

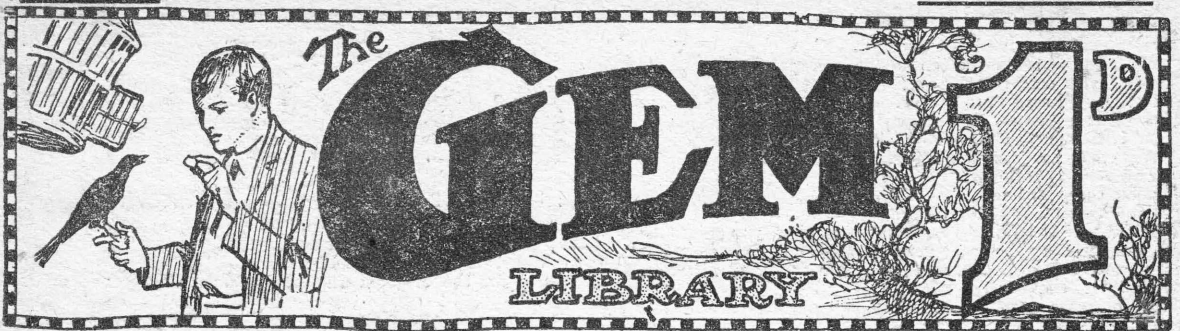
Next Thursday's
School Tale:

"STAGE STRUCK!"

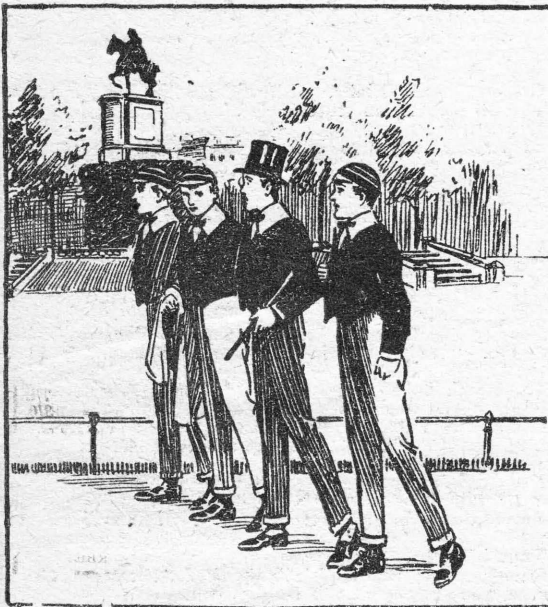
By MARTIN CLIFFORD
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Thursday.



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Tom Merry & Co. in Ireland!

A Splendid New, Long Complete
School Tale of the Famous Chums
of St. Jim's.

By

MARTIN CLIFFORD.

CHAPTER 1. A Farewell Feed.

TOM MERRY looked out of his study window into the old quadrangle of St. Jim's, his sunny face slightly tinged with sadness.

It was the last day of the term.

On the morrow the old school was breaking up; and the boys of St. Jim's would be dispersed to the four corners of the kingdom.

Not that Tom Merry was sorry the holidays had come. He was glad, and he was looking forward to the long weeks of the midsummer vacation very keenly.

But as he glanced round the old quad. in the setting sun his satisfaction was tinged with a shade of melancholy.

Tom Merry & Co. had had many good times at the old school; and now that the hour of parting had come once more, and he was to turn his back upon the old place for a long time, he felt that it was a little ungrateful to be so glad to go.

He looked round the sunny quad. over at the New House, round at the gym, and across to the playing-fields lying wide and green in the sunshine.

"Ripping old place," he murmured. "Blessed if I'm glad I'm going."

His reflections were interrupted by a sudden sound of hissing and fizzing in the study behind him.

He gave a sudden jump, and uttered an exclamation.

"My hat! The eggs!"

He swung round from the window.

Manners and Lowther, his study-mates, had left him in charge of the tin saucepan, laden with eggs on the study fire, while they went down to the tuck-shop for the other articles required for the last feed in the study.

And in his melancholy contemplation of the old quad., Tom Merry had forgotten the eggs; thus unconsciously understudying King Alfred of immortal memory.

"My hat!"

The tin saucepan had boiled over, and the fire was hissing and spitting, and blacks were sailing in armies round the study.

Tom Merry made a dive at the fireplace.

He caught the short handle of the egg saucepan to catch it off the fire; and made the sudden discovery that it was exceedingly hot. He had lifted the saucepan about a foot from the fire when that discovery dawned upon him, and he let go. There was a crash, and a sizz, and a blare from the fire—and then the eggs cracked and sizzled merrily in the heart of the flames. The saucepan rolled into the grate, and Tom Merry regarded the disaster with dismay.

There was a step in the passage, and Manners and Lowther of the Shell came into the study, both of them laden with parcels.

"Here we are," said Monty Lowther cheerily. "My hat! The study's full of blacks! Why—what—you awful ass! Is that how you cook eggs?"

"You fathead!" ejaculated Manners. "What are you up to?"

"They're upset!" explained Tom Merry.

"Yes; I can see that, fathead! They're done in now!" growled Manners. "Of all the asses, I think you take the cake!"

He picked up the egg saucepan from the fender.

"Look—out!" exclaimed Tom Merry, in warning.

"It's—"

"Yaroo!"

Crash!

The saucepan crashed into the fender, and Manners' hand flew to his mouth, and he sucked it desperately, and gurgled over it in a spasmodic way.

"Groo! Hoo! Yow! Oh! You dangerous ass! Yoop! Why didn't you tell me the beastly thing was—groo—beastly hot—yow! Yah! Oh! Yowp!"

"I was telling you—"

"Yowp! Groo! I've scorched my paw now—groo! Yah! Fathead! Ow!"

Next Thursday:

"STAGE STRUCK!" & "THE SCHOOL UNDER CANVAS!"

"Lucky it wasn't worse," said Monty Lowther, as he deposited his parcels on the study table.

Manners glared.

"How could it have been worse, ass?"

"Well, I might have picked up the saucepan, you know."

"Ow! You funny ass—yow!"

"I'm sorry," said Tom Merry. "The saucepan boiled over, and I burnt my hand, too, getting it off the fire."

"Ow! Serve you right! Yow!"

"Why, you ass!" said Tom Merry indignantly.

"Yow! You fathead!"

"Look here, Manners!"

"Look here, Tom Merry!"

"When you two duffers have done ragging, you might lend me a hand getting the tea," grunted Monty Lowther. "Some fellows are coming. Those eggs don't smell nice burning, either. Stir 'em into the fire."

Tom Merry stirred the unfortunate eggs into the fire, and Monty Lowther, taking up the saucepan carefully with a handkerchief round the handle, refilled it, and planted it on the glowing cinders.

"Now, do keep an eye on that this time," he said. "What on earth did you want to let it boil over for?"

"I was looking out of the window," Tom Merry explained.

"Anything going on?" asked Lowther, with a glance towards the window.

"No; I was just looking."

"What on earth at?"

"Oh, the place, you know."

"What place?" asked Lowther, staring at his chum as though he suspected him of some slight attack of weakness in the mental regions.

Tom Merry coloured.

"Oh, the place—I was thinking we've had some good times here, and I don't really know whether I'm glad to go—"

"My hat!"

"Haven't you ever thought anything of the sort, you practical beast?" demanded Tom Merry warmly.

"Course I have," said Lowther. "We all get romantic at times; but it's out of place when you're boiling eggs. You ought to do the melancholy-reflection business after tea."

"You ass!"

"It's just as good then, and it doesn't interfere with cooking the eggs," said Lowther, imperturbably. "Keep your eye on this lot, and don't have any more reflections. We'll be melancholy together after tea, if you like, and I will weep when I say good-bye to Figgins, and—"

"Oh, cheese it!"

Blake, Herries, Digby and D'Arcy of the Fourth came along from Study No. 6, and were greeted warmly by the Terrible Three. Then Kangaroo of the Shell dropped in, and then Reilly of the Fourth. Then came Figgins & Co. from the New House—Figgins, Kerr, and Wynn. After them came Redfern, Owen, and Lawrence, also of the New House. By that time the study was pretty well crowded. Bernard Glyn and Clifton Dane came along, glanced in, and grinned, and walked on. It was a case of standing room only, now. Gore and Skimpole and Bishop and Brooke also looked in, and drifted away. Fifteen fellows was certainly a large number to cram into a junior study, though certainly on some celebrated occasions it had held more.

"Bai Jove!" Arthur Augustus D'Arcy remarked, as he sat on the window-sill with his beautiful trousers carefully hitched up, so as not to bag at the knees. "Bai Jove! It's warm, you know."

Jack Blake regarded his elegant chum with great admiration.

"Gussy thinks these things out," he confided to the study. "It's wonderful how he does it, but he does. Nobody else would have worked it out—without the aid of a net, too—that a study with fifteen chaps and a fire would be warm on a hot summer's day."

"Weally, Blake—"

"Well, it is warm," said Tom Merry, laughing. "The fire's going down, though!"

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(See column 2, page 27 of this issue.)

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 236.

READ "THE KIDNAPPED SCHOOL," IN "THE MAGNET" LIBRARY. Now on Sale. PRICE 1^d.

"So is the grub," grinned Figgins. "This toast is prime, Fatty, old man, how do you like the rashers?"

Fatty Wynn gave Figgins an eloquent look.

"First chop!" he said, tenderly.

"Gentlemen—"

It was Arthur Augustus D'Arcy of the Fourth, who spoke. The juniors in the study looked round at him.

"Hallo!" exclaimed Herries. "Gussy's going to make a speech!"

"Hear, hear!"

"I am not exactly goin' to make a speech, deah boys. I am goin' to make a pwoosition," said Arthur Augustus, modestly. "I've got somethin' to say to you fellows, and I take this opportunity, while we are all together."

"Hear, hear!" said Kangaroo. "Gentlemen, order! Silence for the original and pathetic parting speech of our friend Gussy!"

"You uttah ass, Kangawoo—"

"Why, I'm backing you up!" said the Cornstalk indignantly. "I suppose it is original and pathetic, isn't it?"

"Order! Wire in, Gussy!" said Blake, helping himself to the toast on D'Arcy's plate. "You won't want this, if you're going to speak, will you?"

"Why, you ass—"

"Go on!" said Blake, with his mouth full of toast. "We're all waiting on tenterhooks!"

"Hear, hear!"

And Arthur Augustus D'Arcy cleared his throat, and began.

CHAPTER 2.

Trouble in the Family.

"GENTLEMEN—that is to say, deah boys—"

"Hear, hear!"

"We are about to bweak up for the holidays—"

"Hear, hear!"

"Nobody like Gussy to bring us unheard-of news!" said Kangaroo. "Any more in the new and startling line, Gussy?"

"We bweak up to-mowwow," said Arthur Augustus, unheeding. "And during the vac. I am goin' to pay—"

"Good!" said Monty Lowther. "Nothing like paying up in the vacation, and starting the new term clear! Whom are you going to pay?"

"I am goin' to pay—"

"Your tailor?"

"Pway don't be an ass, Lowther! I am goin' to pay—"

"Your bills?"

"I am goin' to pay a visit!" shrieked Arthur Augustus. "I'm goin' to pay a visit to Dublin, you ass!"

"By George, are you?" said Tom Merry. "Well, I hope you'll have a good time."

"Sure, you'd better come to Belfast!" said Reilly, of the Fourth, who hailed from that famous city. "Dublin is all right, but Belfast is—"

"All righter?" suggested Monty Lowther.

"I am goin' to Dublin—"

"Better come to Belfast!"

"—for the Horse Show," explained D'Arcy. "I am goin' to Dublin for the Horse Show in the vacation, deah boys."

"Sure you mean the Horse Show?" asked Monty Lowther, with an air of surprise.

"Certainly!"

The humorist of the Shell shook his head gravely.

"That isn't the kind of show you ought to be exhibited in!" he remarked. "It's another kind of animal—"

"You feahful ass!" said Arthur Augustus. "I didn't say I was goin' to be exhibited, you howlin' duffah! I'm goin' to the Horse Show because my bwothah Conway is exhibitin' some horses there; and I want to see the place, anyway. Dublin is a vewy intwestin' city, and the capital of Ireland!"

"Is it really?" asked Manners. "Where did you hear that?"

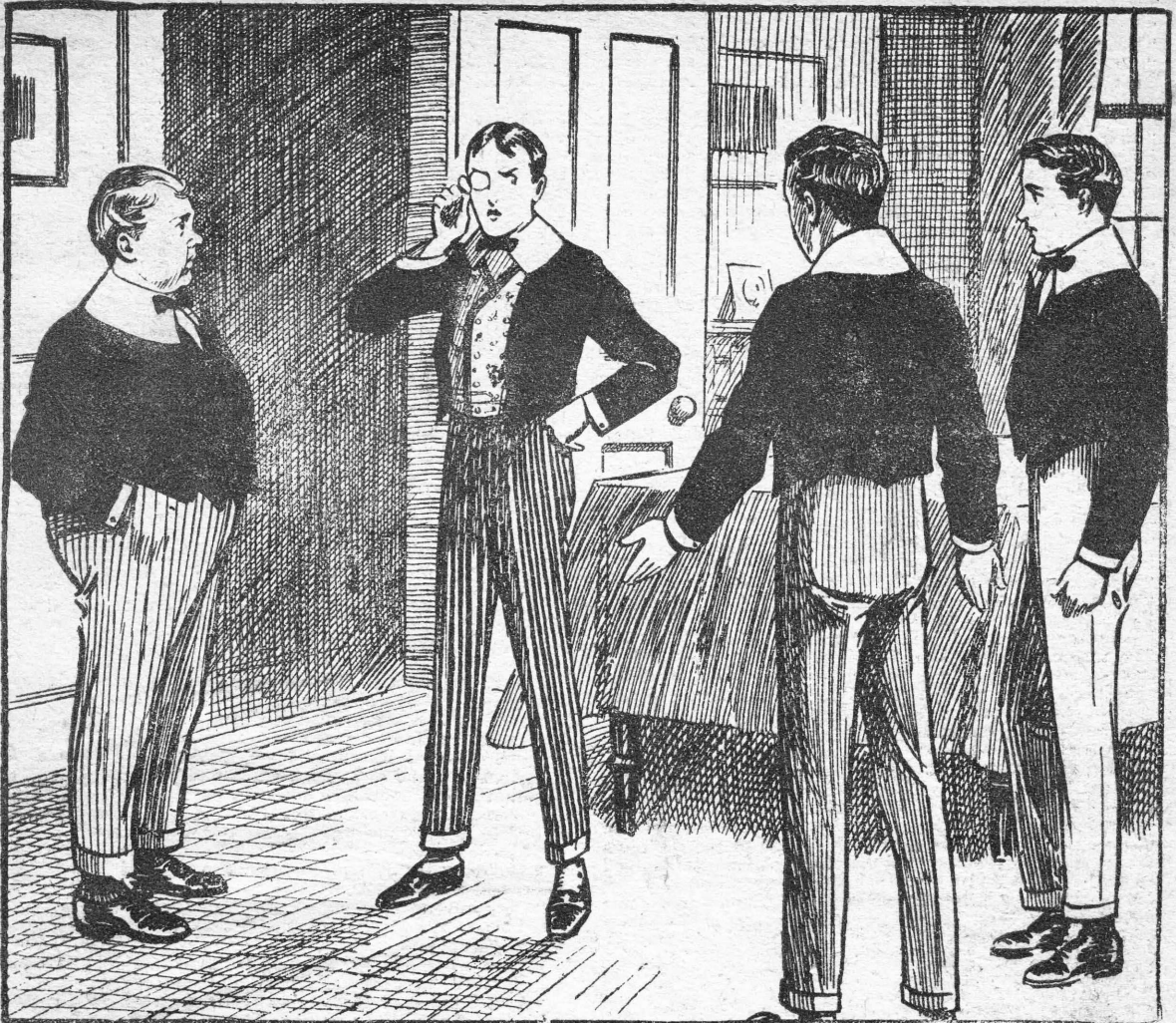
"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Better come to Belfast!" said Reilly, with a shake of the head. "I'll put you up with pleasure if you come to Belfast, and show you over the factories and things. We're the richest city in Ireland, and the greatest city in the United Kingdom—"

"I was goin' to say—"

"You'll have to go to say, to get to Dublin!" agreed Reilly. "Sure, the Irish Say will be a bit rough on you, too!"

"Pway don't be funnay, Weilly! I was goin' to say, that I shall be glad to see any of you fellows who care to come with me," said D'Arcy. "I should be vewy pleased to make up a party to do Dublin."



"It is all right, Gussy. Fatty accepts your apology. You accept ours. Kerr apologises to me and I apologise to Kerr!" Arthur Augustus D'Arcy gazed suspiciously at Figgins & Co. But he encountered three faces that were almost owl-like in their gravity, and he was satisfied. "Vewy well, deah boys, it is all wight," he said. "It is all sewene!" (See Chapter 3.)

"Faith, Dublin's more likely to do you!" said Reilly. "Better come to Belfast!"

"Blake and Dig are coming down to my place for the vac," said D'Arcy. "They'll be coming with me, and Hewwies will come if he can get away fwom his people; but they're goin' to take him to the Channel Islands. Any of you fellows who care to meet me at Holyhead to crows ovah to Dublin will be welcome guests, and I'll look aftah you in Dublin, and see that you don't come to any harm!"

The juniors glared at Arthur Augustus.

"You don't say so!" gasped Monty Lowther at last.

Arthur Augustus nodded genially.

"Yaas, wathah!" he replied. "You wemebah the time we did London, and you fellows all got lost? I'll be more careful of you in Dublin. I weally won't let you get out of my sight, and I'll see that you don't get undah the twams, or fall into the Jiffey—"

"The what?"

"The Jiffey!"

"The Liffey, you gossoon!" yelled Reilly.

"Vewy well; the Liffey, then!" said Arthur Augustus graciously. "It's all one, deah boys! Now, would you fellows like to come to Dublin?"

"What-ho!"

"Hear, hear!"

"There, there!" you mean!" said Monty Lowther.

"Vewy well," said D'Arcy. "You can w'ite to me, you know, and tell me what time you can get down to Eastwood, or you can meet me at Holyhead when I take the boat. And you can all wely upon me to look aftah you!"

"And you can rely on us to give you a thick ear if you do!" said Kangaroo.

"Weally, Kangy—"

"What kind of grub do they provide in Dublin?" asked Fatty Wynn dubiously.

"I weally don't know, but I expect it will be all wight. Iwish hospitality is well known," said Arthur Augustus.

"Sure, yes! But ye'd better come to Belfast!" remarked Roilly.

"You can wun down fwom Belfast on the waylay, Weilly," Arthur Augustus remarked. "You can meet us in Dublin, you know, and show us wound, as you are an Iwish chap, and know the wopes and speak the language, and so on!"

"The language!" yelled Blake. "What kind of language do you think they talk in Dublin, you chortling ass—Dutch or Sanskrit?"

"Iwish, I suppose!" said D'Arcy innocently.

"I've heard them speak Welsh in Wales, anyway," said D'Arcy. "I wemebah once I was there on a holiday, and I heard a chap sweawin' howwibly, as I thought; but a fellow said he was only speakin' in Welsh—"

Fatty Wynn rose to his feet, and laid down his knife and fork, and moved away through the packed juniors towards Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. He halted in front of the swell of St. Jim's, and glared at him.

"What sort of an ass do you call yourself?" he demanded.

"Weally, Wynn— Yawooh!"

Arthur Augustus came off the window-sill with a sudden bump. He found himself suddenly lying on his back on the floor of the study, with Fatty Wynn sitting on his chest. The fat Fourth-Former was a heavyweight, and Arthur Augustus gasped feebly beneath him.

"Ow! Gewwoff! Weally, you know—"

"Take it back!" roared Fatty Wynn.

"Eh? Oh! Wescue!"

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 236.

NEXT THURSDAY: "STAGE STRUCK!" A Splendid, New, Long, Complete School Tale of the Chums of St. Jim's. By MARTIN CLIFFORD.

"Take it back!"
 "Take what back, you feahful ass? Gewwoff!"
 "Ha, ha, ha!" roared Figgins. "You forgot there was a wild Welshman present, look you! You had better apologise, Gussy, before he slays you!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"
 "Bai Jove! Wescue!"
 Fatty Wynn glared round at the grinning juniors.
 "Welsh is the most musical, the most poetical language that ever was talked!" he said. "Silly asses who don't know Welsh don't understand it! I'm going to wipe up the floor with Gussy to show him that Welsh is a poetical language—"

"Ow! Wescue!"
 "Take it back, then!" roared Fatty Wynn.
 "Sing him a Welsh song if he doesn't, Wynn!" suggested Monty Lowther.

"Ha, ha, ha!"
 "Ow! I will take anythin' back, if you will woff off my chest!" murmured Arthur Augustus faintly. "Pway dwag him off! He's cwushin' me to extinction, and uttably wuinin' my jacket!"

"What kind of language is Welsh?" demanded Fatty Wynn, glaring down upon his crushed victim.

"Beautiful!" gasped D'Arcy. "Pway woff off!"
 "Is it the most poetical language in the world?" demanded Fatty Wynn.

"Yaas!"
 "And the most musical?"
 "Yaas!"
 "And the most poetical?"
 "Yaas, wathah! Pway gewwoff!"

Fatty Wynn rose to his feet.
 "All serene!" he said. "But if you— Yaroo!"
 The moment Fatty Wynn's weight was off him, Arthur Augustus leaped up like a jack-in-the-box, and in a second he had his left arm round Fatty Wynn's neck, and the Welsh junior's head in chancery.

"Now, you awful boundah—"
 "Yaroo!"
 "I'll teach you to wuin my jacket—"
 "Yowp!"

Fatty Wynn grappled with his assailant, and they struggled frantically. There was a roar of remonstrance on all sides. The study was too full for there to remain room for a personal encounter, and the two combatants bumped into fellows right and left as they staggered to and fro.

Manners gave a fiendish yell as Fatty Wynn's foot came down on his toe, and Tom Merry roared as D'Arcy's elbow found a billet in his eye.

"Stop them! Ow!"
 "Kick them out!"
 "Bump 'em!"
 "Bai Jove! I'll thwash the wottah—"
 "Groo! I'll squash the silly ass, look you—"
 Crash!

Fatty Wynn hurled all his weight upon his adversary. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy was not built to stand that. He staggered back, and crashed into the table, dragging Fatty Wynn with him. The table was not built, either, for such assaults, and it simply crumpled away under the crash of the two struggling juniors.

"Ow!" roared Blake, as the teapot flew into his lap.
 "Oh! Yah!"
 "Yaroo!"
 Crash—crash!
 "Bai Jove!"

And Fatty Wynn and Arthur Augustus D'Arcy rolled, struggling, among the debris of the tea-table, amid smashed plates and cups and saucers, and squashed tarts and cake, and flowing tea and milk.

CHAPTER 3.

Apologetic.

TOM MERRY & CO. threw themselves, with one accord, upon the two struggling juniors.

Hands were laid upon Fatty Wynn and his foe from all sides, and they were whirled bodily into the passage and bumped down upon the linoleum.

Then the door was slammed upon them.
 "My hat!" ejaculated Tom Merry, surveying the wreck in the study in dismay. "That's a ripping end to a farewell tea-party. I must say!"

"Groo! I'm scalded!"
 "I'm sticky!"
 "I'm buttery!"
 "I'm eggy!"
 "Yow!"

And the tea-party in Tom Merry's study broke up. It was time they broke up, for, as Monty Lowther remarked, every-

thing else in the study was broken up. The Terrible Three were left to sort out what remained whole in the wreckage, while their guests departed to clean off the various comestibles and fluids that had been distributed over them.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy had gone up to the Fourth Form dormitory to change his clothes, and he was occupied in that important task for more than an hour.

When he came down, he looked as clean and neat as a new pin. He glanced into Tom Merry's study in passing, and found the chums of the Shell resting after their labours. The Terrible Three looked at him rather grimly.

"Awfully sowwy, deah boys!" said D'Arcy gracefully.
 "As a mattah of fact, I am afraid I was to blame!"

"Go hon!" growled Lowther.
 Arthur Augustus nodded.
 "Yaas," he said. "I didn't mean it, of course, but Fatty may possibly have constwued my wemarks into a weflection on his native language. Undah the circs, he was quite wight to wesenit it, and I owe him an apology."

"Br-r-r-r!"
 "That is weally not an intelligible wemark, Mannahs, deah boy!" said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy mildly. "I owe you fellows an apology, too, for havin' caused a wow in your stuidy. I apologise! Now it's all wight!"

"The table isn't all right!" growled Tom Merry. "It's got a leg off!"
 "And the crockery isn't all right!" said Lowther. "It's smashed!"

"Sowwy, deah boys! Howevah, between one gentleman and anothah an apology sets ewewythin' all wight," said Arthur Augustus, with dignity. "I apologise, therefore—"
 "Go and apologise to Fatty Wynn, and give us a rest; do!" said Monty Lowther.

"Weally, Lowthah—"
 "Scat!"

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy jammed his eyeglass into his eye, and gave Monty Lowther a glare that ought to have withered him to ashes upon the spot. But it did not have that effect. Lowther did not turn a hair, and Arthur Augustus turned haughtily upon his heel and quitted the study. The sound of a chuckle followed him.

Arthur Augustus walked down the passage with a sniff, and discovered Kangaroo and Reilly chatting at the corner. He bowed to them gracefully.

"My deah boys—"
 "Hallo!" said Kangaroo, with a concerned look. "Got a twist in the back?"

"Certainly not!"
 "A pain in the spinal column?"
 "No, Kangy."
 "Then what are you twisting forward in that queer way for?" asked the Cornstalk.

"You uttah ass! I wasn't twistin' forward in a queeah way!" said Arthur Augustus indignantly. "I was bowin' to you because I'm goin' to apologise. I wegarid it as necessary to apologise to all Tom Mewwy's guests for havin' involuntawily upset the tea-party."

"All serene," said Harry Noble. "Your apology is accepted. Same to you, and many of 'em!"

Reilly chuckled, and Arthur Augustus walked on, with his nose very high in the air. Arthur Augustus's Chesterfieldian and Grandsonian manners made it imperative for him to render an apology when he felt himself in the wrong. But, somehow or another, the juniors of the School House did not seem to take his graceful apologies with proper seriousness.

The swell of St. Jim's looked into his own study, No. 6 in the Fourth Form passage, as he passed. Blake, and Herries, and Digby were there, looking out things they intended to take home with them for the holidays.

"Here's Gussy!" said Blake. "Good! Can I have your Sunday topper to take home my white mice in, Gussy?"

"Weally, Blake—"
 "Certainly not!" said Digby. "I want it for my white rabbit!"

"I wefuse to have a wabbit taken home in my toppah!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus indignantly. "Pway listen to me. I owe you chaps an apology—"

"Never mind that," said Blake. "Let's have the topper instead."

"I apologise for havin' caused a wow—"
 "My dear chap, you're always causing rows in one way or another," said Blake. "What with your tenor solos and other things, we live in a state of rows."

"Ha, ha, ha!"
 "The question before the meeting, is—can I have your Sunday topper to carry my white mice in?"

"I want it for my white rabbit!"
 "It would do for me to carry Towser's biscuits in," said Herries thoughtfully. "I propose that we toss up for it. Does that suit you, Gussy?"
 Slam!

GET YOUR FRIEND TO BECOME A "GEMITE"!

The door closed violently after the retreating form of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, and the swell of St. Jim's walked away.

He left the School House and walked out into the quadrangle, where the shadows were lengthening as the sun sank lower over the distant woods.

Arthur Augustus crossed the quadrangle towards the New House.

School House and New House juniors at St. Jim's were generally in a state of warfare, but on the last day of the term they buried the hatchet, so to speak. The feed in Tom Merry's study had been very amicable all round. The New House were rivals of the School House, but that was no reason why Fatty Wynn, Figgins, and Kerr should be left out of the round of apologies. They were entitled to an apology like the rest of the tea-party, and Arthur Augustus was not a fellow to neglect his duty.

Figgins & Co. watched Arthur Augustus from their study window as he crossed the quad. towards the New House. Fatty Wynn breathed wrath.

"The blessed bounder!" he exclaimed. "He hasn't had enough, and he's coming over here for some more. He's given me a fat nose to take home for the holidays. I'll give him one to match if he comes to this study!"

"He can't be coming here!" said Kerr.

"I'll bet he is!"

Fatty Wynn was right.

The footsteps of the swell of the School House were heard in the passage outside Figgins's study, and there was a tap at the door, and Arthur Augustus D'Arcy opened it and presented himself to the amazed eyes of the New House trio.

"I——" he began.

"The blessed cheek!" gasped Figgins. "Collar him!"

"Bai Jove! I—— Oh!"

Figgins, Kerr, and Wynn rushed upon the intruder. They swept him over in their combined grasp, and bumped him on the study carpet. A cloud of dust rose from the carpet, and a yell of anguish from D'Arcy.

"Bai Jove! You're wuinin' my bags! Oh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Bump him!"

Bump!

"Ow! Yaroo! You awful wuffians! I shall wefuse to apologise now! Ow!"

Figgins started.

"Eh?" he exclaimed. "What—what did you come here for, Gussy?"

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy sat on the carpet and gasped.

"Ow! I came to apologise to Wynn, but now I wefuse to do anythin' of the sort! Ow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the New House juniors.

"Weally, you fellows—— Ow!"

Figgins winked at his chums.

"It's all right, Gussy——" he began.

"It is not all wight!" shrieked D'Arcy. "You have thrown me into a fluttah, and made my twousahs howbly dustay. I am goin' to give you a feahful thwashin'——"

"Hold on! We apologise——"

"Eh!"

"As one gentleman to another—I mean, as three gentlemen to another—we apologise," said Figgins, with great gravity. "That sets all right, doesn't it?"

"Your bags won't be dusty now," grinned Kerr.

"Order, Kerr! How dare you be funny on such a serious subject?" said Figgins sternly. "It's all right, Gussy. Fatty accepts your apology. You accept ours. Kerr apologises to me, and I apologise to Kerr. And you'll agree, so I expect, that everything is quite correct, as they say in the song."

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy gazed suspiciously at Figgins &

Co. But he encountered three faces that were almost owl-like in their gravity, and he was satisfied.

"Vewy well, deah boys, it's all wight," he said. "I shall have to go and get a bwush down. It's all sewene."

And Arthur Augustus departed; and as he went down the passage, he heard a sound from Figgins's study that sounded suspiciously like a cackle.

CHAPTER 4.

A Lesson in Irish.

THE next morning St. Jim's broke up for the holidays.

Tom Merry, Manners, and Lowther found themselves in the same carriage with D'Arcy, Blake, and Digby. Manners and Lowther were going to Tom Merry's place for the vacation; and Blake and Digby with Arthur Augustus. Their way lay together as far as Easthorpe. Then the train would bear the Terrible Three on to Huckleberry Heath, where Laurel Villa was situated—the home of Miss Priscilla Fawcett, Tom Merry's old governess.

"Don't forget that you're comin' to Dublin in time for the Horse Show, deah boys," Arthur Augustus D'Arcy remarked, as he began to gather up his property preparatory to getting out of the train, as the last station before Easthorpe was passed. "I wathah think we shall have a wippin' time, you know. Pway tell Miss Pwiscillah that you will be all wight in Dublin, Tom Mewwy. Say that I shall keep an eye on you all the time."

"Why, you ass——"

"By the way, hadn't you better get a phrase-book, or something, and learn Irish before you start, Gussy?" asked Monty Lowther. "You would find some of the phrases useful in asking your way about Dublin, you know."

Arthur Augustus looked thoughtfully at Lowther across his silk hat, which he was polishing ready to put on when the train stopped.

"Bai Jove! Where do you get that book, Lowthah? I should think that would be vewy useful, especially as I am goin' to guide you fellows wound. I asked Weilly about learnin' Irish, and he only cackled, and wouldn't tell me anythin'."

"They call it Erse, I think," said Lowther reflectively. "I could teach you a bit now if you like. The train doesn't stop for ten minutes yet."

"I didn't know you knew it, Lowthah."

"Oh, I don't say I speak it with facility," said Monty Lowther modestly. "But I can put you up to some useful phrases, you know. Suppose you want a jaunting-car——"

"Bai Jove! What's that?"

"Car you take a jaunt in, of course. Well, if you want a jaunting-car you call out 'Cruiskeen lawn!'"

"Bai Jove! What does that mean?"

"That means what I say. If the driver isn't quick enough, you add 'Gamachree ma cruiskeen lawn!'"

"Oh, good! I'll make a note of that, deah boy. Do you know any more?"

"Certainly! When you mean good-morning, you say 'Mavouneen!'" said Monty Lowther unblushingly; "and for good-evening you say 'Acushla!'"

"I believe I've heard those words before, in a song or somethin'."

"Very likely. Then an electric tram is called a colleen bawn," continued Lowther.

"Bai Jove!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Tom Merry involuntarily.

Arthur Augustus turned his eyeglass upon the captain of the Shell.

"Weally, Tom Mewwy——"

"All serene," said Tom Merry. "Go on, Monty. We're all learning. What's the Irish for silly ass and spoofer?"

"I know the English for silly ass," said Lowther. "Two words beginning with 'T. M.'"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Bai Jove, I wogard that as wathah funnay, you know. Ha, ha, ha!"

Arthur Augustus wrote down the valuable phrases Monty Lowther had taught him, and conned them over thoughtfully.

"Thank you vewy much, Lowthah," he said. "Suppose I want somebody to diwect me on the way, how do I ask him?"

"Oh, that's quite simple!" said Monty Lowther blandly. "You say, 'Acushla machree,' if you are speaking to a lady, and 'Spalpeen gossoon' if it's a man."

"Thank you vewy much, deah boy."

"You walk up to a stranger in Dublin and say, 'Spalpeen gossoon,' and you'll be surprised at the result," said Lowther.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I fail to see any cause for wibald laughtah, Tom Mewwy. What are you cacklin' at, Blake?"

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NEXT
THURSDAY:

"STAGE STRUCK!"

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"I'm thinking of the surprising result," said Blake, chuckling. "I'm quite keen to see you start talking Irish to the natives. Hallo! We're getting in."

Arthur Augustus jammed his silk hat on his head.

"Good-bye, deah boys!" he said. "See you again when we start for Holyhead. Pewwaps I'll wun ovah to Hucklebewwy Heath and see you befoah. Good-bye!"

And the Fourth-Formers and the Shell fellows shook hands all round, with mutual good wishes, and as the train stopped in Easthorpe Station, Blake, and D'Arcy, and Digby stepped out.

The Terrible Three waved their caps from the carriage window, as the train glided on.

"Good old Gussy!" chuckled Monty Lowther. "I'd go to Ireland now, if only to hear him talk Irish."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Only two stations further on," said Tom Merry, looking from the carriage window, and feasting his eyes upon the green countryside. "It's a jolly good idea of Gussy's, going to Dublin in the vac. We've been in France and in America, and we've never been to Ireland yet. Chap ought to see his own country first."

"Hear, hear!"

The little station of Huckleberry Heath came in sight at last. As the local train slowed down, a feminine figure was visible on the platform. It was Miss Priscilla Fawcett. Tom Merry's old governess was there to meet the train. Her kind old face peeped out from under an Early Victorian bonnet, and she was using her parasol with deadly effect upon the station porter, of whom she was asking questions. The unfortunate man had been jabbed in the shoulders or ribs three or four times, to draw his attention to Miss Fawcett's queries as to whether the train was overdue, and whether there had been an accident.

The train clattered in, and stopped, and Tom Merry threw open his carriage door.

Miss Fawcett ran towards him.

"My darling Tommy!"

Miss Fawcett never could understand fully that Tom Merry had really passed the age of seven or eight; and to her he remained still the nice little boy she had been accustomed to lead about by his chubby hand.

The captain of the Shell at St. Jim's was really a different fellow, but Miss Priscilla was never likely to realise it.

She folded Tom Merry in her arms as he descended from the train, and fairly hugged him, much to the interest of several persons on the platform.

"My darling Tommy! I was afraid there had been an accident. The train is nearly a minute late! Oh, dear!"

"All serene!" said Tom Merry, kissing Miss Priscilla on both cheeks.

"Are you quite well, Tommy?"

"Right as rain!"

"You have not got your feet wet coming down?"

Tom Merry turned pink, and Manners and Lowther were taken with a sudden fit of coughing.

"No fear," said Tom Merry. "Not likely to get one's feet wet on a blazing summer day like this, I suppose."

"Did you get the new socks I sent you, Tommy?"

"Yes."

"And the new—"

"Yes, yes, I got everything," said Tom Merry hurriedly.

"It's all right. Let's get down to home, dear. I'm anxious to see Laurel Villa again."

"Certainly, my darling child! You are sure you are quite well?"

"Oh, ripping!"

"There seems to be a little flush in your cheeks," said Miss Fawcett, holding her darling at arm's length, and surveying him fondly, quite regardless of the interested spectators of the touching scene.

Manners and Lowther nearly choked with their coughing, and Tom Merry's flush became more pronounced than ever.

"Warm day!" Tom Merry explained.

"Dear me! It was a little thoughtless of Dr. Holmes to break up on a very warm day, which is not good for you to travel on," said Miss Fawcett. "Surely you could have suggested to him to defer the breaking up till to-morrow, Tommy dear."

"Ahem!"

"I fear you are a little feverish—"

"You haven't spoken to Manners and Lowther yet, dear," said Tom Merry hurriedly.

"Oh, don't mind us!" said Monty Lowther, in his blandest tone. "We like to see you welcomed home, Tommy. Please excuse my cough; it's come on quite suddenly."

"You ass!" murmured Tom Merry fiercely.

"Pray excuse me, my dear little ones," said Miss Priscilla, shaking hands with Manners and Lowther. "I am so

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anxious about Tommy. The dear child is so delicate, though he will never admit it. I am very glad to see you, my dears, and I am so glad you were with Tommy, to take care of him if he should have felt faint in the train."

Tom Merry murmured something, and Manners and Lowther tried not to yell—and succeeded with noble efforts. Then they set out for Laurel Villa.

CHAPTER 5.

A Dangerous Expedition.

MISS PRISCILLA FAWCETT made very much of her ward during the holidays. Nothing was good enough for Tom Merry, and during the holidays which Tom Merry spent at the old house Laurel Villa was like unto a land flowing with milk and honey. The Terrible Three had a very good time. They rambled in the woods, boated on the river, played cricket with Mr. Dodds, the curate, and his village team, and visited Arthur Augustus D'Arcy at Eastwood House. After a time, however, they exhausted Laurel Villa, and they were not sorry to have the trip to Dublin to look forward to. Miss Fawcett would have liked her favourite to have spent the whole vacation with her, but she was not selfish, and as she lived only for Tommy she was glad to make any plans to give him the best possible time in the holidays. But Tom Merry had not yet mentioned the trip to Dublin. Miss Fawcett had crossed the sea once, on the never-to-be-forgotten occasion when she had brought Tom Merry home in his babyhood from India, and she had a very keen recollection of that time, though Tom Merry did not remember it. Miss Fawcett was sure to be alarmed at the idea of Tommy crossing the Irish Sea, and her knowledge of Ireland, too, was a little vague. She would not have been surprised to hear that "moonlighters" paraded the streets of Dublin in broad daylight, and she was firmly convinced that nobody in Ireland ever paid any rent, and that shooting landlords was a national industry, carried on on a very extensive scale.

Tom Merry had deemed it more judicious to select a favourable moment for breaking the news to her, and he left it till Arthur Augustus came over with Dig. and Blake to arrange for making the start.

It was a blazing August afternoon when Arthur Augustus D'Arcy's arrival was announced by the toot of a motor-car in the road that ran past the garden-gate of Laurel Villa.

D'Arcy left his car in the road, and came up the garden with Blake and Digby, and found Miss Fawcett and Mr. Dodds the curate and the Terrible Three having tea together in the garden, under the shade of a gigantic apple-tree.

"Here we are again, deah boys," said D'Arcy. "How do you do, dear Miss Fawcett? So jolly glad to see you again, Mr. Dodds! Do you wemembah playin' cwicket at St. Jim's?"

Mr. Dodds laughed.

"I remember very well," he replied.

Tom Merry found chairs for the three Fourth-Formers, and they sat down to drink tea of Miss Fawcett's own making, and to eat lovely little cakes that also were the work of her own hands.

"Bai Jove, Fatty Wynn would like to be here!" said Arthur Augustus. "By the way, I've had a letter from Wynn, and it's all wight. He's comin' with us to Ireland, and he's going to meet us at Holyhead."

Monty Lowther looked very serious.

"Like taking a Jonah on board, you know," he said, with a shake of the head.

D'Arcy turned his eyeglass upon Monty Lowther in surprise.

"I weally fail to see it," he remarked. "How is Fatty Wynn like Jonah?"

"He's travelling in Wales," explained Lowther.

"Bai Jove, what a wotten pun!"

"So you are going to Ireland, Arthur?" asked Miss Fawcett.

"Yaas, wathah, Miss Fawcett! My bwothah Conway is exhibitin' some animals at the Horse Show, you know. Conway has some land in Ireland—in Dublin countay, I think, or some othah countay. He bweds horses and things. I quite approve of it. I'm goin' to take these fellows for a little wun to Dublin. Will you be weady to start on Monday, you fellows?"

Miss Fawcett looked alarmed.

"Is Tommy going?" she asked in a faint voice.

"Yaas, wathah; and Mannahs and Lowthah."

"To—to Ireland?"

"Yaas."

"Oh, dear!"

Arthur Augustus looked surprised.

"Yaas, I suppose you feel a little anxious about him, Miss Pwiscilla," he remarked. "But it's all wight. He will be with me, you know."

"Do you really want to go, Tommy dear?"

"What-ho!" said Tom Merry.

"But think of the danger, my darling!" said Miss Fawcett.

"There isn't any danger," said Tom Merry, laughing. "It's all right. The sea is as smooth as a mill-pond in August."

"But—but Dublin!" murmured Miss Fawcett. "I read in the papers only the other day of a dreadful outrage—somebody was shot, or else was nearly killed in a machine or something, and it happened in Cork."

"Well, that's a good way from Dublin," grinned Tom Merry.

"Yaas, wathah!"

"And then the dreadful moonlighters, and the Peep-of-Day Boys, and the—the dreadful dynamitards!" said Miss Fawcett faintly.

"Ha, ha, ha! Excuse me, dear," said Tom Merry; "but it's all right. Dublin isn't really full up with dynamiters. Dynamiting as a pastime has gone quite out of date."

"Besides, I shall be lookin' aftah Tom Mewwy, you know, Miss Fawcett," said Arthur Augustus. "I can speak a little of the language, and we shall be all wight."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Perhaps you could have police protection, Tommy dear," said Miss Fawcett, brightening up. "It is not a question of money. You might have a special constable to walk about with you."

Mr. Dodds almost choked over his cup of tea.

Manners and Lowther walked down the garden to recover themselves. The mental picture of Tom Merry walking about the streets of Dublin with a special constable in charge of him was a little too much for them.

"Tom Mewwy will be all wight," said Arthur Augustus feebly. "Undah my care, you know—"

"Besides, Lord Conway will be there," said Tom Merry.

"Yaas; I shall have to look aftah Conway, too."

"I—I feel very much alarmed," murmured Miss Fawcett. "Oh, Tommy dear, I wish you were not going upon this dreadful expedition."

"But, my dear—"

"Suppose someone should be shooting at his landlord, and should miss him, and hit you by mistake!" murmured Miss Priscilla.

"That's all right; Irishmen are good shots," said Blake.

"I do not think you need be alarmed, Miss Fawcett," said Mr. Dodds, remaining grave with a terrific effort. "There is really no shooting in the streets in Dublin. The boys will be quite safe. I have been there, Miss Fawcett."

The good old lady brightened up.

"Ah, you have travelled in Dublin, Mr. Dodds?" she asked, speaking of that great city much as if it were the Rocky Mountains or the Caribee Islands.

"Yes, indeed. A very great city, and well worth the time the boys will spend there," said Mr. Dodds. "It will do them good to see the capital of the sister kingdom. I assure you that your alarm is quite without grounds."

And Miss Fawcett allowed herself to be persuaded by Mr. Dodds, on the evident understanding, however, that if Tom Merry should be shot or blown up in Dublin she would consider the curate of Huckleberry Heath responsible for that catastrophe.

This difficult matter being settled, the juniors made their preparations for the journey to Dublin.

The Terrible Three and Blake, Digby, and D'Arcy were to go to London together, and, after spending a few days at Lord Eastwood's house there, to take the train for Holyhead, and meet Fatty Wynn and Kerr and Figgins there. Kangaroo was to join them in London, and Reilly was to turn up in Dublin when they arrived there, and the party would be complete.

Miss Fawcett saw the juniors off at the station on Monday, with all their bags, and looked very serious as she kissed Tom Merry for good-bye.

"Write to me every day, dear," she said. "Pray do not leave me in anxiety." Tom Merry might have been going to China, by the way the good old lady spoke.

"Yes, rather," said Tom Merry cheerily. "Picture-post-card every day, without fail."

"And mind you do not get your feet wet crossing the sea."

"I'll be careful."

"And take one of the Purple Pills for Peaky Persons if you feel the slightest indisposition after landing in Dublin. I have put a box of them in your bag, also some of the Little Lozenges for Little Lungs."

"I'll remember."

"And remember, too, the Pink Powders for Purple People."

"Yes, rather!"

"And—"

"Urry up, there!"

"Come on, Tommy!"

"Good-bye, my darling," said Miss Fawcett.

"Good-bye, dear."

And the train buzzed off with the Terrible Three. Miss Priscilla Fawcett stood on the platform, and waved her hand with the parasol in it, very nearly depriving the porter of an eye. The hapless man escaped just in time, and Miss Fawcett continued to wave her parasol till the train disappeared from the station.

CHAPTER 6.

Off to Dublin.

TOM MERRY & CO. spent several days in London, till Kangaroo joined them, and then the seven juniors left Eastwood House one fine morning, and started for Euston, to catch the 8.30 train for Holyhead. Arthur Augustus was looking a little sleepy as the handsome Mercedes car rolled them away to the station. The swell of St. Jim's was not accustomed to rising so early during the holidays.

"Lovely morning," said Monty Lowther. "We're going to have a fine day. I'll teach you some more Irish in the train, Gussy."

"Thank you vewy much, deah boy."

Kangaroo stared.

"What's that?" he asked.

"I'm teaching Gussy Irish, ready for getting to Dublin," Lowther explained.

The Cornstalk roared. Arthur Augustus turned his eye-glass upon him severely.

"Weally, Kangawoo, I see no weason for cacklin'," he said. "I considah that it is vewy kind of Lowthah to take the twouble."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Here we are!" said Tom Merry, as they ran into the grey, grim station. "Now, then! How many hat-boxes are you travelling with, Gussy?"

"Only one, deah boy. My patah says that in case of accidents I shall be able to get a new toppah in Gwafton Street."

"Oh, good! That's a very important point. If your toppah should be blown overboard I don't see how we could visit Dublin without it, o' course."

"Quite so, deah boy. Pway be careful with that hat box, portah."

"Yessir."

The hat-box was deposited safely upon the rack in a first-class carriage, and the juniors ensconced themselves there. Arthur Augustus looked round the carriage a little dubiously.

"I suppose we all want to twavel in the same cawwiage?" he remarked.

"Yes, rather!"

"There are only six seats, you see, and there are seven of us," Arthur Augustus remarked. "It seems wathah a pwoblem, doesn't it?"

"Not at all," said Lowther. "You can sit on your hat-box."

"Weally, Lowthah—"

"Or lie on the floor," Kangaroo suggested. "That would really be better, because then we could use you for a foot-rest."

"Good idea!"

"Hear, hear!"

"Weally, Kangawoo—"

"It's all right; it's settled."

"But, weally—"

"Don't mention it, dear boy," said Kangaroo. "As your guests we're willing you should do everything you can to make us comfy."

"Certainly," said Blake. "I think it is quite right of Gussy to be careful on these points. I should not object, however, to his removing his jacket before we put our feet on him."

"Not at all."

"Oh, no; must be considerate."

"You feahful asses—"

"Eh?"

"You uttah chumps—"

"Good!" said Kangaroo. "I'm making some notes on 'Manners of the Aristocracy,' to take home with me to Birriboola. Lemme see. Is that the way you always talk to your guests, Gussy?"

"Weally, you know—"

"Is it a custom to call guests by other names as well?"

Arthur Augustus turned pink.

"Pway excuse me, deah boys," he said. "I had forgotten for a moment that you were my guests. But, weally—"

"Don't mention it," said Digby. "Now, if you're ready to lie down, I'll lift up my feet, but don't make me keep 'em up a long time."

"You uttah— Ahem! Weally, Dig—"

"It's good for the feet to have something soft to rest them on," said Lowther. "I'll put mine on Gussy's head."

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"Ha, ha, ha!"
 "You feahful— H'm! I will stand, deah boys, and you can have the seats," said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy stiffly.
 The juniors roared.
 "You ass! Stand all the way to Holyhead? Ha, ha, ha!"
 "Undah the circs—"
 "Sit down, fathead!"
 And Tom Merry dragged the swell of St. Jim's into a corner seat.
 "But there are only three seats a-side, deah boy."
 "Can't we squeeze up and make room for four?" demanded Tom Merry.
 "Bai Jove, so we can!"
 "Ha, ha, ha!"
 And Arthur Augustus being thus amicably accommodated, the juniors rested their feet on the floor instead of upon the aristocratic person of the swell of St. Jim's. The train started.
 "We're off!" said Manners. "What time do we get in to Holyhead? Anybody know?"
 "About two o'clock."
 "Well, that's not a bad run," said Manners. "Lucky I've brought my pocket chess with me. Who's going to play?"
 "I wouldn't mind singin' a tenah solo to pass the time, deah boys," said Arthur Augustus modestly.
 Lowther shook his head.
 "Might lead to misunderstandings on the line," he said.
 "Weally, Lowthah, I fail to compwehend."
 "Suppose it was mistaken for a train whistle—"
 "You uttah ass—"
 "Ha, ha, ha!"
 And the juniors started on their journey in great spirits, minus the tenor solo.

CHAPTER 7.

The Sufferings of Fatty Wynn.

FIGGINS & CO. were waiting on the Admiralty Pier at Holyhead when Tom Merry and his comrades arrived. They greeted the arriving juniors with a St. Jim's yell, and they shook hands most heartily all round. They were very glad to see one another again. Fatty Wynn was carrying a large and well-filled bag in his plump hand, and it was not necessary to ask what it contained. The fat Fourth-Former evidently did not intend to risk going hungry on the voyage, though he was running other risks to which the contents of the bag would probably add.
 The juniors walked on to the steamer in a big crowd of passengers, and Fatty Wynn cast a slightly anxious look at the sea.
 It was very calm, and shining in the bright sun.
 "Looks all right," said Tom Merry, with a smile; "but I shouldn't bolt more than enough for four, Fatty."
 Fatty Wynn grunted.
 "The fact is, I'm hungry," he said. "We've been waiting for you chaps a quarter of an hour. I think, upon the whole, that a chap can't do better than lay a solid foundation. What do you think?"
 "Remember the chops of the Channel," grinned Lowther.
 "Well, this isn't the Channel, you know."
 "Two and three-quarter hours before we arrive at Kingstown," said Figgins. "Better be careful, Fatty."
 "The sea looks jolly smooth, Figgins."
 "It won't be quite so smooth out there."
 "Well, it's rather dangerous starting on a voyage hungry," said Fatty Wynn, in an argumentative way. "I shouldn't wonder if that's likely to bring on sea-sickness."
 "Ha, ha, ha!"
 "What do you think, Gussy?"
 "I shall leave it in the saloon, I think."
 "Eh?"
 "And weah a stwaw one on deck."
 "What are you talking about?"
 "My toppah. You see, it might be blown off, and—"
 "Ass!"
 "Weally, Wynn—"
 "I won't have much," said Fatty Wynn, sitting down and opening his bag. "But, as a matter of fact, I ate hardly anything this morning in the hurry of getting off—only a few sausages with the bacon and kidneys, and a few rounds of toast, and a cake or two. And I had a light lunch—only a steak pie and some mutton chops and potatoes and a pudding—so I really think—"
 "Ha, ha, ha!"
 "I'll just have a snack now. A veal pie will last me a bit, with some of the cold sausages, Figgy."
 Figgins chuckled.
 "Got it, Fatty! You'll soon have room for more."
 "Oh, really, Figgy—"
 "We're off!" said Tom Merry. "Hurrah!"
 The steamer was throbbing off from the pier.
 Fatty Wynn disposed of the veal pie very quickly, and some

cold sausages followed it. Then Fatty Wynn glanced at the sea, and was reassured by its smoothness, and started upon a pigeon pie. A cold pudding followed, and by that time Fatty was so interested in his occupation that he forgot all about the sea and its dangers.

The contents of the bag rapidly diminished.
 "You fellows have some?" asked Fatty Wynn hospitably.
 "No fear!"
 "Thanks, no!"
 "Wathah not!"
 "We lunched in the train," explained Kangaroo, "and I think the water is going to be choppy."
 "Oh!" said Fatty Wynn.
 The steamer glided on swiftly over the shining sea.
 Fatty Wynn cast a doubtful look round him; but the water was calm and shining, and he was reassured, and he commenced operations upon a large bag of tarts.
 The other fellows strolled up and down the deck, looking out over the bright sea and chatting cheerfully as they drew further and further away from the shore.
 Fatty Wynn had intended to point out the Welsh mountains to his comrades, but it slipped his memory now. He was busy.
 It was nearly an hour before he joined the chums of St. Jim's, with a somewhat shiny look upon his plump face.
 "Feeling all right?" asked Tom Merry.
 Fatty Wynn nodded.
 "Right as rain," he said.
 "Oh, good! Keep it up."
 "The steamer isn't so steady as she was," said Fatty Wynn.
 "It won't be a rough crossing," said Manners, "but we shall rock a bit. Shall I call to the steward to get a basin ready?"
 "Ow!"
 "Like some nice fat bacon now, Fatty?" asked Monty Lowther.
 "Groo!"
 Fatty Wynn walked hastily away.
 As the middle of the crossing was reached, the steamer certainly had a motion that was decidedly unpleasant, to a fellow who had just lunched not wisely but too well.
 Fatty Wynn walked up and down for a time, and then he returned to his seat and sat very quietly.
 Figgins bore down upon him half an hour later.
 Fatty Wynn looked up pathetically as Figgins halted on the deck in front of him. The fat Fourth-Former's face was strangely pale, and he seemed to be perspiring.
 "When do we get in, Figgy?" he whispered.
 "About another hour," said Figgins encouragingly.
 Fatty Wynn groaned.
 "Sure!" he asked. "Tom Merry said it was less than a three-hour passage from Holyhead to Kingstown."
 "So it is."
 "Well, we've been a jolly lot more than three hours already."
 Figgins grinned.
 "We've been about an hour and a half," he said.
 "Oh!"
 "Feel bad, old man?"
 "Oh, no! I—I think the pigeon-pie was a mistake, though."
 "Don't think about it," said Figgins consolingly. "Think of something else, and it'll pass off. Think of the Horse Show."
 "Blow the Horse Show!"
 "Think of Gussy speaking Irish when he gets to Dublin." But Fatty Wynn hadn't a smile left.
 "Blow Gussy!" he groaned.
 "Think of—of the splendid feed we'll have when we get in," said Figgins, rather unfortunately.
 "Grooh!"
 Fatty Wynn made a desperate rush to the side.
 He returned to his seat, looking white and worn. Figgins brought him a glass of water, but the Falstaff of the New House at St. Jim's waved it feebly aside.
 "Take just a sip, old man!" said Kerr sympathetically.
 Fatty Wynn groaned.
 "Is there anything you would like?"
 "Yes," said Fatty faintly. "I think I should like to die! Oh!"
 "Poor old man!"
 "Groan!"
 "Buck up, Fatty!"
 "Groan!"
 "It'll soon be over, you know. I'll tell you the instant we see the Irish coast."
 "Groan!"
 "Feeling very bad, old chap?"
 "Groan!"
 Fatty Wynn was past the power of speech. He lay back

on the seat, and groaned, careless of everything. Life seemed a burden to Fatty Wynn at that moment, and the greatest boon would have been sudden death. He had wild thoughts of jumping overboard, but he had not the strength to rise from the seat, and he dared not move. Every motion of the ship was a fresh anguish to him.

"You shouldn't have bolted so much, you know," said Figgins. "It was reckless."

The fat junior groaned. "It was the pigeon-pie!" he moaned. "It might have been the sosses, but I think it was the pigeon-pie. Ow!"

The juniors gathered round Fatty Wynn in great sympathy. Two or three other people were feeling quality along the deck, but with the exception of Fatty Wynn the St. Jim's fellows were all right.

"We're in sight of land now, Fatty," said Figgins encouragingly. "Turn your head, old son, and see Dublin Bay as we go in."

Groan!
"Most beautiful bay in the world, you know, Fatty," urged Blake.

Groan! Fatty Wynn did not care for beautiful bays at that moment.

"Soon be on land now, Fatty."
Groan!

"I—I think they ought to be prosecuted for hanging it out like this," said Fatty faintly. "They advertise to do it under three hours, and we've been six or seven."

The juniors grinned.
"We haven't been two and a half yet, Fatty," said Tom Merry.

Groan!
"Buck up!"

Groan!
"Here we are!" exclaimed Figgins at last. "It won't be a few minutes now, Fatty. We're closing up to the pier."

Groan!
When the steamer stopped at the Kingstown Pier at last, Figgins and Kerr took an arm each of Fatty Wynn, and led him ashore. Fatty Wynn did not speak a word until the juniors were seated in the Dublin train. He sat silent during the run from Kingstown to the city, but as the train ran into Westland Row Station he raised his head.

"Feel better, Fatty?" asked Figgins.
"Better?" said Fatty. "I'm all right. I feel hungry."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

CHAPTER 8.

Arthur Augustus Speaks Irish.

REILLY, of the Fourth, was waiting for the party at Westland Row Station. Dublin was blazing in the summer sunshine as the juniors alighted from the train, and Reilly rushed up to them excitedly.

"Arrah, and here you are!" he exclaimed.
"Yaas, wathah, deah boy!"

"You should have come to Belfast," said Reilly. "But sure, ye'll have a ripping time here. Of course, in Belfast—"

Fatty Wynn tapped him on the arm.
"I'm hungry," he said.

Reilly grinned.
"Sure, you needn't tell me that!" he said. "I know that. Faith, and did anybody iver see ye when ye weren't hungry?"

"I've had a rotten time coming over," said Fatty Wynn.

"I'm hungry now. I suppose there are places in Dublin where a chap can feed when he's in danger of dying of starvation?"

"Sure, and that's so; but in Belfast—"

"We ain't in Belfast now," roared Fatty Wynn; "we're in Dublin. Where can I get something to eat?"

"We had bettah get to Conway's hotel," said Arthur Augustus. "My majah will be expectin' us."

"Is it far?" asked Fatty Wynn.

"I weally do not know. Do you know where the Mewwion Hotel is, Weilly?"

"Sure I do. We'd better take a car."

"Better have a snack at some nearer place, then, first," said Fatty Wynn. "Your major can wait for you a bit, Gussy. There's no hurry."

"Weally, Wynn—"

"Let Gussy lead," said Monty Lowther. "He speaks Irish—"

"Phwat!" exclaimed Reilly.

"I've been teaching Gussy Irish," explained Lowther.

"He knows what to say to a chap when he wants to know the way. You lead, Gussy, and let's get out. The bags can be sent on to the hotel."

"Wight-ho, deah boy!"

And the juniors walked out into Westland Row in the bright August sunshine.

Monty Lowther pressed Arthur Augustus's arm, and pointed to a gentleman in decidedly ragged garments who was standing upon the kerb, apparently devoting the whole of his attention to the important business of chewing a straw.

"Ask him to recommend you to a good restaurant, Gussy," whispered Lowther.

"Vewy well. He doesn't look as if he goes to good westauwants, though," said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, rather dubiously.

"Oh, you mustn't judge by appearances in this country," said Lowther airily. "That chap is very likely a peer. You know they have a great love for jokes and japes in Ireland, and he may be a member of the peerage dressed like that for a lark. They do that kind of thing in Lever's novels, you know."

"Bai Jove!"
"Speak to him in Irish, old man. You remember what I told you?"

"Yaas, wathah!"
And Arthur Augustus walked up to the dilapidated gentleman on the kerb, and raised his silk hat gracefully.

"Pway excuse me—" he began.

The man stared.
"Spalpeen gosssoon!" said Arthur Augustus agreeably.

The stranger's look became fixed.
"Spalpeen gosssoon!" repeated D'Arcy, wondering what was the cause of the frightful expression that was over-spreading the stranger's face. "Cruiskeen lawn!"

"Phwat did yez say?" roared the stranger.

Arthur Augustus staggered back.

"Bai Jove! He speaks English!" he ejaculated.

"English, is it?" roared the stranger. "Is it mad ye are, then? Sure, if ye're looking for a black oie, it's Mike Milligan that can oblige ye!"

"My deah man—"
Biff!

The stranger hit out, and Arthur Augustus sat down on the pavement in great surprise.

"Ow! Bai Jove!"
Crunch!

D'Arcy's silk hat had fallen off as he sat down thus abruptly, and the stranger brought down a heavy boot upon it.

The hat crunched up.
"Bai Jove! Ow! Wescue! The man's mad! Yawoooh! Help!"

Tom Merry & Co. shrieking with laughter, rushed up. The stranger glared at them, and swung away, and went on chewing his straw at another corner.

"What on earth did you say to him to make him biff you?" asked Blake.

"Ow!"
"Did you speak to him in Irish?" asked Monty Lowther.

"Gwool! Yaas!"

"What did you say?"

"Only what you told me, deah boy—spalpeen gosssoon—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"
"You uttah ass—"

Reilly shrieked, in great danger of a violent attack of hysterics. Arthur Augustus picked up his ruined topper, and sadly tried to push out the crushed sides, and make it bear some semblance to a hat again.

"It's uttably wuined!" he groaned.

"Never mind! We'll go through Grafton Street, and you can get another," said Tom Merry consolingly.

"I'm jolly well not going to wait while Gussy buys toppers!" roared Fatty Wynn. "Didn't I tell you I was hungry?"

"Yes; I think I heard you mention it!" said Tom Merry, grinning. "Hallo, Gussy! Where are you going?"

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy had pushed back his cuffs in a businesslike manner.

"I am goin' to give that awful wottah a feaful thwashin'!" he exclaimed.

"Hold on—"

"Stop him!"

"Order!"

"I wufuse to ordah—I mean—I am goin' to thwash that feaful boundah! He has stwuck me on the nose—"

"You should have specified which part you wanted to be struck on, if the nose doesn't suit you!" remarked Lowther.

"How was he to know? Be reasonable!"

"Weally, Lowthah—"

"The man's all right!" gasped Reilly. "It's one of the customs of the country, that's all. It's quite a common custom in Dublin."

"Bai Jove! Is it poss.?"

"Quite possible—frequently happens after you greet a man as you greeted that chap," said Reilly faintly. "You

see, you have to be awfully careful in pronouncing our language; it's very important!"

"Vewy well, in that case—"
"Better let him off," said Tom Merry. "And as he's twice as big as you are, it's barely possible that thrashing him wouldn't work out quite satisfactorily. Let's get on this tram and get down to the hotel before Fatty Wynn begins eating one of us."

"I'm hungry—"
"Vewy well. I am vewy much obliged to you for your instructions, Lowthah; but I shall not try to talk any more Irish on this visit!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"
"No; I shouldn't!" said Reilly. "Come on!"
And Arthur Augustus, carrying his battered hat in his hand, allowed himself to be led away, and shortly afterwards the juniors were discussing a solid meal with Lord Conway, Arthur Augustus' elder brother, in the restaurant of the Merrion Hotel—and Fatty Wynn was happy.

CHAPTER 9.

In Dublin.

THIS is something like!"
Fatty Wynn made that remark, as he sat at the table in the restaurant and looked over the well-spread board.

His unhappy experiences on the Irish Sea were forgotten by this time. In fact, the fat Fourth-Former of St. Jim's had an aching void to fill.

Lord Conway smiled.
"Something like!" repeated Fatty Wynn. "Jolly good idea of yours, coming to Dublin, Gussy!"
"You should have come to Belfast!" murmured Reilly.

"Did you have a good crossing?" asked Lord Conway.
"Yaas, wathah!"
"All except Fatty," said Tom Merry. "He suffered a bit. He laid in too many preparations for the voyage."
"Any accidents on board?" asked the viscount, looking very hard at his younger brother's nose, which was red and a little swollen.

"Not on board," grinned Blake. "Gussy had some trouble with a chap in Westland Row, that's all. Gussy goes about looking for trouble, you know."

"Weally, Blake—"
"He called a man names," explained Manners.
"Weally, Mannahs—"
"And the man punched his nose!" grinned Digby.
"Pway don't listen to these widdlewous wemarks, Conway!" said Arthur Augustus, with a severe glance at his humorous chums. "It's all wot, of course! I was simply speakin' in Irish to the chap, and he misunderstood me!"

His elder brother stared at him.
"Speaking in what?" he ejaculated.
"Irish."
"Do you mean to say that you know any Erse?" exclaimed Lord Conway. "And were you ass enough to talk to people in Erse?"

"Weally, Conway, deah boy, I object to bein' called an ass! As I am in Iweland, I natuwallly talk to the people in Irish! When I was in Pawis I talked in Fwrench!"
"And there were some misunderstandings there, too!" grinned Figgins.

"Weally, Figgins—"
"But what on earth did you say to the man?" exclaimed Lord Conway, in astonishment. "What Irish did you use?"

"I said 'Good-afternoon, my deah fellow,' or something to that effect, in Irish."

"But what words did you use?"
"Two Irish words, that Lowther taught me."
"Oh!" said Lord Conway, with a glance at Monty Lowther, who was sedately eating his dinner. He knew the humorist of the St. Jim's Shell. "And what were the words?"

"Spalpeen gossoon!"
"Eh?"
"Spalpeen gossoon!" said D'Arcy. "I hadn't time to say any more; but Lowther's taught me some more words as well."

"Ha, ha, ha!"
"Weally, Conway—"
"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Lord Conway, laughing till the tears ran down his cheeks. "You young ass! Ha, ha, ha!"
Arthur Augustus D'Arcy jammed his eyeglass into his eye, and looked at his elder brother very severely.

"I fail to undahstand the cause of this wibald laughtah!" he said.

"Ha, ha, ha!"
"Weally, Conway, I twust—"
"You young ass!" gasped Conway. "If that's the way

you talk in Irish, you'd better depend on English in the future, especially as it's the language of the country!"

"Bai Jove! Is it? Lowthah said—"
"Ha, ha, ha!"

Arthur Augustus looked at Monty Lowther. The Shell fellow was devoting his attention to the asparagus, and seemed to have no attention left for anything else. D'Arcy tried in vain to catch his eye.

"Lowthah!" he exclaimed.
"Hallo?" said Monty Lowther.
"Were you pullin' my leg when you were teachin' me Irish, you wotah?"

"Eh?"
"I demand whethah you were wottin' when you were teachin' me Irish?" said Arthur Augustus, rising from his seat wrathfully.

Lowther nodded.
"Do you mean to say yaas?" demanded D'Arcy.
"Certainly not!"
"Then what do you mean to say?"
"Yes," said Lowther; "not yaas."
"Ha, ha, ha!"

Arthur Augustus reddened with wrath.
"I am sowwy to have to disturb the harmony of this meetin'," he said, "but I shall have no wesource but to thwash Lowthah. He has taken me in."

"If you make a row, we'll get the waiter to take you out," said Manners.

"I'm going to thwash Lowthah—"
"Sit down, Gussy," said Jack Blake, dragging Arthur Augustus down into his seat.

"Pway welease me, Blake—"
"Do you always thrash your guests, Gussy?" asked Kangaroo. "I will make a note of that, if that is another custom of this country."
"Lowthah is not my guest now. He is Conway's guest—"

"It's all in the family," urged Blake. "Besides, think of his uncle."

"His uncle!"
"Yes," said Blake solemnly. "His uncle."
"You uttah ass! What has his uncle got to do with it?" exclaimed D'Arcy.

"Why, if you start on Lowther, you mayn't leave a whole bone in him, or even a speck of grease to mark the spot! You know what a fearful fellow you are when you get going. Are you prepared to bring down Lowther's uncle's whiskers in sorrow to the grave?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"
"I weward you as a silly ass, Blake—"
"You can regard me as your twin brother if you like," said Blake affably, "only sit down, and be quiet."

"Order!" said Lord Conway, laughing. "Arthur, please be quiet. We don't want the hotel manager to come and complain of disorderly conduct at this table."

"Bai Jove!"
That awful thought made the swell of St. Jim's sit down immediately.

And the fearful thrashing was not bestowed upon the humorist of the Shell.

CHAPTER 10.

A Walk Round Dublin.

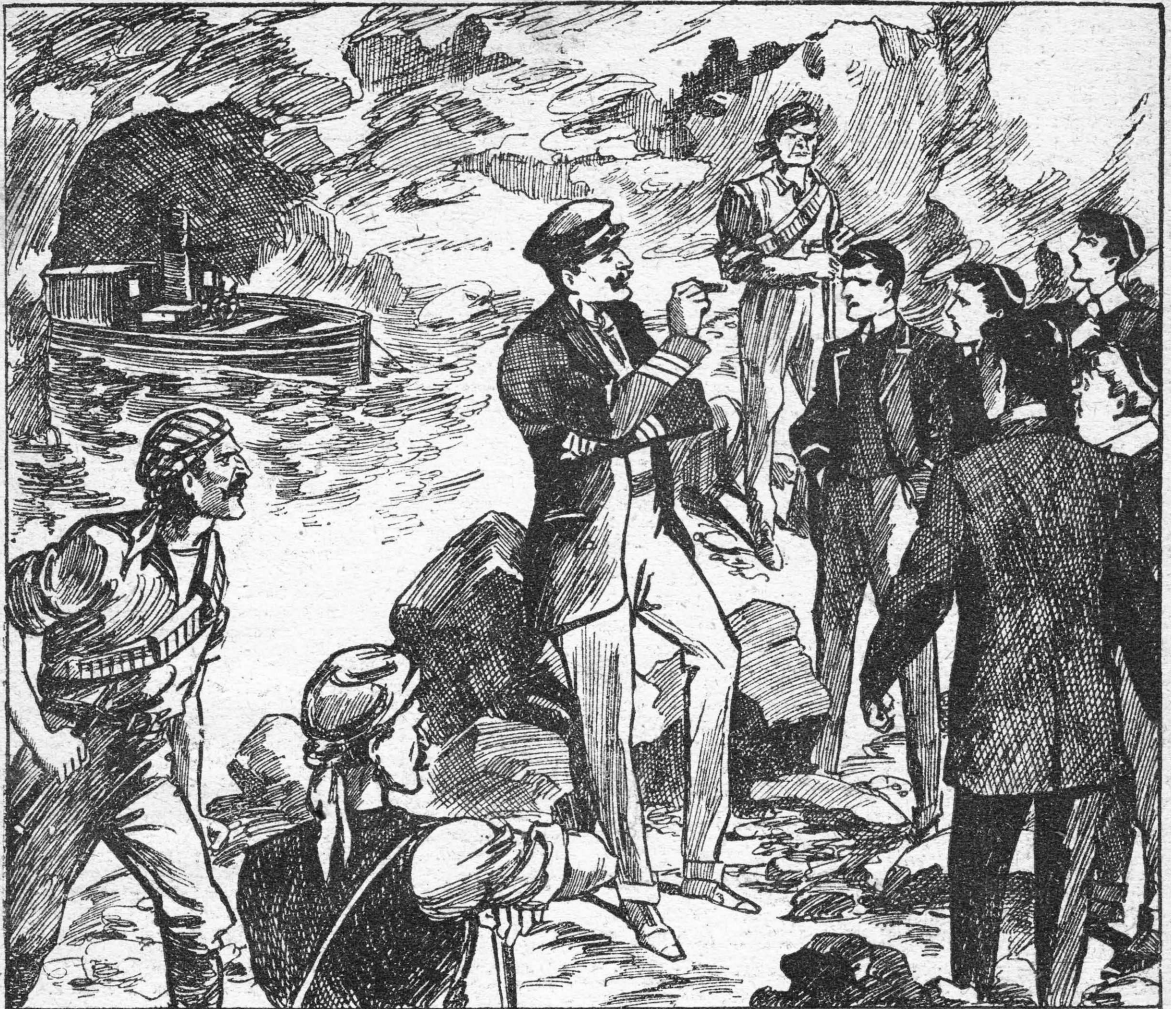
THE next day Tom Merry & Co. went out to see Dublin. Lord Conway had arranged comfortable quarters for them at the hotel, and done all he could for their comfort, and after that he left them to themselves—a proceeding which was, naturally, very agreeable to the juniors of St. Jim's. They did not need to be taken round like a Cook's conducted party; besides, they had Reilly with them, and Reilly had lived in Dublin, and knew the city well. True, Reilly's chief topic was the wonderful superiority of Belfast, but he was a very good guide all the same. And he devoted himself to showing the St. Jim's juniors as much as possible in the time they had at their disposal.

The juniors turned out of bed early, and after breakfast Arthur Augustus called them together in the vestibule of the hotel. The swell of St. Jim's had a somewhat anxious expression upon his face—a great deal like a hen counting her chickens.

"Now then, deah boys, are you weady?"
"Ready—ay, ready!" said Kerr solemnly.
"Pway don't get lost or anythin' when I take you out—"
"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Keep with me, and don't make me keep lookin' wound for you," said Arthur Augustus.

"All right, father!" said Blake.
"Weally, Blake—"
"Buck up, daddy; we're waiting!"
"You uttah ass—"



"What are we kidnapped for?" shouted Wingate furiously. "I want labour!" exclaimed Captain Firebrace. "I'm searching for something in this cavern, and the whole place has to be dug from end to end. You have to do it!" (The above incident is taken from the splendid, long, complete tale of Harry Wharton & Co., entitled: "THE KIDNAPPED SCHOOL!" which is contained in our popular companion paper "THE MAGNET" LIBRARY. Now on Sale. Price One Penny.)

"Mustn't call your little boys names," said Monty Lowther. "Lead the way, granny!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Arthur Augustus sniffed, and led the way.

"Sure, and who's guide?" asked Reilly.

"You can point out the places of interest, deah boy," said D'Arcy; "but I wegard myself as bein' wespensible for the party."

Reilly chuckled.

"Lead on, then," he said.

Arthur Augustus led on.

In a few minutes they found themselves looking at St. Stephen's Green, and D'Arcy turned to the Irish junior for information.

"Zoological Gardens," explained Reilly airily.

D'Arcy turned his eyeglass carefully upon the green.

"Bai Jove! I don't see any animals," he said. "Where are they kept?"

"Running about loose," said Reilly cheerfully. "There's one of them lying in the grass now on the other side of that shrubbery."

"Is there weally?"

"Yes. Creep through the shrubs there, and give a shout, and you'll see him jump up."

"Bai Jove!"

"Give a regular yell, and watch the result."

"Wight-ho!"

Arthur Augustus stooped and crept through the shrubbery. The St. Jim's juniors waited and watched. Arthur Augustus disappeared from sight for a moment, and then suddenly there was a yell.

"Yawwoh!"

The animal on the other side of the shrubs jumped up, but it turned out to be a biped of the human variety—a somewhat dilapidated tramp, who was taking his early siesta on the grass. He was surprised and startled by the sudden yell behind him, and he jumped up in alarm.

"Pwhat!" he ejaculated.

"Bai Jove!"

Arthur Augustus stared at him blankly.

The tramp stared at Arthur Augustus.

"You young idiot!" he said.

"Weally—"

"What did you yell at me for loike that, then?"

"Bai Jove!"

"Is it mad you are?"

"I—I beg your pardon," gasped D'Arcy. "I weally beg to apologise, my deah sir. I—I was undah a misappwehension. Bai Jove!"

The tramp glared at him, and then his expression changed. He held out a dirty hand, and the swell of St. Jim's willingly dropped a shilling into it, and retreated through the shrubs. He fixed a look of deep reproach upon Reilly.

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NEXT THURSDAY: "STAGE STRUCK!" A Splendid, New, Long, Complete School Tale of the Chums of St. Jim's. By MARTIN CLIFFORD.

"Well?" said the Belfast boy innocently. "Have ye seen the animal jump up?"

"You uttah wottah!"

"Perhaps you didn't yell loud enough," suggested Blake. "Go in again."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I wefuse to do anythin' of the sort. I wefuse to ask Weilly for any furthah information. I don't believe this place is the Zoological Gardens at all."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It's St. Stephen's Green," said Tom Merry, laughing. "Don't you think it's time you gave up leading, and let Reilly take the lead, Gussy?"

"Certainly not!"

"But you don't know the place, you know."

"I am willing to weevie information from Weilly, but I wegard myself as being responsible for the partay," said D'Arcy. "I cannot delegate my dutays to Weilly."

"Faith, and I——"

"Pway say no more, deah boy. I am in charge of the partay, and I will show you wound. Follow me."

The juniors grinned to one another, and followed Arthur Augustus.

As the swell of St. Jim's had never been in Dublin before, and as he had not even provided himself with a plan of the city, he was certainly not exactly the fellow to be guide, but the juniors followed him cheerfully. It was a beautiful summer's day, and Dublin was looking bright and cheerful, with its good-humoured crowds in the streets, and Tom Merry & Co. did not mind what direction they went in.

"I'll show you chaps College Gween first," said D'Arcy. "I've heard a lot about College Gween. It's a vewy celebrated spot."

"Go ahead!"

"I shall have to ask for diwections."

"Ask in Irish, mind," said Monty Lowther.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I wefuse to do anythin' of the sort."

Arthur Augustus paused, and raised his straw hat to a gentleman who was passing. The swell of St. Jim's was wearing a straw, not because the weather was hot, but because he had not yet had an opportunity of purchasing a new topper.

"Pway excuse me," said D'Arcy. "Can you diweet me to College Gween?"

The gentleman smiled.

"Certainly," he said. "Pass the Wolfe Tone Memorial yonder, go up Grafton Street, and there you are."

"Thank you vewy much, sir."

And Arthur Augustus raised his hat again, and turned back to his friends.

"Come on, deah boys! By the way, as we go through Grafton Street, I will stop and get a toppah. Somebody told me that Grafton Street is the great shoppin' street in Dublin, and I shall be able to get a fashionable toppah there."

"We didn't come out to buy toppers," Blake remarked.

"Weally, Blake——"

"We'll give him five minutes," said Tom Merry generously.

"Weally, Tom Mewwy——"

"Lead on," said Figgins. "If we've come out to buy toppers, we may as well get it over. Here's the half-tone memorial."

"The Wolfe Tone Memowial, you ass!"

"My mistake," said Figgins blandly. "I've done that. Come on!"

And the juniors turned into Grafton Street.

In that handsome and busy street, Arthur Augustus was at no loss to discover a fashionable hatter's.

He halted at the first he came to.

"Come in, deah boys," he said. "I should like your advice, you know. I have been told that they make the bwims a little widah here, and I shall have to be careful."

And the juniors, all of them looking as solemn as owls, entered the hatter's to back up the swell of St. Jim's in that most important undertaking

CHAPTER 11.

A Very Important Purchase.

"YES, sir!"

The attendant who came to serve Arthur Augustus did not speak in Irish. In fact, he had an accent which smacked very strongly of London. Perhaps he was not a native.

"I want a new hat," D'Arcy explained.

"Size eight," said Lowther.

Arthur Augustus looked at him.

"What do you mean, Lowthah? I do not take eights."

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"But you will," explained Lowther, "when you've guided us round Dublin, you'll be suffering from swelled head, and it's a good idea to allow for it."

"You uttah ass!"

"Well, I'm only trying to save you money," said Lowther resignedly. "It isn't really much good a chap trying to help you, Gussy."

"Pway wing off, Lowthah, and don't be funna. Pway show me some hats, deah boy; I am wathah particulah about the bwims."

"Yessir. Latest thing in brims, sir—quite the latest."

Arthur Augustus's aristocratic face beamed with an innocent pleasure as topper after topper was taken out of its bandbox for his inspection.

He tried them on, in turn before a cheval glass, surveying the effect under every possible aspect.

The juniors of St. Jim's waited.

They stood first upon one foot and then upon another, and grunted.

But the swell of the school was not to be hurried. He might have been hurried in other matters, but in selecting a silk topper or a fancy waistcoat, never. There are some occasions which call for leisurely care. This was one of them.

"What do you think of that, deah boys?" asked Arthur Augustus, turning round with the sixth or seventh topper on his head.

"Ripping!" said Tom Merry.

"Splendid!"

"First chop!"

"Come on!"

"Time's getting on!"

Arthur Augustus shook his head.

"You weally don't seem to take a pwopah intwest in the mattah!" he said. "You can wan on if you like, only mind you don't get lost."

Tom Merry grunted.

"You'll get lost if we lose sight of you, you young ass," he growled.

"Weally, Tom Mewwy——"

"Oh, buck up with the topper, and come on," said Keffy.

"I'm getting a bit peckish," said Fatty Wynn. "I thought at the time I hardly had enough for breakfast. I'm always too moderate, that's what it is."

D'Arcy handed the hat back to the polite attendant, and tried another and another. The juniors yawned portentously. Blake suggested removing the swell of the Fourth forcibly from the shop.

"I weally think this one will do," said Arthur Augustus, at last; "the bwim is just flat enough, and the cowwect width within a fwaction. Pway what is the pwice of this hat?"

"Twenty-five shillings, sir."

"Bai Jove! I genevally give a guinea," said D'Arcy. "However, I dare say silk hats are dearah in Dublin. My majah only gives twenty-five."

The attendant smiled deprecatingly, listening with great politeness to D'Arcy's confidences concerning his major. Arthur Augustus had a really winning habit of confiding his affairs to everybody, as it were, taking it for granted that they were deeply interested, and, indeed, that they knew all about them.

"Let's have a look at that topper, Gussy," said Monty Lowther, as the attendant departed to change a five-pound-note for the swell of St. Jim's.

"Certainly, deah boy."

Monty Lowther took the topper and examined it with a care that was very flattering, and showed that he was properly impressed with the importance of the matter.

He carried it nearer to the shop door, and examined it there, with his back turned to the swell of St. Jim's.

Out of sight of the unsuspecting Arthur Augustus, the Shell fellow proceeded to carry out a little scheme, with the concoction of which he had filled up some of the time spent in waiting for D'Arcy.

The humorist of the Shell had borrowed a little inkpot of red ink from the cash desk, where he had perceived it.

With his back towards D'Arcy, and at some distance from the swell of St. Jim's, he loosened the lining-band inside the hat, and poured ink there with a liberal hand.

Then he put the leather lining back in its place.

There was no sign of the ink to be seen.

But when the heat imparted to the lining by the hat being worn had its effect, the red ink would work through, and then——

What would happen then was not Monty Lowther's business. But he thought it probable that Arthur Augustus D'Arcy would not keep him waiting three-quarters of an hour in a stuffy shop again, while he purchased a silk topper.

"Thank you," said Arthur Augustus, taking his change, and shoving it into his trousers' pocket without counting it.

"Now, Lowthah, I will have my hat."

"Here you are, old son."

GET YOUR FRIEND TO BECOME A "GEMITE"!

"Thanks, deah boy."

Arthur Augustus put the topper on before the glass, and was pleased. The obliging attendant promised to send the straw hat to the hotel; and the St. Jim's juniors quitted the shop.

"This way, deah boys," said Arthur Augustus, starting down the street.

The juniors smiled.

Arthur Augustus had turned in the wrong direction on leaving the shop, and was starting back the way they had come. As he was leader of the party, however, no one made any remark, but they followed him patiently.

The swell of St. Jim's led the way till he came to the corner of Grafton Street, and turned and caught sight of the Wolfe Tone memorial.

Then he halted.

"Bai Jove!" he exclaimed.

"Anything wrong?" asked Tom Merry.

"Oh, no! But it is vewy wemarkable," said Arthur Augustus, with an exceedingly puzzled expression.

"Lost your way?"

"Certainly not."

"Taken the wrong direction, eh?"

"Not at all, deah boy. I was only surprised to see another memowial to Wolfe Tone, exactly like the first one we saw."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I fail to see anythin' to laugh at, deah boys. There is not the slightest diffevence, so fah as I can see, between this memowial and the othah memowial."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Weally, you fellows——"

"It's the same thing!" shrieked Reilly.

"Wats!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Arthur Augustus adjusted his eyeglass very carefully, and took a very careful survey of the memorial, and then looked at his yelling chums.

"It is certainly wemarkably like," he said. "But how can it possibly be the same thing, when it's in a diffevent place?"

"Ass! It's in the same place!"

"I wefuse to be called an ass! And the othah one was at the corner of St. Stephen's Green!"

"That's St. Stephen's Green, under your nose."

"Nothin' of the sort. We've been walkin' away fwom it."

"Yes, ass, until we came out of the shop!" yelled Kerr; "then you started walking back towards it, and we followed you."

"Bai Jove!"

"About time somebody else took the lead, I should think," grinned Figgins.

"Wats! Pway follow me," said Arthur Augustus, leading the way up Grafton Street again. "I wegard it as a good ideah to have a second look at a famous memowial. Come on."

And the juniors followed him, chuckling.

After having been prevented forcibly from entering a shop in search of neckties, and another that had a tempting display of fancy waistcoats, Arthur Augustus D'Arcy succeeded in leading his flock right through Grafton Street, as far as Trinity College.

There he paused.

"Well, where's College Green?" asked Blake, with a grin.

"The chap I asked said it was here."

"Point it out, then—you're guide."

"Where is it, Gussy?"

"Pway wait a moment. I will ask this policeman. Pway, officah, can you diwect me to College Gween?"

"Shure and I can," said the officer, in the deep and rolling accent of Tipperary. "Shure you are lookin' at it now, and ye've but to cross the r-road."

"Thank you vewy much."

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy & Co. crossed the road.

They found themselves staring at the Bank of Ireland, but so far as they could see there was no trace of College Green.

Arthur Augustus looked round him in surprise. Again he had recourse to a policeman.

"Pway can you tell me where College Gween is?" he asked.

"Here!" said the policeman, and walked on.

"Bai Jove!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Reilly.

"I see nothin' whatevah to laugh at, Weilly. I am afwaid those chaps are takin' me in. I do not see College Gween."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Pewwaps we'd better leave College Gween ovah for a bit," said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy hurriedly. "Let's get back to lunch."

"That's a jolly good idea!" said Fatty Wynn.

"Hear, hear!"

And they walked on, grinning, after Arthur Augustus

D'Arcy. From Reilly's remarks to the other fellows, Arthur Augustus gradually learned that College Green was no longer the green of olden time, having gone the way of most greens that are encompassed about by a growing and prosperous city. But the swell of St. Jim's did not seem to hear. He walked on, with his nose very high, still leading the way.

CHAPTER 12.

Follow My Leader.

THE day was warm, and walking made it warmer. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy was not surprised to feel a certain degree of dampness upon his forehead—and, indeed, once or twice he regretted that he had not stuck to the straw hat and left the topper to be sent to the hotel. He felt dampness trickling down his face at times; but he attributed it to perspiration, and took no other heed of it. He was quite unconscious of the fact that a thin crimson rivulet had trickled over his left ear, and that another was circling round his right eyebrow. The red ink was beginning to work.

"Sure you're on the right road, Gussy?" asked Blake, after some time.

The juniors had walked up Westmoreland Street, and were in sight of the bridge over the Liffey.

"Yaas, that's all wight. No good goin' back exactly the way we came, you know," said Arthur Augustus. "Bettah have a walk wound."

"Yes, but——"

"You twust to me, deah boy."

"I'm hungry," remarked Fatty Wynn.

"You always are, deah boy. Never mind that."

"Look here——" began the fat Fourth-Former wrathfully.

"Pway follow me."

"Where are we going?"

"To the Mewwion Hotel. Conway is comin' back to lunch, and we shall get in about the wight time."

"How do you know the hotel's in this direction?" demanded Fatty Wynn.

"Pway leave that to me."

"But look here——"

"This way, deah boys!"

Arthur Augustus had arrived at the bridge over the River Liffey now—O'Connell Bridge, which gave access to the celebrated Sackville Street on the northern bank. The swell of St. Jim's was in reality a little bothered, for he had not seen the river before; but as he had constituted himself leader he would not admit that he was afraid he was going wide of the mark.

"Bettah get a new woute back, and see somethin' of the place," he remarked.

"We didn't cross the river coming out," said Digby.

"All the more reason why we should cwoss it goin' back, if we want to see somethin' of the town, deah boy."

That was unanswerable.

The juniors followed Arthur Augustus, and he led them across the handsome bridge into Sackville Street.

"Which way now?" asked Tom Merry, grinning.

"Wight on, deah boy!" said Arthur Augustus, without hesitation.

It is said that he who hesitates is lost. Arthur Augustus did not hesitate; but he was certainly lost, all the same.

But it would never do for a leader to appear uncertain before his followers.

The swell of St. Jim's walked onward with erect head and firm steps.

The streaks of crimson on his countenance, which were now increasing in volume, attracted some curious glances from passers-by, and some smiles.

But Arthur Augustus was too much occupied in trying to think out the way, without betraying to his followers that he was lost, to notice it.

Right up the great wide street Arthur Augustus marched and arrived at Rutland Square, where the Rotunda faced them.

The juniors paused to look at the building.

"Have you brought us here to see a concert?" asked Tom Merry, glancing at a notice outside the Rotunda.

"I dare say that's a famous buildin', deah boy; and it's a good ideah to see it."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Come on!"

"Whither bound?" asked Monty Lowther.

"Pway follow me, and don't bothah me with questions, Lowthah. I can't guide a partay about a city and answah questions at the same time."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I'm hungry," said Fatty Wynn.

"Well, be hungwy quietly, for goodness' sake!" said Arthur Augustus.

"Why, you ass——"

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NEXT THURSDAY: "STAGE STRUCK!"

"You can get some toffee here," said Blake, pausing. "Let's buy Fatty some toffee, and shut him up with it."
 "Well, that's not a bad idea," said Fatty Wynn. "I'm ready for lunch, but toffee's better than nothing. I had a very light breakfast—only ham and eggs and bacon and a few sausages and a pie, besides the toast and sardines and prawns—"

"Here's some toffee! Chew it and be quiet!"
 "Thanks!"
 Fatty Wynn's cheek bulged out with a chunk of toffee in it as the party walked on, and he looked more contented. Arthur Augustus was still leading without hesitation. He led up one street, and down another, and round about, the juniors waiting with exemplary patience for him to confess himself lost.

But it was pretty certain that the swell of St. Jim's would not make that confession until the last possible moment. The St. Jim's juniors found themselves in Beresford Place presently, and they followed Arthur Augustus along the Custom House Quay.

Then D'Arcy sighted a bridge, and led the way to it. At all events, he was now able to get back across the Liffey. They crossed the river once more; and D'Arcy, feeling that he had to keep his back to the river to get back to the original starting-place, marched on southwards.

The juniors had covered many miles now, and they were getting tired; but they resolved to see it through. Arthur Augustus led them on at a slackening pace.

The smiles of the passers-by at his crimson countenance began to attract his attention now, and he attributed the smiles to the fact that he was a stranger in the town who had apparently lost his way.

This supposition made him walk on with his aristocratic nose higher than ever.

"Bai Jove, it's warm!" he said.
 "Yes, warmish," said Monty Lowther. "By the way, it's past lunch-time, too."
 "I twust you are not goin' to begin wowyin' about gwub, as well as Fatty Wynn, Lowthah?" said Arthur Augustus.

Monty Lowther chuckled.
 "Not at all, old fellow! But I should like to know where we're going!"

"We are goin' back to the hotel."
 "Where is the hotel?"
 "I'm leadin' you there."
 "Lead on, Macduff!" said Manners.

"Bai Jove, I feel quite wet with perspiration, you know!" said Arthur Augustus, drawing a handkerchief out and mopping his face.

Then he uttered a sharp exclamation:
 "Gweat Scott!"
 "What's the matter?" demanded the juniors.
 "Bai Jove! Look at that!"

Arthur Augustus held up the handkerchief for inspection. It was stained with red.

The swell of St. Jim's was looking amazed and alarmed.
 "Am I bleeding anywhere, deah boys?" he asked.
 "Can't see any cut," said Lowther.
 "But look at my handkerchief—it's all wed!"
 "Well, your face would naturally be red in this heat," said Lowther.

"You uttah ass! The wed-ness cannot wub off a wed face on to a handkerchief when a chap gets wed walking."

"Well, it has done it," said Lowther. "This is a remarkable case. It has happened. There's the red on your handkerchief to prove it."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I must somehow have got some wed ink on my face—unless my nose is bleedin' without my knowin' it."

"Do you feel a pain anywhere?"

"Not at all, deah boy."
 "Well, lead on; we can't stop to have the wounded attended to when we're marching home to lunch," said Figgins.
 "Wenly Figgins—Gweat Scott!"

Arthur Augustus dabbed his face again, and the handkerchief came away redder than ever.

The swell of St. Jim's was alarmed. The other fellows

chuckled hysterically. Arthur Augustus had rubbed the ink all over his face by this time, and his countenance was glowing with crimson.

People stopped in the street to contemplate his flaming countenance.

"Bai Jove!" said Arthur Augustus, in dismay. "I—I think I had better see a doctah!"
 He removed his hat to wipe his brow.

A stream of red oozed from under the lining of the hat over his hand.

Arthur Augustus gazed at it in blank amazement. He looked at the thick, red smudge in the hat, and then at his hand, and then at the handkerchief.

Then he understood.
 "What an extwaordinawy thing!" he gasped. "There is wed ink in my hat!"
 "Impossible!" said Monty Lowther gravely.
 "Yaas. Look."

"Extraordinary!"
 "Amazing!"
 "What did you put it there for, Gussy?"
 Arthur Augustus glared.

"You ass! I did not put it there!"
 "How did it get there, then?" asked Monty Lowther sceptically.

"I weally do not know, unless the hattah put it there as a pwactical joke."

"Must have been as mad as a hatter if he did," said Lowther.

"Ha, ha, ha!"
 "It is no laughin' mattah, deah boys," said D'Arcy distressfully. "I weally feel howwid, and I feel that this looks simply wicidulous."

"Quite so!" agreed Blake. "It does."
 "Ha, ha, ha!"
 "I weally must have a wash. I wish I knew the way to the hotel—"

"You do know the way, don't you?" exclaimed Tom Merry, in great astonishment. "Why, you've been guiding us all this time!"

"Ahem! You see, I could find it if I had time; but—"
 Reilly chuckled.

"Shall I guide you?" he asked.
 Arthur Augustus hesitated for a moment. Then he replied, with an effort:
 "Yaas, please."

"Good! Come on!"
 Reilly led the way down a short turning, and they stood in front of the Merrion Hotel.

They had been three minutes from it when D'Arcy halted, though, if he had led them onwards, the juniors would have left it further and further behind. Arthur Augustus gazed at the hotel in great surprise for a moment, and then nodded with satisfaction.

"You see, I had weally bwrought you back, aftah all, deah boys!" he remarked.

"Well, my hat! You were going to the Circular Road!" exclaimed Reilly indignantly.
 "Here we are, deah boys!" said D'Arcy, apparently not heeding. "Come in, and I'll get a wash, and we can have lunch."

And they entered the hotel.
CHAPTER 13.
Surprising.

LORD CONWAY was standing in the wide vestibule of the hotel, waiting for the juniors to come in. It was considerably past the time fixed for lunch, and Lord Conway had lunched himself and was smoking a cigarette afterwards. He glanced at the juniors with a smile as they came in.

"Did you go a little too far?" he asked. "Had a nice walk?"
 "Faith, and it was ripping!" said Reilly

"First rate, sir!"
 "Oh, good! I—" Lord Conway stopped as he caught sight of his young brother's face. "Good heavens! What has happened, Arthur?"

"Nothin', deah boy."
 "Have you been in an accident?" exclaimed the viscount anxiously.

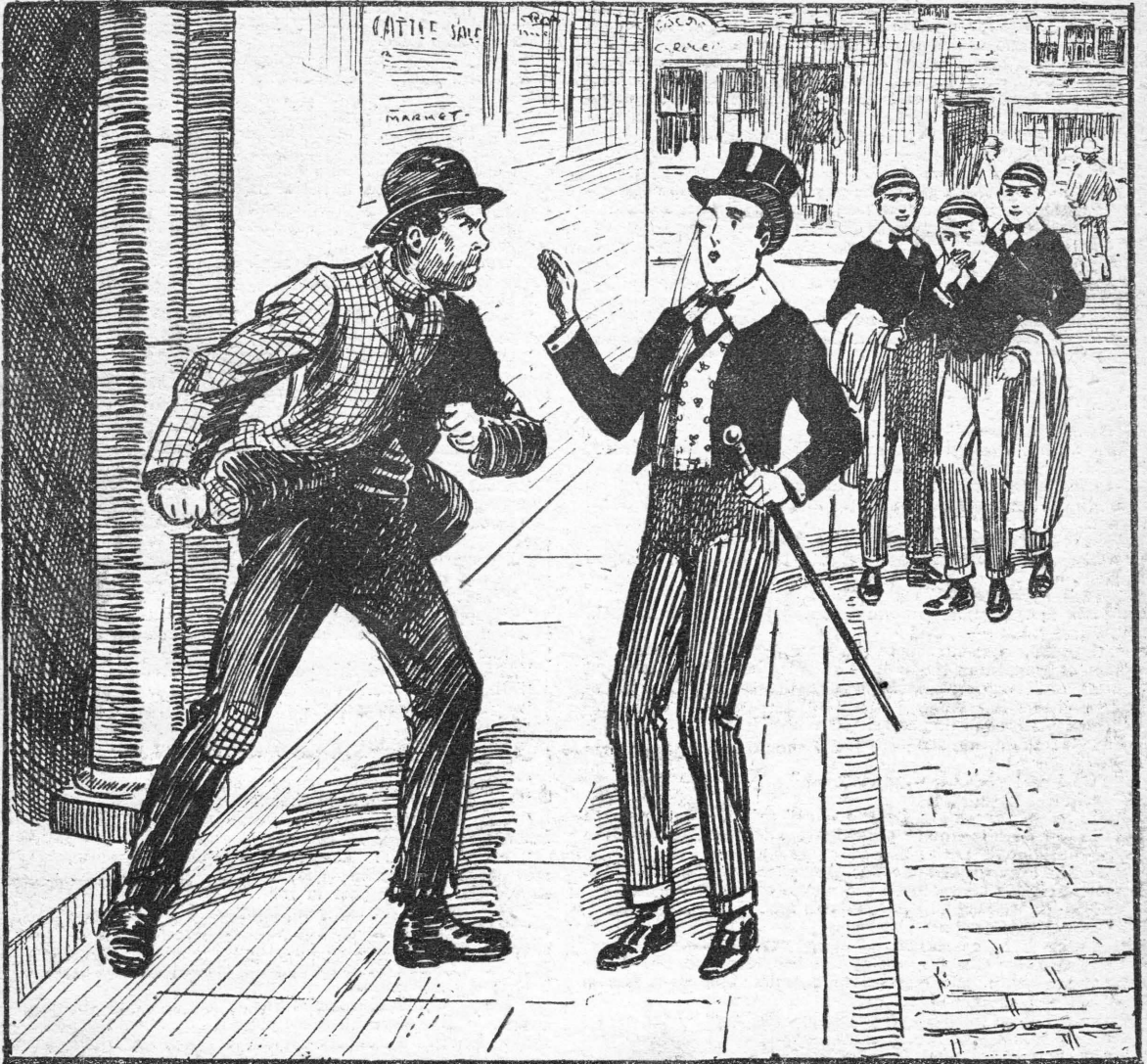
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"Spalpeen, gossoon, said Arthur Augustus agreeably, wondering what was the cause of the frightful expression that was overspreading the stranger's face. "Cruiskeen lawn!" "Phwat did ye say?" roared the stranger, "Sure, if ye're looking for a black oie, it's Mike Milligan that can oblige ye!" (See Chap. 8.)

"Wathah not!"
 "How did your face get like that? Are you bleeding?"
 "Not at all, deah boy."
 "Then what is it?"
 "Wed ink."
 Lord Conway stared at his brother, as well he might.
 "Red ink!" he repeated.
 "Yaas, wathah!"
 "Do you mean to say that you have been about with that red ink on your face?"
 "Yaas."
 "What for?"
 "Ha, ha, ha!" roared Blake. "What for, Gussy?"
 "Weally, Conway, I twust you do not think that I did it on purpose?" said Arthur Augustus, exasperated. "There is wed ink undah the linin' of my toppah. I bought it at a shop in Gwaffon Stweet, and the hattah must have done this for a lark."
 "Impossible!"
 "Weally, you know——"
 "I suppose this is a jape?" said Lord Conway, half frowning and half laughing. "I am sure the hatter would not have done it!"
 "Then I uttably fail to see how it could have been done, as I have been weahin' the hat evah since I bought it," said D'Arcy. "It fits me vewy well. As fah as fit goes, you can buy a toppah in Dublin quite as easily as in London. Did you notice any wed ink about it when you examined it just before I put it on, Lowthah?"

"Oh!" exclaimed Lord Conway, laughing. "Lowther examined it just before you put it on, did he?"
 "Yaas, wathah!"
 "Then I don't think I should complain to the hatter. You had better go and get a wash now," said the viscount, laughing.
 A light broke upon the mind of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. He jammed his monocle into his eye, and turned a fierce, accusing look upon the humorist of the Shell.
 "Lowther, you ass, did you put the wed ink in my hat?"
 "Ha, ha, ha!" roared Lowther, unable to contain himself any longer. "Oh, my only Aunt Maria! Ha, ha, ha!"
 "Bai Jove! You feahful wottah!"
 "Ha, ha, ha!"
 "I'll give you a feahful thwashin'——"
 "Order, Gussy!" said Tom Merry, laughing. "You'll get chucked out, you know!"
 "I am goin' to thwash Lowthah——"
 "Order!"
 Lord Conway jerked D'Arcy back as he was rushing at the humorist of the Shell.
 "Be quiet, Arthur!"
 "Weally, Conway——"
 "You had better go and get your face washed."
 "Undah the circs——"
 "Under the circumstances, go and get that red ink washed off your face, and you had better have your hat cleaned, too."
 * Arthur Augustus ascended the broad, palm-shaded stair.

case of the hotel, and sought his room. But Arthur Augustus had no memory for numbers, and the morning's adventures had been a little exciting, and the hotel was enormous. He had to inquire, and meeting a waiter coming downstairs with a tray laden with glasses, he stopped to inquire. The waiter was well-laden, and he was picking his way down very carefully, when Arthur Augustus spoke to him and made him look up from the tray he was carrying.

"Pway, can you tell me—"
"Oh!" gasped the waiter.
One wild, frightened glance he gave at the crimson countenance just before him, and the tray went down with a crash.

"Crash! Clang! Smash!"
"Oh! Help!"
"Bai Jove!"
"Take it away!"
"You uttah ass!"

A chambermaid ran out of a room at the smash, and at the sight of D'Arcy's blazing countenance she shrieked and staggered against the wall.

"Oh! Help! It's the devil himself! Help!"
"Weally, you know—"
"Oh! Ow!"
"Gweat Scott—"

The waiter, eyeing Arthur Augustus with evident dread, backed up the stairs, not daring to pass him. There was an angry exclamation as the hotel manager came prancing up from the lower staircase—a resplendent gentleman, of dubal aspect.

"What! Patrick, what does this mean—hey?"
"Shure, and it was the freight, yer hanner!" gasped Patrick.

"What nonsense! What—"
"Look at the young jintleman, sir!" gasped poor Patrick.
"What—what— Oh!"

Arthur Augustus turned to the manager to explain. The fat gentleman threw his hands forward, as if to ward him off, and staggered backwards, and crashed into a palm-stand and sent it reeling.

"Good heavens!" he gasped. "What is it? What frightful Red Indian has got into my hotel? Help! Boots! Police!"

"Bai Jove! It's all wight, sir—"
"Help!"

"Shure, it gave me a freight, sir!" said the unfortunate Patrick. "And the good glasses are all broke, sir, for the young jintleman's trick!"

"Twick!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus indignantly. "It is not a twick! I have been the victim of a twick myself!"
"It is—ah!—human!" gasped the manager.

Arthur Augustus glared at him.
"Human!" he ejaculated. "Why, you uttah ass—"

Lord Conway stepped out of the lift. He had heard the crash from below, and guessed that Arthur Augustus was in trouble. He proceeded to pacify the manager.

It was not a difficult task for his lordship. And as all breakages would go down in Lord Conway's bill, the manager was easily pacified, and he even smiled at the absurd joke that had been played upon Arthur Augustus.

Poor Patrick gathered up the fragments of glass, as the fat manager retired placated. Arthur Augustus tapped him on the shoulder.

Patrick shuddered as he looked up.
"Shure, and don't luke at me like that, sir," he implored, "it gives me the 'orrers yet!"

"Weally, my deah fellow—"
"Faith, and ye don't know how ye look!" said the waiter.
"Pway guide me to my woom," said Arthur Augustus pathetically, "I want to get a wash. I forget the numbah, but it's next to Lord Conway's."

"Faith, and it's me that will do it, sir!" said the waiter.
And he guided D'Arcy to his room, and retired with a half-crown in his hand, much to his surprise. And Arthur Augustus enjoyed a much-needed wash; but wash as hard as he would, there was still a suspicious redness about his aristocratic countenance as he descended to lunch.

CHAPTER 14.

Trouble on the Tram.

"HORSE SHOW to-day!" said Tom Merry cheerfully, the next morning, as the juniors sat down to breakfast.

"Yaas, wathah!" said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, "I suppose you fellows won't mind comin' wound with me first to get a new topper."

"Not if you'll come round with me to get some red ink," said Lowther.

"Weally, Lowthah—"
"Pass the kidneys," said Fatty Wynn, "I've been waiting
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nearly a minute for you, Blake. I say, I'm hungry. I think this must be a very healthy place. I know I've got a jolly good appetite here."

"Every place you live in must be a jolly healthy place, then," said Kerr. "You aren't exactly off your feed at St. Jim's."

"And the grub's good," said Fatty Wynn, unheeding. "Upon the whole, I like Dublin. I shall always remember the grub at this hotel as long as I live."

"Faith, but you should have seen Belfast!" said Reilly. "Kidney and bacon better than this at Belfast?" asked Fatty Wynn, with great interest.

"Faith, everything's top notch. And the eggs and butter—"

"We might go round through Belfast to get home," said Fatty Wynn thoughtfully.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Is Gussy going to take the lead to-day?" asked Kangaroo.

"Weally, Kangy—"

"Oh, I don't mind," said Kangaroo cheerfully, "the Horse Show lasts long enough for us to see it, even if you lead us to Phoenix Park by mistake this time!"

"Upon the whole, I shall welinquish the leadahship to Weilly," said D'Arcy, "as he knows the place, he is weally more qualified in some wespects to be guide—"

"Go hon!"

"I shall, howevah, keep a supewintendin' eye on the aw-gagements."

"Good!" said Lowther. "Which is your superintending eye?"

"I weward you as an ass, Lowthah. How are we goin' to get to the Horse Show, Weilly? Conway has gone out."

"Tram!" said Reilly.

"I suppose we could have taxicabs, couldn't we?" asked D'Arcy. "They are weally more comfortable than twams, you know."

"Who's leader of this party?" asked Reilly.

"Oh, weally, Weilly—"

"Splendid tramway service here," said Reilly. "Not up to Belfast, of course; but ripping. We shall get to Balls Bridge in next to no time."

"What are we goin' to Balls Bwidge for, Weilly?"

"Horse Show, ass!"

"Oh, I see! Is it held there?"

"Yes, fathead! In the grounds of the Royal Dublin Society," said Reilly, "and sure it's a splendid show intirely."

"Yaas, wathah! There are jumpin' competitions, too," said Arthur Augustus thoughtfully. "I wathah think I should like to take part in that."

"Only horses do the jumping," said Lowther.

"I mean on a horse, you silly chump!" said D'Arcy. "I suppose you wemembah the time I won a steeplechase? I have told Conway I will jump his horses for him if he likes, but he did not seem to be impressed."

"They parade the horses there, hundreds of them," said Reilly. "I've seen it before, you know. Sure, it's a splendid show. There's a military review in Phoenix Park to-morrow, too; and we mustn't miss that. And we've got to go up the Nelson Pillar."

"Bai Jove! What's that?"

"The pillow Nelson used the night before the battle of Trafalgar," said Monty Lowther solemnly.

"Bai Jove! Have they weally got that here?"

"You'll see it to-morrow."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

After breakfast the chums of St. Jim's started. Reilly being the leader this time, no time was lost; and as Arthur Augustus insisted upon purchasing a new topper, he was allowed ten minutes. Fortunately he succeeded in acquiring a topper in that time, and then they made for the trams.

Reilly selected a tram, and the juniors boarded it, filling a good many seats with themselves.

The morning was very fine and sunny, and the juniors clambered to the top of the tram. Eleven juniors covered a good deal of space there. The tram clanged off on its way to Balls Bridge.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy had taken a front seat by himself. The other fellows were in the rear seats. In the seat behind D'Arcy was a stout farmer-looking man, with a stubby beard and a weather-beaten face, probably bound to the Horse Show himself. Monty Lowther occupied the third seat behind, with Manners. Monty Lowther had a light cane under his arm, and as the tram started, he gently reached forward with it, past the intervening farmer, and softly tilted D'Arcy's hat up from behind with the end of his stick.

The next instant he whipped the cane back, and became intensely interested in the roadside.

Arthur Augustus caught his hat as it tilted over his nose, and set it on his head again, and turned a wrathful glare round.

The stout farmer just behind him was reading a paper, and he had not seen Lowther's action in the least. He was chuckling over some joke he was reading in the paper, when he became aware of D'Arcy's fixed glare.

D'Arcy gave him a terrific look, fully convinced that the stout gentleman had tilted up his hat, and then settled down again with a sniff.

The Irish farmer had a look of wonder upon his good-natured, ruddy face. Why a perfect stranger should turn round and glare at him in that ferocious manner was a mystery to him; but seeing that D'Arcy was English, perhaps he attributed it to some peculiar English custom.

The tram clanged on, and about ten minutes later, when D'Arcy was staring steadily ahead, and the farmer was buried in his paper again, Monty Lowther gently insinuated his cane forward, and knocked up the brim of D'Arcy's topper from behind.

"Bai Jove!"

This time the topper fell off, and D'Arcy caught it just in time. He jammed it fiercely upon his head, and swung round in his seat.

He glared at the farmer, and then at Manners and Lowther in the seat further behind. The two Shell fellows were staring hard at a passing jaunting-car. Apparently that jaunting-car filled up their whole thoughts.

"Sir!" said D'Arcy.

The farmer looked up from his paper.

"Is it spakin' to me yez are?" he inquired.

"Yaas."

"Oh!"

"I am surprised at you, sir!" said Arthur Augustus, in a most stately way.

The astounded farmer looked at him blankly.

"It's surprised at me ye are?" he asked.

"Yaas, wathah!"

"What do ye mean?"

"I wegard such a twick, sir, as uttably unbecomin' a man of your yeahs, sir."

"Phwat!" spluttered the amazed farmer.

"I twust you will not be guilty of such an absurdity again, sir."

"Phwat!"

"That is all," said Arthur Augustus, with dignity.

And he turned his back upon the bewildered farmer, and sat very erect, staring before him along the road.

The Irishman turned very red. He was amazed, and he was angry; but he was more amazed than angry. He looked round him in a helpless sort of way, and caught Monty Lowther's eye. Lowther tapped his forehead significantly.

The farmer started with horror.

"Is it mad he is?" he murmured, below his breath.

Monty Lowther nodded solemnly.

"Not dangerous," he whispered. "It's all right; we're taking care of him. But don't mind what he says, sir."

"Howly Smoke!" murmured the dazed farmer. "It's not safe intirely to have him on a public tram."

"Hush! He'll get excited if he hears you!"

The farmer relapsed into uncomfortable silence. He kept an alarmed eye on Arthur Augustus's back for some time, in evident dread the poor insane young gentleman would turn round upon him again. But Arthur Augustus resumed sitting bolt upright, very haughtily and stiffly. After a time the farmer became reassured, and returned to his paper, and the incident passed from his mind.

The cane came cautiously forward from behind again, and Arthur Augustus's hat was tilted over his nose.

Arthur Augustus jumped up in a rage.

"Bai Jove! You're doin' it again!" he roared.

The farmer dropped his paper, and looked at him in anxious terror.

The swell of St. Jim's jammed his monocle into his eye, and glared at the startled Irish gentleman.

"How dare you?" he roared.

"Phwat?"

"You knocked my hat!"

"Your—your hat!"

"Yaas!"

"Shure, I didn't, my poor young gentleman," said the farmer. "Faith, and it's mistaken ye are. I was r-readin' me paper."

"Better humour him," murmured Monty Lowther under his breath.

"You tilted my hat ovah my nose!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

And the farmer, who had heard that it was judicious to humour lunatics, took Monty Lowther's advice.

"Yis, sorr," he exclaimed. "But, shure, I won't do it again."

"You had better not, you ass!"

"No, sorr."

"I wefuse to have such absurd twicks played upon me."

"Yis, sorr."

"I wegard you as a fwivolous ass!"

"Yis, yis!"

"If it were not for my wesppect for your yeahs, sir, I should give you a feahful thwashin'!"

"Yis, yis!"

"Then pway do not do it again."

"No, no!"

And Arthur Augustus turned his back upon the alarmed farmer and sat down.

CHAPTER 15.

Quite a Mistake.

ARTHUR AUGUSTUS D'ARCY sat with a very pink face, staring directly before him. The other passengers on top of the tram were grinning, and the juniors of St. Jim's grinned. The farmer was the only person who was not grinning. He was in a most uncomfortable frame of mind. He would not have hurt a poor insane lad for anything, but he was in momentary fear that D'Arcy might break out and be violent. He looked round for another seat to change into, but there was a big crowd going to the Horse Show at Balls Bridge, and there was not a single seat, excepting the one beside D'Arcy. And that would have been a change for the worse.

The tram clanged on, and Monty Lowther restrained his peculiar sense of humour for some time. They had passed the Circular Road by the time the farmer had become interested in his paper again, and it was safe for the humorist of the Shell to push his cane forward once more.

Arthur Augustus gave almost a yell as he felt his silk hat jerked forward over his eyes. He caught it, and jammed it on his head, and tore round. Lowther had only just time to put his cane out of sight and to become interested in a distant view of the Grand Canal.

The farmer was deep in his paper, and did not see D'Arcy turn round. But this seemed to the exasperated swell of St. Jim's merely a dodge to irritate him. He reached over the back of his seat, and dashed the newspaper down.

"Ochone!" ejaculated the startled farmer, suddenly seeing D'Arcy's excited face glaring at him. "Oh! I—ah!"

"You wuffian!"

"Phwat?"

"You fwightful ass!"

"Oh, sorr!"

"I wegard you as a dangewous lunatic!"

The farmer knew that it was a peculiar fancy of lunatics to fancy that others were mad instead of themselves. He needed no further convincing that the elegant young gentleman was not right in his head.

"I'm sorry, sorr!" he stammered.

"Will you let my toppah alone?"

"Certainly, sorr; certainly!"

"How dare you touch it?"

"Yes, sorr; no, sorr."

"I wegard you as a feahful ass. A man of your yeahs ought to know bettah. How dare you play such twicks?"

"Holy Smoke!" murmured the farmer. "Shure, I wish the journey was over! Oh, sorr, I'm sorry. I won't touch it again, sorr."

"I wefuse to sit in fwont of you," exclaimed D'Arcy. "If you cannot wefwain fwom playin' insane twicks on me, I insist upon changin' seats."

"Oh, sorr! Yis, sorr!"

Arthur Augustus came out of his seat, and made room for the farmer to pass him. The stout gentleman rose willingly. He moved forward to take the front seat, but he kept his face to D'Arcy all the time, as if afraid that the swell of St. Jim's might spring upon him. He backed into the seat like a horse into the shafts of a cart, and sat down with a gasp. Arthur Augustus took the seat behind, breathing wrath.

Then it occurred to the farmer how dreadfully unsafe it was to sit with his back to a lunatic. He rose in his place. Arthur Augustus fixed a basilisk glare upon him.

"Are you beginnin' again?" he snorted.

The farmer eyed him with dread.

"No, sorr!" he gasped. "I—I'm goin' down."

"Good widdance."

The farmer stumbled down the stairs behind, and took a seat inside the tram, mopping his brow with a red handkerchief.

Arthur Augustus glanced at the juniors, who were almost in convulsions.

"I do not wegard this as a laughing mattah, deah boys," said the swell of St. Jim's.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I fail to see anythin' comic in the mattah at all. I have

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heard a great deal about Irish politeness, but if this is a specimen of it—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Pway don't cackle. I am vevy much annoyed."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Arthur Augustus sat very stern and stiff for the rest of the journey.

The tram arrived at Balls Bridge, and the juniors descended. So did nearly all the other passengers, including the farmer. The stout gentleman hopped out and hurried into the grounds, keeping the corner of his eye on Arthur Augustus. The St. Jim's juniors followed him in.

"That man's conduct was uttally wemarkable and outwageous," said Arthur Augustus. "I fail to compwehend it. How a man of his age—"

"What did he do?" grinned Blake.

"Did you not see him continually tiltin' my hat ovah my eyes fwom behind?"

"No."

"Did you, Lowthah?"

"Certainly not"

"My dear chap, you were sittin' just behind him—"

"Yes, I should have seen it if he did it," said Monty Lowther cheerfully. "But he didn't."

"You uttah ass—"

"Thanks!"

"You must be off your silly wockah, Lowthah! Do you mean to say that my toppah was not tilted ovah my eyes?" exclaimed the swell of St. Jim's.

"Oh, no. But it wasn't the farmer. You owe him an apology for being so rude to him."

"Wasn't that man?" ejaculated D'Arcy.

"No!"

"Then who was it?"

"I did it, daddy! I did it with my little hatchet—I mean with my cane," said the Shell fellow cheerfully.

The juniors roared. The expression upon Arthur Augustus D'Arcy's face was irresistible. He glared at Monty Lowther speechlessly. Lowther lifted his cane, and tilted the elegant junior's topper off once more, as if to show how it was done.

"Oh!" gasped D'Arcy. "It was you—you!"

Monty Lowther nodded.

"Little me!" he agreed.

"You feahful wottah! You have caused me to be guilty of gwoss wudeness to a stwanganh," exclaimed D'Arcy. "But I believe you are wottin'. He admitted doin' it."

"That was only to humour you."

"Wats! Why should he want to humah me?"

"Because he thought you were potty."

"Eh? How could he think that?"

"Well, you see, I thought I ought to give him some explanation of your extraordinary conduct," explained Lowther.

Arthur Augustus jumped.

"You—you told him—"

"Exactly."

"Bai Jove! I will thwash you—"

Monty Lowther dodged behind the shrieking juniors.

"You'd better go and apologise to the gentleman, I think," he said. "He must have a very bad impression of English manners."

"Bai Jove, yaas! I will thwash you aftahwards."

Arthur Augustus looked round anxiously for the farmer. The stout gentleman was still in sight in the crowd, and D'Arcy hurried after him. He realised that Monty Lowther's little jape had made him most inexcusably rude to a stranger, and he was anxious to explain matters and to apologise.

"Pway stop, my deah sir!" he panted, as he hurried after the stout gentleman. "I want to speak to you. I—"

The farmer looked round, and saw D'Arcy dashing after him.

His ruddy face went quite pale.

There was not the slightest doubt in his mind that the lunatic had broken out at last, and was about to be violent.

He gazed at D'Arcy for one moment, and then broke into a run. Arthur Augustus, surprised at that peculiar action, put on a burst of speed.

"Pway stop!" he exclaimed. "My deah sir, pway stop!"

But the alarmed farmer did not stop.

He dashed away at full speed, panting for breath, with the swell of St. Jim's panting on his track.

Tom Merry & Co. put their hands to their sides and roared.

Arthur Augustus was tearing on the track of the fleeing farmer, and would have caught him had not two or three people got in the way. Arthur Augustus ran into a couple of sightseers, and sat down suddenly, and when he recovered himself the farmer had disappeared.

The swell of St. Jim's sought him far and wide, but he was gone. Doubtless the much-injured gentleman was congratulating himself upon a fortunate escape from a dangerous lunatic, and Arthur Augustus returned to his comrades, and

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found them in hysterics. Lord Conway joined the party just in time to save Monty Lowther from an assault and battery, from which he could not possibly have defended himself in his convulsed state.

CHAPTER 16.

Arthur Augustus Distinguishes Himself.

IT was some time before Arthur Augustus recovered his equanimity.

But the Horse Show had the effect of placating him at last. Love of horseflesh was one of D'Arcy's strong points, and in the interest of the great show he was willing to forget and forgive all offences.

The juniors walked round under charge of Lord Conway, and looked at the innumerable horses of various breeds assembled there with unflagging interest.

Lord Conway's own animals came in for a special share of attention, and at the Horse Show, if not in the streets of Dublin, Arthur Augustus was really equal to the task of guide. What D'Arcy did not know about horses was not worth knowing, and he could tell the points of any animal at a glance.

"Bai Jove!" said the swell of St. Jim's enthusiastically. "I wegard this as a wippin' place, you know. We'll have anoathah day heah, dear boys."

"Yes, rather!" said Tom Merry.

"Yaas, I'm weally glad I bwought you youngstahs to Dublin," remarked the swell of St. Jim's thoughtfully.

"You should have seen Belfast," said Reilly.

"By Jove! What's that?"

There was a sudden uproar and a rush of the crowd. A parade of horses was taking place, and the crowd was very thick, and there was pushing and yelling as the rush started.

"Arrah! Look out!"

"Run!"

"Look out!"

Lord Conway knitted his brows.

"It's a loose horse," he exclaimed. "The brute is savaging—look at him! Here, get out of the way, you kids—among the trees, here."

"Bai Jove!"

The crowd was scurrying back in hot haste.

It was a splendid animal that had broken loose—a handsome stallion, a perfect picture of strength and beauty. The groom lay on the ground, where he had been knocked by the excited animal, and the horse was dashing along at top speed, with a crowd in pursuit. The noise added to the excitement of the runaway, and it dashed right at the crowd, who broke and ran and yelled in alarm.

With its head tossed up and mane flying, the runaway dashed on directly towards the spot where the St. Jim's juniors were standing.

Tom Merry & Co. dashed for the trees. A crash from the flying hoofs of the runaway would probably have been fatal.

But Arthur Augustus did not move.

He set his silk topper back on his head, jammed his eyeglass firmly into his eye, and watched the runaway with perfect coolness.

"Gussy!" roared Blake, from the trees. "Gussy, you ass! Run!"

"Wats!"

"Gussy!"

"Run, you ass!"

"Wats! I'm going to stop him!"

"My hat! He'll be killed!" exclaimed Tom Merry.

"Gussy—"

"Arthur—"

Lord Conway and the juniors ran back towards the swell of St. Jim's.

But they were not needed.

The runaway swerved as it came charging down upon the elegant junior, and the swell of St. Jim's made a spring.

In a second he was upon the back of the runaway stallion, though how he had got there seemed a miracle to the onlookers.

There was no saddle upon the horse, not even a cloth, but Arthur Augustus could ride any animal barebacked.

With his knees gripping the flanks of the horse he sat tight, while the surprised and excited stallion pranced and careered furiously.

The juniors halted.

"Great Scott!" gasped Tom Merry. "The reckless ass!"

"Good old Gussy!"

"It's all right," said Blake. "Gussy can ride anything. It's one of the things he can do. Mind he doesn't ride you down, that's all."

The runaway was careering wildly, but as if he knew that he had a master upon his back, his fury spent itself, and as D'Arcy remained firmly seated, the fury of the animal calmed down.

GET YOUR FRIEND TO BECOME A "GEMITE"!

There was a roar of cheering from the crowd, ready, like an Irish crowd at any time, to appreciate good horsemanship.

"Brava!"

"Hurrah!"

Arthur Augustus, with a placid smile on his face, rode the horse back to the panting groom.

"Here you are, deah boy!" he said cheerfully.

"Tare an' 'ounds!" gasped the astounded groom. "How did ye do it, sorr?"

Arthur Augustus slipped from the horse as the groom took the bridle.

"It's all wight," he said. "Bai Jove, he's a beauty, and I'd like to wide him!" He patted the horse's glossy neck.

"It's all wight, old boy!"

And the recaptured runaway was led away.

Thump!

Arthur Augustus staggered as Tom Merry's appreciative thump landed upon his back.

"Ow! You ass! Yow!"

"Good old Gussy!"

"Yawooh!"

"Bravo!"

"You uttah ass——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Sure, and it's a broth ar a boy ye are!" shouted Reilly, hugging the swell of St. Jim's. "Faith, and I've niver seen anything like it! Bravo!"

"Pway don't thump me, you silly asses!" gasped D'Arcy. "You can admire me as much as you like, but pway leave me a little bweath."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It was ripping of you, Arthur," said Lord Conway quietly; "but he might have savaged you. I thought for a moment his teeth were in your leg."

"Oh, that was all wight; he didn't touch me."

"You might have been killed if you'd slipped when you mounted him."

"Bai Jove, I nevah thought of that!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Let's go and have some lunch," said Fatty Wynn. "Excitement makes me hungry."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Arthur Augustus was the hero of the hour after that. He bore his blushing honours thick upon him with becoming modesty.

And the rest of the day passed most agreeably at the Horse Show, and the juniors left determined to pass another day there. They took the tram back to Dublin, and Arthur Augustus gave Monty Lowther a most significant glance as he sat down.

"If there is any more wot, Lowthab, there will be a wov!" he said.

Monty Lowther looked surprised.

"What's the matter now?" he asked.

"If you get sayin' to anybody that I am potty, or that sort of thing——"

"All right!" said Lowther affably. "I'll keep it dark!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You uttah ass——"

"Remember, you fellows, Gussy wants us to keep it a dead secret," said Monty Lowther solemnly.

"I wefuse to discuss the mattah with you, Lowthab. I have a wreat mind to give you a feahful thwashin'."

And Arthur Augustus looked most lofty and stately as the tram bore the St. Jim's party back to town.

CHAPTER 17.

Very Funny!

"I 'VE got a good ideah, deah boys," Arthur Augustus announced the next day.

"Whose?" asked Blake.

"Wats! I think we ought to go down to the wewiew in Phoenix Park. There's goin' to be a wewiew of infantwy and cavalwy."

"Good!"

"And I'm thinkin' of goin' in a jaunтин'-car. It's no good comin' to Ireland without widin' in a jaunтин'-car, you know."

"Good egg!" said Tom Merry. "It's one way of getting there."

Jaunting-cars in plenty were outside the hotel. A young driver, with a cheery, ruddy face, and a mischievous gleam in his eyes, touched his hat to Arthur Augustus, as the swell of St. Jim's looked at his horse.

"Car, sorr?"

"Yaas, I was thinkin' of it," said Arthur Augustus.

"Best car in Dublin, sorr," said the driver. "It's well known, sorr; you can't do better than take Micky Dolan's car, sorr. Best bit of flesh in all Dublin."

"Yaas, I wathah like the look of the gee," said D'Arcy.

"I want you to dwive me to Phoenix Park."

"Yis, sorr."

"You come on with me, Blake and Dig. You othah chaps can take the othah cahs."

"All serene, Gussy."

And the three Fourth-Formers mounted Micky Dolan's car.

Arthur Augustus seemed just a little doubtful as he took his seat. The vehicle did not seem exactly secure to a stranger's eye; but if Irish fellows could ride in them, there was no reason why D'Arcy should not.

"All right, sorr?" asked the driver, gathering up his reins.

"Yaas, wathah."

"Hold on, thin, sorr."

"That's all wight."

"Better hold on, Gussy," said Jack Blakö.

"All sewene, deah boy."

The driver cracked his whip with a report like a pistol-shot, and the car started with a sudden bounce that threw the juniors against one another.

Arthur Augustus gave a yell.

"Yawooh!"

He caught at his silk hat just in time to save it, with one hand, and threw the other arm round Digby's neck.

"Hold on!" roared Digby. "I mean, let go!"

"Ow! Yawooh!"

"Hold on to the rail," growled Blake. "Didn't I tell you?"

"Bai Jove! Do the cars always jump like this?" gasped Arthur Augustus, holding his hat on his head with one hand, and himself on the car with the other.

Blake chuckled.

"I don't know. These giddy jarvies are famous for driving recklessly, I know that. But I shouldn't wonder if our friend Micky is giving it to us a little thick because we're innocent strangers."

"Bai Jove!"

"Let him see that we can stand it," growled Digby.

"Don't say a word."

"Yaas, wathah!"

The car bounded on to an accompaniment of pistol-like cracks from the driver's whip. The other cars, with Tom Merry & Co. in them, followed. But Arthur Augustus and his companions had no eyes for the others. They only wanted to keep on their own car; and when the road was clear the car "jaunted" in a way that made keeping on rather difficult. Micky Dolan was evidently playing a little game with the strangers, from a Hibernian sense of humour; but nothing would have induced the St. Jim's juniors to ask him to drive more carefully.

The driver grinned at them presently.

"Yer hanners all right?" he inquired.

"Ripping!" said Blake.

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Not too fast goin', yer hanners?"

"Too fast!" said Blake cheerfully. "You don't call this fast, do you? You should see how we drive in Yorkshire."

The driver's face fell a little.

"Dwive fastah, for goodness' sake," said Arthur Augustus.

"We might as well have walked if we're goin' like this."

"Yes, rather," said Digby.

The driver stared at them blankly for a moment; and then he cracked his whip wildly, and devoted himself to getting top speed out of his horse, and administering to the car as many jumps as he possibly could. Wherever there was anything in the road to give the car a jump, the driver took it; and he would make sudden turns and swertes apparently at the risk of pulling his car to pieces.

But the juniors did not mind.

As they grew more accustomed to the rapid motion, they entered into the spirit of the thing, and enjoyed it exceedingly.

"Faster, deah boy!" shouted D'Arcy.

"Buck up!" yelled Blake. "What are you crawling like this for?"

"Get a move on!" shrieked Digby.

"Tare an' ounds," gasped Micky Dolan, "the poor baste can't do another ounce!"

"Oh, buck up!"

"Can't you make that animal move?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Micky Dolan drove on desperately. His steed, which seemed as mischievous as himself, galloped, and jumped, and shook the car, as if entering into the joke. But the more the horse galloped, and the more the car creaked and jumped, the more the St. Jim's juniors urged the driver to speed.

"Faith," grinned Micky Dolan, at last, "I'm beat, sorr! Sure, and it's an illigant joke of yer honours."

Blake gasped.

"I've heard in England that these cars jolt, and are quite

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dangerous," he said. "Might as well be in a perambulator, so far as I can see."

"Yaas, wathah!"
"Or a milk-cart," said Digby.

The driver chuckled. The car rattled on in sight of the shining Liffey, and Micky Dolan brought it to a flourishing halt at last outside the park gates. The other cars came rattling and bouncing up.

"My hat," gasped Tom Merry, as he jumped down, "that was a drive!"

"Yes. I like a gentle run in the morning," said Blake, with a nod. "These things go as steady as omnibuses in England, don't they?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Arthur Augustus settled with the drivers, and the juniors strolled in the great park. It was a blazing summer's day, and there were big crowds in the park. Strains of music could be heard in the distance.

"Where is the view, I wondah?" Arthur Augustus remarked, looking round through his eyeglass.

"This way!" said Reilly. "It doesn't begin yet. Let's have a look round the park."

"Wight-ho!"

Tom Merry & Co. strolled round the park, and rested under the trees, till the review of the troops commenced; a performance watched by great crowds of people. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy was especially interested in the cavalry.

"Bai Jove," the swell of St. Jim's remarked, "they're wippin' widahs, you know." Arthur Augustus did not notice for a moment that the crowd had surged back, to give room for the military evolutions. "Weally—Bai Jove, where have you fellows gone?"

The swell of St. Jim's looked round him in amazement. The crowd had ebbed back, and the juniors had gone with it, and Arthur Augustus was left standing alone in a great space.

"Gweat Scott! What—"

"Come on!" yelled Blake.

"What's the matter, deah boy?"

"Look round, you ass!" yelled Kangaroo.

Arthur Augustus cast an alarmed look round. Then he gave a gasp. A line of mounted men were riding straight at him, amid a thunder of hoofs and jingling of bridles and accoutrements. A hoarse voice roared out to D'Arcy to get out of the way.

"Bai Jove!" gasped D'Arcy, in dismay. Tramp! Tramp! Tramp!

The earth seemed to shake under the trampling of hoofs.

Tramp! Tramp!

As the swell of St. Jim's stood almost petrified, the cavalry came charging down upon him, and a hoarse voice roared again.

Arthur Augustus ran.

He ran to clear the flank of the manoeuvring cavalry, and he ran hard; and, as he paused at last, he looked back, and gave a gasp of dismay as he saw that the trampling line had wheeled, and was pursuing him.

"Bai Jove! Oh!"

Arthur Augustus ran again in desperation, and, sighting his chums in the distance, made for them. He ran desperately, with the tramp and clink behind him ringing in his ears. He reached the St. Jim's juniors, panting for breath and streaming with perspiration.

"Oh!" he gasped. "Ow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"What are you cacklin' at, you boundahs?"

"Ha, ha, ha! What are you running for?" yelled Blake.

"They were aftah me!"

"Ha, ha! They wheeled, just after you started running this way."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Bai Jove!"

Arthur Augustus swung round. The cavalry had wheeled in a new direction, and were gone. His last desperate run had been for nothing. He panted for breath, and mopped his streaming brow, while the juniors shrieked.

It was some time before Arthur Augustus recovered his breath and his equanimity.

"Bai Jove!" he said at last. "I weally don't care for reviews. I wegard those cavalry as bein' uttably weckless!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

In spite of Arthur Augustus's misadventures in the review, the juniors spent a very happy day in Phoenix Park, and they came home well satisfied with themselves.

Another day at the Horse Show, and the time of the St. Jim's juniors' stay in Dublin reached its end. As they took the train for Kingstown Harbour, Arthur Augustus settled himself in his seat with a cheerful smile.

"Well, we've had a good time here, you know!" he remarked.

"Yes, rather!" said Kangaroo. "I'm sorry to leave it! We'll come over to Ireland again another vac."

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"Betther come to Belfast next time!" observed Reilly.

"Ripping country!" said Monty Lowther. "Ireland ought really to be the richest country in the world soon."

"Why?"

"Because it's capital is Dublin!"

"Ow!"

"I do not quite see that," said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, looking puzzled. "Certainly, this is a vevy great city, but—"

"It's a pun!" shrieked Lowther.

"Eh? What is?"

"That is, ass! Dublin—doubling! See?"

"No; I don't quite see. Say it over again."

"Its capital is doubling!" yelled Lowther. "Therefore—"

"Is that a pun?" asked Arthur Augustus innocently.

"Yes," yelled Lowther; "that's a pun!"

"Bai Jove!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The train ran down to the pier, and the juniors boarded the boat for Holyhead. This time Fatty Wynn did not lay in a solid foundation for the voyage, and he did not suffer such direful results. The mountains of Wales rose before him and found him feeling quite well—and very hungry. And directly he had set foot on his native land, Fatty Wynn did the fullest possible justice to a most terrific square meal.

"That's something like!" he remarked, as he leaned back in his chair with the air of a fellow who had deserved well of his country. "After all, there's no place like home! Yes; perhaps I'd better have a little more pudding. No good leaving it."

"No good at all," said Figgins. "Pile in! Break the record, if you don't break your works inside first!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Arthur Augustus suddenly.

Figgins stared at him.

"Hallo! What's wrong with you?" he asked.

"Ha, ha, ha! It's vevy funnay!"

"What is?"

"That pun!"

"What pun?" demanded Tom Merry.

"The one Lowthah made in the twain. I have been thinkin' ovah it, and it's just stwuck me!" exclaimed D'Arcy.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It's vevy funnay indeed!" said Arthur Augustus, chuckling. "Ireland ought to be a vevy wich country soon, because it's capital is Dublin! Ha, ha, ha! I'll tell that to Hewwies as soon as we get back to St. Jim's!"

And Arthur Augustus did not forget. When the new term commenced, and the St. Jim's fellows foregathered from all quarters of the kingdom, the chums of Study No. 6 greeted Herries warmly, and Arthur Augustus found an early opportunity of giving him the benefit of that pun.

"Hewwies, old man," he said, taking the burly Fourth-Former aside, "I want to ask you somethin'."

"Oh, he's all right!" said Herries. "I suppose you're thinking about Towser? He's been a bit off his feed, but he's ripping now!"

Arthur Augustus sniffed.

"I was not goin' to speak about Towsah," he said; "I want to ask you somethin'. It's a widdle."

"Oh, a riddle! Well, go on!"

"Why ought Iweland to be vevy wich soon?" asked Arthur Augustus.

"Blessed if I know!" said Herries. "I don't see why Ireland should be rich, unless they get it out of the old-age pensions."

"It's a widdle, you ass! Guess!"

"I give it up."

"Because Dublin is the capital of Ireland!" said Arthur Augustus triumphantly.

And he waited for a roar of laughter from Herries.

The roar did not come. Herries only looked puzzled.

"I know it is!" he said. "What's that got to do with it?"

"It's a pun, you ass!"

"Is it? It doesn't sound to me like a pun, but I'll take your word for it. Now, speaking about Towser—"

"Bai Jove! It doesn't sound so funnay to me now as it did before," said Arthur Augustus thoughtfully.

And certainly it was not quite so funny!

Tom Merry & Co. were back at St. Jim's again, with stories to tell their schoolfellows of their sojourn in the sister isle. They retained the pleasantest possible recollections of Dublin; only, whenever the subject came up, Reilly, of the Fourth, always had one remark to make:

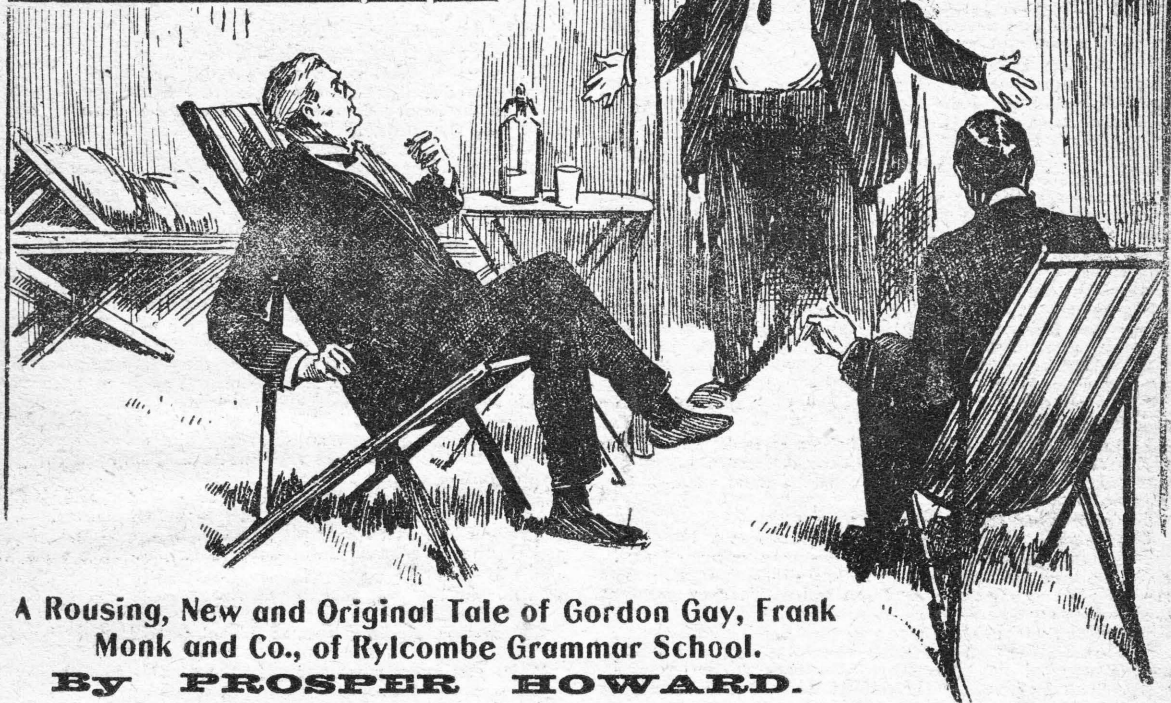
"Yis, yis; thru for ye! But you should have seen Belfast!"

THE END.

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THE SCHOOL UNDER CANVAS!



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By PROSPER HOWARD.

WHAT HAS HAPPENED SO FAR.

"The School will assemble in Big Hall at half-past six o'clock. An important announcement will be made.

"(Signed), E. MONK, Headmaster."

The appearance of the above brief notice on the school board is the first hint that the Rylcombe Grammar School receives of the great change in its circumstances that is pending—nothing less than the removal of the whole school into temporary quarters under canvas by the sea, on the Essex coast. Just at this time the ranks of the Fourth Form are reinforced by Gustave Blanc—immediately christened Mont Blong—a new boy from across the Channel. Mont Blong, who attaches himself to Gordon Gay & Co., is a slim and elegant youth with a peculiar flow of English, but he quickly shows his worth by holding his own with Carker, the bully of the Fourth. Amidst great excitement the Grammarians travel down to their new abode. During the first few days Gordon

Gay discovers that there is more in Mont Blong than at first meets the eye, and that the French junior can speak English fluently. Gordon Gay, Frank Monk & Co., and Mont Blong are one day caught by the sea in a cave, and have to wait until late at night before they can leave it. While here they are surprised to see Herr Hentzel, their German master, in secret conversation with two other Germans, and they are more surprised still to learn from Mont Blong that the Germans are spies.

The juniors return to the camp, and find a number of seniors gambling in the captain's tent. Gordon Gay determines to give them a lesson, and disguises himself as Dr. Monk, who is at the time out of camp. He leaves his tent to go to Delamere's, when he meets the captain of the school himself walking round the camp.

(Now go on with the story.)

Caught Red-Handed.

The disguised junior paused and gave Delamere a nod, and the captain of the Grammar School raised his cap respectfully.

"I did not know you were back from Netherby, sir," he said.

"Indeed, Delamere!"

The juniors in cover of the tent chuckled inaudibly. It was the voice of the revered Head to the life! It was no wonder that Delamere did not suspect.

"A beautiful night, sir," said Delamere.

"Yes, quite so! H'm! I see that there is a light burning in your tent, Delamere."

The captain of the school coloured. He knew how Corton and Hake were occupied at that moment in his tent.

"I—I left it burning, sir," he said.

The pseudo doctor shook his head solemnly.

"Ahem! That is extravagant, Delamere. I have had electric light laid on in each tent in order to obviate—ahem!—the risks of fire. But it is not my wish that this most expensive light should be burned in—ahem!—extravagance. You should—ahem!—extinguish your light, Delamere, when you leave your tent."

"Yes, sir. I am sorry, sir," said Delamere, with great meekness. There was a haunting terror in his heart that the Head, now that his attention was drawn thither, might find some reason for looking into the tent. The captain of the Sixth cudgelled his brains for some device for putting Hake and Corton on their guard.

"But perhaps one of your friends is in the tent, Delamere," said the Head kindly. "In that case, it is meritorious—ahem!—to burn the midnight oil, in the cause of study."

"Ye-es, sir."

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"Shall we look in, and see the studious youth thus engaged?" said the new Head, with a kind smile. "What a pleasant little surprise for him!"

He moved towards the tent. Delamere gave a sort of stifled cry.

"No, sir! Oh, no! Don't, sir!"

The Head turned on him in surprise.

"What did you say, Delamere?"

"I—I mean, sir—," stammered Delamere helplessly. "I—I—"

His voice trailed away in hopeless confusion.

"Is there anything going on in your tent, Delamere, of which you do not wish your headmaster to be a witness?" exclaimed the disguised junior sternly

"Oh, sir!"

"Answer my questions, Delamere."

"N-n-no, of course not, sir."

"Then why do you not wish me to enter?"

"Because—ahem!—ah—the tent is very untidy, sir. I'm sorry to say I—I'd rather make it a bit more fit for your inspection, sir."

"Nonsense, Delamere. If you have left your tent in a slovenly state, that is all the more reason why I should inspect it," said the New Head sternly. "Say no more. I shall now most certainly go into your tent, Delamere."

"Oh, sir! I—I—"

"Silence!" rapped out the Head.

"But, sir, I—"

"If you say another word, Delamere, I shall dot you in the eye—I—I mean I shall be seriously angry with you," said the Head severely.

He strode hurriedly towards the tent, leaving Delamere almost sick with terror, and almost dazed with astonishment. Unless Dr. Monk had been drinking—which was extraordinary—the expression he had used was simply unaccountable. But Delamere had little time to think even of that astonishing remark the Head had made. With faltering footsteps and deadly pale face, he followed the doctor, as the latter strode to the entrance of the tent.

"The game's up!" groaned Delamere. "This means the sack!"

The new Head pulled the flap of the tent aside, and a glare of light came out from within. Corton's voice was heard.

"Hallo! You've come back to take a hand then, Dolly! My hat!"

The new Head strode into the tent.

Hake and Corton sprang to their feet.

The light gleamed upon the table—upon upturned cards, and little heaps of money—copper, and silver, and gold. The two cads of the Sixth, almost transfixed with terror, gazed at the little grey-haired, grey-bearded gentleman who stood before them, with a stern frown upon his wrinkled brow.

"What is this?" The Head's voice was deep and rolling, and it sounded like thunder to the ears of the unhappy "dogs" of the Sixth. "Gambling! Good heavens! Hake! Corton! What have you to say?"

But Hake and Corton had nothing to say. They stood with gaping jaws, their starting eyes fixed upon the Head in utter terror and dismay.

A Little Correction.

"The Head!"

"Oh, Jerusalem!"

Corton and Hake started to their feet, staring blankly at the imposing form before them, and the stern face with the white whiskers and frowning brow.

Outside the tent, Delamere, the captain of the Grammar School, stood irresolute. He felt that the game was up now. He had been unable to warn the two cads of the Sixth, who were playing cards in the tent, and he could only stand there in dumb misery waiting for the storm to burst. He knew that he could not dissociate himself from what was going on in his tent. Even if he had pleaded ignorance, Corton and Hake were not likely to leave him out of it. If they were to be disgraced and expelled from the school, they were not likely to allow him to escape scot-free. The Rylcombe captain was white as death, as he stood there in the moon-light, and heard the voices from the open tent.

"Hake! Corton!"

It was the Head's voice—and not a moment's suspicion crossed the minds of the black sheep of the Sixth that it was not the Head who stood before them. That it was Gordon Gay in disguise was a thought that was not likely to occur to them. Gordon Gay's wonderful skill in impersonation was well known in the Fourth, but Fourth-Form matters did not come very much under the ken of the Sixth.

Hake and Corton gazed at the pseudo Head with drooping jaws.

"Hake! Corton! What does this mean?"

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Hake tried to speak, but no words would come. A hollow gasp came from Corton.

It was really hardly necessary to ask what it meant. The cards and money on the table were a sufficient explanation.

The Head raised his hand in a magisterial manner. "You have been gambling!" he exclaimed, in a terrifying voice.

"Oh, sir; no, sir!"

"No, sir; oh, sir!"

"What!" thundered the doctor.

"Yes, sir! Oh, sir! No, sir!" mumbled Hake, hardly aware of what he was saying in his dismay and bewilderment.

"You see, sir—we, sir—," stammered the unhappy Corton.

"Wretched youths! This then is the way you employ your leisure hours!" said Gordon Gay, in Dr. Monk's deepest tones.

"Oh, sir!"

"A—a little friendly game, sir," stammered Corton, recovering himself a little. "Of course, we were not playing for money, sir."

"Oh, no, sir!" gasped Hake.

"Then what is this money doing on the table here?"

"That—that—that is my money, sir," said Hake. "We—we've been settling up some accounts, sir, and we happened to leave the money on the table. Corton was showing me a trick with the cards, sir."

"Yes, sir, that was it," said Corton. "I hope you don't think I would gamble, sir. I was showing Hake a trick my—my uncle taught me, sir."

"How dare you tell me such whoppers?" thundered the Head. "I—I mean such falsehoods, you young bounders—that is to say, young rascals."

Corton and Hake stared at him helplessly. Even in their terror and confusion they could not help wondering at the Head's queer selection of language.

"You were playing nap!" went on the new Head. "You were playing for money! You were, in fact, gambling. You Hake, are a prefect, and it is your duty to stamp out any such rascally practices in the school. You have been very rough on the best boy in the school—Gay, of the Fourth."

Three juniors hidden behind the tent, hearing it all through the canvas, chuckled. Wootton major and minor, and Mont Blong were keeping out of sight while they enjoyed the jape on the bullies of the Sixth.

The seniors in the tent heard the chuckle, and looked round in astonishment. The Head went on hastily.

"If you had taken example by Gay, of the Fourth, Hake and Corton, you would never have fallen into these disreputable ways."

"Oh, sir!"

"Delamere!"

The captain of the Grammar School came into the tent.

"Yes, sir," he muttered.

"Did you know what was going on in this tent?"

"Yes, sir," said Delamere.

"And you allowed it—you, the captain of the school, in whom I have always placed my confidence!" thundered Gordon Gay.

Delamere winced.

"Yes, sir."

"You have betrayed the trust reposed in you, Delamere."

"I know I have, sir," groaned the captain of Rylcombe.

"I—I've been a fool and a cad, sir. I know what you're going to do, and I know I deserve it, sir. The sooner you kick me out of the school the better."

There was a momentary silence. The captain's face was very white, and the working of remorse seemed to make his handsome boyish features old and wan. Not a doubt crossed Delamere's mind that it was the real Head who stood before him, and he stood like a criminal waiting to receive sentence from his judge.

"Delamere," said the Head at last, "you are frank, at all events. I suspect that you have been led into this by these awful blighters—I mean by these unscrupulous young rascals, Hake and Corton."

"I don't lay the blame on them, sir," said Delamere. "I've been a fool and a cad. I know what to expect, and I'm not complaining."

There was a great deal of dignity about the handsome captain of Rylcombe as he stood there to receive judgment. Gordon Gay felt a twinge of compunction. But, after all, it was a lesson that was very necessary to the captain of Rylcombe.

"If I overlook this, Delamere, will you promise that nothing of the kind shall occur again?" asked Gordon Gay.

Delamere looked up with a sudden flush of hope.

"Oh, sir!" he gasped.

It was all he could say.

"Well, Delamere?"

"I—I will promise, sir; but—but—"

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"Then I shall say no more about it, so far as you are concerned," said Gordon Gay magnanimously.

"Oh, sir!" gasped Delamere.

"But as to these rotten outsiders," went on the Head, astounding the three seniors more and more by his peculiar epithets. "They will have to be made an example of. You have a cane here, Delamere?"

"Yes, sir."

"Hand it to me!"

Delamere handed him the cane.

"Now, you young rotters," said the Head, frowning severely at Hake and Corton, "I shall not expel you from the school this time. I shall give you a chance to turn over a new leaf. But I cannot allow these rascally proceedings to pass unpunished. Hake!"

"Ye-es, sir."

"Lean face downwards over that table."

"Oh, sir!"

"Obey me at once."

Hake obeyed.

The cane rose and fell. Hake gave a wild yell at each cut. But he dared not change his position. Humiliating as the punishment was for a Sixth-Former and a prefect, he was only too glad to escape so cheaply. The humiliation was not all the punishment, however. It hurt! Gordon Gay laid on a dozen strokes with all the force of his powerful arm, and Hake simply wriggled.

"You may go, sir!" said the Head sternly. "Now, Corton!"

"I—I—I—" stammered Corton.

"Take Hake's place instantly!"

"Oh, yes, sir!"

Corton bent over the table very reluctantly. The cane swished in the air, and Corton began to yell. Twelve severe strokes were awarded to him, and Corton was twisting in a very uncomfortable manner when the punishment was over.

Gordon Gay threw down the cane.

"Delamere!" he rapped out.

The captain of Rylcombe flushed and drew back. He would rather have been expelled than have undergone that humiliating punishment. But that was not the disguised junior's intention.

"Delamere, you will take those cards and throw them into the sea!"

Delamere drew a deep breath of relief.

"Yes, sir."

"Never let anything of this sort occur again, and never mention the matter to me or to anyone else."

"Very well, sir."

Delamere gathered up the cards and left the tent.

"As for you, you young scoundrels," said the Head, frowning at the two twisting and writhing seniors, "I have punished you, and I shall not mention the matter again. You will, I hope, profit by this lesson."

"Oh, yes, sir," muttered Corton. "Sis-sis-certainly, sir."

"You are very g-g-good, sir!" stammered Hake.

"You may go."

The two black sheep of the Sixth left the tent.

The disguised junior waited till they were gone, and then he burst into a laugh. He had bottled up his feelings with great difficulty while the seniors were present, and now he could contain them no longer. He sat on the table and roared.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Tat you excuse me, mein Herr—"

Gordon Gay jumped.

In the midst of a roar of laughter, his mouth remained open, and he stared almost idiotically at Herr Otto Hentzel, as the German master of Rylcombe looked into the tent.

Gordon Gay is Reported to Himself.

Herr Hentzel was not easily astonished, but he was simply astounded now.

The Head of the Grammar School had always been a most reserved, quiet, and dignified gentleman.

To find him sitting on the edge of a table, roaring with laughter over apparently nothing, was amazing to the German master.

Herr Hentzel stared at the Head, and the Head stared at Herr Hentzel, and there was a moment of silence.

"Tat you excuse me, sir," said the German master again.

"Ah!" gasped Gordon Gay, wondering whether the keen eyes of the German would penetrate the disguise which the Sixth-Formers had failed to pierce. "Ah, it is you, Herr Hentzel."

"Ja wohl," said Herr Hentzel. "Yes, sir. I tink I hear your voice, and I come in because it is tat I wish to speak mit you. I have tink tat you are in Netherby."

Gordon Gay recovered himself. He had a desperate game to play now, and he realised that he needed all his coolness. If

he were discovered impersonating the Head, the consequences were likely to be extremely painful for the enterprising Cornstalk junior.

"As you see, Herr Hentzel, I am here," he said.

"Ferry good, sir; so I make mein report?"

"Certainly, Herr Hentzel. Pray proceed."

"I have made a most unpleasant discovery, sir," said the German master. "I tink tat it is mein duty to tell you."

"Oh!" murmured Gordon Gay.

"It is about some young rascals in te Fourth Form, sir."

"Indeed!"

"Yes, sir. Te names are Gay, Wootton major and minor, and tat French poy, Blanc."

Gordon Gay started.

"My dear Herr Hentzel, they are the best boys in the school!" he exclaimed. "Especially Gay. Gordon Gay is really a model. I—I mean he—he sets an example which all the school, masters and boys, would do well to follow."

Herr Hentzel stared.

"I tink tat I change te opinion for you, sir," he said. "I tink tat you admit tat you have te wrong opinion. I suspect tat tose poy are bad, and I vatch tem."

"My hat!"

Herr Hentzel jumped.

"Vat—vat did you say, sir?" he gasped.

"I—I should have said dear me," said the Head. "Goodness gracious, I mean! You have been watching the boys, Herr Hentzel?"

"Ja, ja, mein Herr."

Gordon Gay shook his head.

"I do not approve of that, Herr Hentzel. I think it is a rotten proceeding. A master should be above watching the boys. It is mean."

Herr Hentzel flushed crimson.

"Sir!" he stammered.

"The boys would despise you if they found you watching them," said the pseudo Head cheerfully. "Of course, I dare say they despise you already. But you should not make matters worse, you silly ass!"

Herr Hentzel staggered back.

"Sir! I not understand all tat! If I did not respect you too mooch, I should tink tat you have of te weinge trunken."

"What! How dare you?"

"I—I peg your pardon, sir, but it is ferry strange," said the German master dazedly. "I did not mean, sir, tat I vatch te poy all te time. But I look in der tent, and I see tat tey are absent at dis hour."

"Impossible!"

"It is true, sir. Te poy are not in der tent."

"Then where are they?"

"Preaking pounds at night, sir!" said the German master, with spiteful satisfaction. "And I say vunce more, sir, tat I have always suspected tem. Dey are te vorst poy in te whole school, sir—especially tat French poy, who is ferry inquisitive."

"Do you mean to say that Gay is actually absent from his tent?" demanded the disguised junior.

"Yes, sir."

"I must look into this at once."

The Head left Delamere's tent, and hurried towards the one belonging to Gordon Gay & Co. The German followed in his footsteps.

In the shadow of the captain's tent, Wootton major and minor and Mont Blong looked at one another in dismay.

"My only hat!" murmured Harry Wootton. "This is a giddy hash of things, and no mistake. Gay will be bowled dead out!"

"Poor old Gay!" groaned Jack Wootton. "This is what come of playing japes when he ought to be in bed."

"I zink zat my shum get out all serene," murmured Mont Blong.

"Keep close," muttered Wootton major. "Let's get back to the tent; and mind you don't let old Hentzel see you."

"Right-ho!"

"Oui, oui, my shum."

The juniors crept cautiously towards their own tent. The electric light was burning there now, and they heard the voices of the German master and the pretended Head.

"You see, mein Herr, tat tey are not here."

Gordon Gay stepped into the tent, and looked round.

Tadpole sat up in bed, blinking; but with the exception of the artistic genius of the Grammar School the camp beds were empty. Tadpole blinked in alarm at the masters. He looked very scared.

"Dear me!" said Gordon Gay. "The boys certainly do not seem to be here."

"Did I not say so, sir?"

"Certainly, you did."

"Perhaps tat poy Tadpole can tell us vere tey are."

"Tadpole!"

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NEXT THURSDAY: "STAGE STRUCK!"

A Splendid, New, Long, Complete School Tale of the Chums of St Jim's. By MARTIN CLIFFORD.

"Yes, sir?" gasped Tadpole.
 "Go to sleep at once."
 "Ye-es, sir."
 Tadpole turned over in bed.
 "You not question tat poy, sir?" asked Herr Hentzel, biting his lip.
 "Certainly not, I shall not encourage a boy to sneak about other boys."
 "But, sir—"
 "The boys are certainly gone," said Gordon Gay. "Herr Hentzel, I thank you for bringing the matter to my notice. You may go."
 "Shall I call up to prefects to search for te poy, sir?"
 "No; I will take the matter into my own hands."
 "But I like to help, sir—"
 "I do not want any help. Buzz off!"
 "Eh?"

"I mean leave me. I shall wait here for the boys to return. You may go."

"If you please, mein Herr—"

"Oh, get out!"

Herr Hentzel got out. He was too surprised to do anything else. He walked away like a man in a dream, firmly convinced that the Head had been drinking during his visit to Netherby, and had returned "squiffy."

"Good-night, sir," said Delamere, passing the German on his way to his tent.

Herr Hentzel paused.

"Delanere," he said, "have you seen to Head lately? He was in your tene."

"Yes, sir," said Delamere, flushing.

"Did you notice anything strange about him?"

"I—I don't know, sir."

"It is ferry queer!"

And the German master passed on, leaving Delamere staring after him. The light had been extinguished in Gordon Gay's tent, and the German master, observing that fact from a distance, marvelled. Was the Head sitting there in the dark to wait for the juniors to return, in order to catch them? It was possible, but it was a curious enough proceeding on the part of so dignified a personage as the Head of Rykcombe Grammar School.

Little did Herr Hentzel dream that, in a glimmer of moonlight in the tent, the Head was stripping off the outward

semblance of Dr. Monk, and was transforming himself once more into Gordon Gay of the Fourth.

Wootton major and minor, and Mont Blong came into the tent quietly, and chuckled.

"Oh, you deep beggar!" murmured Jack Wootton. "You pulled the wool over his eyes."

Gordon Gay laughed.

"Yes, rather."

"I zink zat it is all right, my shums—unless ze Sherman mention ze mattair to ze real Head in ze morning."

"My hat! Well, that's a risk we can't help running," said Gordon Gay. "For goodness' sake, let's turn in, in case he brings him along to-night."

And the juniors tumbled into bed, and were soon sleeping soundly. Meanwhile, Herr Hentzel, in spite of what the pseudo Head had said to him, was lurking among the tents at a distance, waiting to spot Gordon Gay & Co. on their return to their quarters!

He had a long vigil—and it was unrewarded! While he was watching for the juniors, they were fast asleep in their tent. The German master went to bed at last, long past midnight, in an exceedingly puzzled frame of mind.

A Little Ragging.

The adventure in the cave on the headland had drawn the chums of the Grammar School together again; but it was only for a time. The coolness between Gordon Gay and Gustave Blanc continued, and they seldom spoke to one another. The French junior sometimes cast one of his pathetic glances at the Cornstalk, but Gordon Gay never seemed to see it. The fact that Mont Blong was playing a part—that he was deceiving the rest of the school, weighed upon Gordon Gay's mind, and he could not be frank and easy with the French junior. And Gordon Gay's coldness to Mont Blong drew the Woottons away from him. They did not know the cause of the trouble; but they could not, of course, desert an old friend for a new one; and as Gay avoided Mont Blong, they naturally came to see less of him, too. If he had not been quartered in the same tent, they would probably have lost sight of him altogether.

Mont Blong certainly felt the estrangement from his "shum" very deeply. He did not look for another chum. He was on very friendly terms with Frank Monk & Co., but he did not "shum" with them as he had done with Gordon Gay.

Gay felt it, too, though he would not say so. He felt that if Mont Blong had any explanation to give, he ought to give it; and if he did not give it, it was because he had none.

And the Cornstalk would have nothing to say to a fellow who admitted that he was pulling the wool over the eyes of the other fellows, and in fact, living a life of pretence. His spying on the German master, too, worried Gay. It was doubtless true, as Mont Blong averred, that Herr Hentzel was a German spy. But what right had Mont Blong to shadow him and even play the listener outside his tent. If he had been a detective, employed to watch the man, it would have been different. But a schoolboy had no right to play the shadower, whatever his motives might be.

Poor Mont Blong, estranged from the chum he had chosen, was not very happy just now; and besides having lost a friend, he had made an enemy. There was no doubt that Herr Hentzel regarded the French junior with suspicion and dislike. He could not have known of his presence in the cave on the occasion of the visit of the German officer; but for some reason he regarded him with suspicion, and he lost no opportunity of making the French junior feel his dislike.

Mont Blong endured that very patiently. When, in the German lessons, Herr Hentzel "ragged" him over-much, he generally found some way of retaliating, and the sympathies of the Fourth were certainly with Mont Blong.

It was about a week after the affair of the headland, when the trouble between the French junior and the German master came to a head.

Herr Hentzel had come into the canvas schoolroom in an exceedingly bad temper. He found fault with all the juniors in turn, and ragged poor Potty Benson till that plump youth hardly knew whether he was upon his head or his heels. Finally, he turned upon Mont Blong, who was looking calm and innocent and as good as gold; and he dragged the unfortunate French youth up and down through German irregular verbs in the most unmerciful way.

It occurred, oddly enough, to Gordon Gay, that Herr Hentzel was really trying to discover whether Mont Blong knew more of German than he gave out. But if that was the case, Mont Blong played his part well. He displayed just enough knowledge for a Fourth-Former, and no more. And as Herr Hentzel took the view that that was not enough, poor Mont Blong had a rough time in class, and finished with being ordered to write out two hundred lines from Goethe's "Faust."



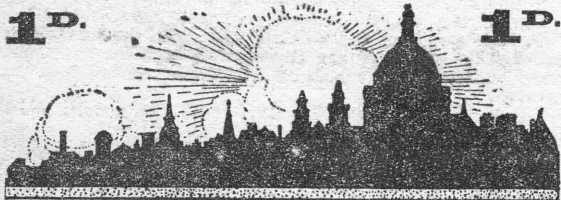
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Whereupon, Mont Blong "got his own back" in one of his peculiar ways. Instead of writing out successive lines, he appeared to misunderstand, and wrote out one line from the poem two hundred times. And the line he selected was "Das Spioneren ist die Lust"—"Spying is your pleasure."

Mont Blong took the lines in to Herr Hentzel in his tent after lessons, and presented them with great meekness.

The German master glanced at the sheets, prepared to find fault; and his face became quite white with rage as he saw what was written.

He had really no reason for finding fault; for the line was undoubtedly from "Faust," and it was very well written. But the innuendo conveyed in it was decidedly provoking, and Herr Hentzel gave way to his temper.

He crumpled the sheets in his hand, and reached out and gave the French junior a sounding box on the ear.

Mont Blong reeled back, more astonished than hurt. Masters at the Grammar School were allowed to use the cane, but a box on the ear was strictly forbidden. Mont Blong's eyes blazed with rage.

But he had no time to speak. Herr Hentzel grasped him by the shoulder, and swung him out of the tent, and he staggered away, and fell outside.

Gordon Gay & Co. were near at hand, and they ran up at once.

Harry Wootton picked the French junior up.

"What's the row?" he asked.

Mont Blong was stuttering with rage.

"Ze rascal! Ze Sherman rottair! He strike me!"

"Phew!"

"He pitch me out of ze tent!"

"The rotter!" said Wootton major. "Here, where are you going?"

"I go to strike heem, also!"

Wootton major and Gordon Gay dragged the excited French youth back.

"Take it calmly," said Wootton major, chuckling. "You can't punch a master's head, you know. Must draw a line somewhere."

"He strike me viz fist——"

"Come away, you ass!"

"I have ze satisfaction——"

"Rot!"

And the chums of the Fourth marched the shrieking French junior away.

Mont Blong resisted, but it was of no use. In the grasp of the three sturdy juniors, he was marched forcibly away to the seashore, and held there till he calmed down.

"Don't play the giddy ox, you know," said Jack Wootton. "I suppose you don't want to be expelled from the school, do you?"

"I zink zat I make him sit up!"

"That's all right—but you can't punch his head."

"Ha, ha! No fear!"

"If you stand by me, my shums, I pay him out all serene," said Mont Blong, eagerly. "I zink zat ve raid his tent to-night, and turn it inside out."

The juniors chuckled.

"Good egg!" said Harry Wootton. "But it's risky!"

"I do not care for ze risk!"

"Same here. But——"

"If you don't help me, I make ze raid on my own, all by myself!"

"Oh, we'll help you. What do you say, Gay? We can't have Fourth-Form chaps knocked about like giddy punching-balls, can we?" said Wootton major.

Gay shook his head.

"Quite right," he said. "Herr Hentzel has been getting his ears up too much altogether lately. A ragging would be a hint to him to put them down."

"Hear, hear!" said Jack Wootton.

"It's easy enough, too," said Wootton major, thoughtfully. "You know he always goes out for a walk after supper—some of his blessed spying, I suppose. We could turn his tent into a giddy wreck while he's gone."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

And the juniors, having discussed the scheme and decided upon it, waited for night.

When Corporal Cutts' bugle sounded lights out that evening, Gordon Gay & Co. retired to their beds, but they did not go to sleep. After Delamere had made his rounds, they slipped out of bed and dressed themselves again. Tadpole was fast asleep, as usual, and they did not wake him. Four of them would be enough for the work they had in hand.

Lurking among the shadows of the tents, they saw the burly form of the German master at last, leaving the camp.

"He's gone!" murmured Gordon Gay. "Come on!"

A minute more, and they were in Herr Hentzel's tent.

They did not waste time there.

The juniors of Ryleombe Grammar School had had some

experience in ragging, and they knew how to improve every moment.

Every article in the tent was turned out or over, and the bed was upset, and the bedclothes tied in knots and scattered on the ground.

In ten minutes, the four juniors had done more damage than could possibly be set right in a couple of hours.

Mont Blong devoted most of his time to a large ironbound box, which was locked, and secured by an additional padlock. But he did not succeed in breaking it, as it was, of course, impossible to make a noise.

"Better let that alone," said Wootton major, "you can't possibly bust it. Besides, I expect Sauer Kraut keeps his papers in it."

"Vous avez raison—you are right, my shum," said Mont Blong.

And he left the ironbound box alone.

But his eyes did not leave it till the juniors left the tent. They returned to their own quarters chuckling, and turned in.

"There'll be a fearful row about that to-morrow," said Gordon Gay. "We shall have to prove a jolly strong alibi."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The juniors were soon fast asleep. Half an hour later Mont Blong sat up in bed.

"You asleep, my shums?" he murmured.

There was no reply, save the deep breathing of Gordon Gay & Co., and the steady unmusical snore of Tadpole.

Mont Blong rose silently from his bed. He unlocked his bag, and took something from it, which he slipped into his pocket when he dressed. Then he stole softly from the tent.

It was a quarter of an hour later when he returned. His face was a little pale, and his eyes shining with excitement. He slipped quietly into bed without awakening his chums.

Missing Papers!

"Ach!"

Herr Otto Hentzel uttered that exclamation as he stepped into his tent.

His foot caught in something on the floor, and he stumbled forward, and fell at full length with a loud grunt.

"Ow! Oh! Ach! Himmel!"

The German master sat up, gasping.

He realised that there had been a "rag" in his tent during his absence; and his little piggy eyes were scintillating with rage as he scrambled to his feet, and turned on the light.

"Mein Gott!"

The German simply glared as he saw the fearful state his tent was in.

"Ach! Dose poys!" he gasped. "Ach! Mein Gott!"

The burly German stood with clenched hands and furious face, glaring round at the wreck of his quarters.

Suddenly a new thought darted into his mind; and he made a quick step towards the ironbound box.

He breathed a deep sigh of relief as he saw that the lock and the padlock were both intact.

"Mein Gott!"

The German master sat down, and unlocked the box, and opened the heavy lid. In the interior were several loose papers; but the box was almost empty.

Herr Hentzel gazed into the box, with every vestige of colour fading from his face.

"Mein Gott!" he stammered. "Mein Gott! I have been robbed!"

For several minutes the German master remained there, as if transfixed by the discovery.

Then he leaped to his feet.

He dashed from the tent, and rushed across to the quarters of Dr. Monk, the Head, where a light was still burning. He rushed into the tent, and Dr. Monk and Mr. Hilton, the master of the Fifth, who were chatting together, started at his sudden entrance.

"Goodness gracious, what is the matter, Herr Hentzel!" exclaimed the Head, in alarm. "You look as if you had seen a ghost."

"I have been robbed!" shrieked Herr Hentzel.

"What!"

"I have been robbed."

Dr. Monk rose to his feet.

"What is that—what do you say?" he exclaimed.

"Robbed! What do you mean?"

"Somevun has robbed my tent."

"Good heavens!"

"Te tief shall be found! He must be found! My papers! Dey are gone!"

"Calm yourself, Herr Hentzel," said Mr. Hilton quietly. "If you have been robbed we shall do our best to recover

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what has been stolen. It was very incautious to keep valuables in so insecure a place as a tent."

"Dey was locked up."

"Locked up in what?"

"A pig ironbound box."

"Is the box gone?"

"No!"

"Then it has been broken open?"

"Nein, nein! Te lock have been pick."

Dr. Monk looked relieved.

"Ah! I was afraid you meant that one of the boys had taken something belonging to you, Herr Hentzel," he said.

"If the lock has been picked that is evidently the work of a professional thief."

"Nein, nein! It is te poys."

"What!"

"Dey have rag te tent. They have upset everyting!"

"Dear me! You had better show us what has happened, Herr Hentzel."

"Follow me, den."

The Head and the Fifth-Form master followed the excited German to his tent. The scene of disorder that met their view caused them to utter exclamations of surprise.

"Dear me, who can have done this!" exclaimed the Head.

"It is der poys."

"It certainly looks like what the juniors would call a rag," said Mr. Hilton. "It is the work of mischievous boys, I suppose. But the robbery—"

"Is that the box, Herr Hentzel?" asked Dr. Monk, looking at the ironbound chest in the middle of the tent.

"Ja, ja!"

"It has not been broken," said Mr. Hilton.

"Nein, nein! It have been unlock."

"Had you lost the key?"

"Nein. I have tat here."

"Then it must have been opened by another key, or picked?"

"Ja, ja wohl!"

"Then it certainly cannot have been done by any of the boys," said the Head decidedly. "It is absurd to suppose that any of the boys of this school would be able to pick a lock like a burglar."

"I quite agree with you," said Mr. Hilton.

The German master waved his hands excitedly.

"My bapers have been taken."

"Private papers of yours?" asked Mr. Hilton.

"Ja, ja!"

"Not money?"

"No, no! Dere was no money dere."

"That is fortunate. Yet it is certainly singular that a burglar should come here to take your private papers," said the Head, in astonishment. "Were they of any great value?"

"Ja, ja! Papers and photographs for a book which I shall write some day," said the German master, after a momentary hesitation. "Dey are value to me, but to a purglar, nein, nein! It is for a shoke dey are taken by the poys."

"But a boy could not pick a lock!"

"I tink so—ja, ja!"

"Then you think that the boys who have ragged your tent have also taken your papers from that box?" asked the Head.

"I am sure of tat."

"There shall be a strict inquiry, of course," said Dr. Monk. "You are quite sure, I suppose, that the papers were here—that you did not place them somewhere else by mistake, or in a moment's absent-mindedness?"

"Mein Herr! Ja, ja!"

"Then in the morning—"

"In to morning!" shrieked Herr Hentzel. "But in te morning it sall be too late. Dose papers may be sent away!"

The Head regarded him in utter astonishment.

"Sent away! What do you mean?"

"I—I mean hidden away!" exclaimed Herr Hentzel, flushing. "Tat is vat I mean. Ve must not give te rascal time to hide dem away."

"Perhaps if we made a round of the camp, sir, we could see if any of the boys are still awake," said Mr. Hilton.

Dr. Monk nodded.

"Very good; let us go."

They left the tent, and made a round of the camp. The hour was very late, and only one tent was lighted. It was that of Mr. Adams, the master of the Fourth, who was busy with examination papers. He looked up in surprise as the visitors glanced into the tent.

"Is anything wrong, sir?" he asked, rising.

"Herr Hentzel's tent has been ragged, Mr. Adams.

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Have you seen or heard anything unusual since lights out?"

"Nothing at all, sir."

"Thank you."

All the rest of the tents were dark. The prefects as well as the juniors were in bed and asleep. Dr. Monk paused at last.

"The boys, whoever they are, have evidently gone back to bed," he said. "We cannot disturb the whole school at this hour, Herr Hentzel. There shall be an inquiry into the matter early in the morning."

"But mein papers!"

"If they have been taken by a boy in a joke they will be safe to-morrow morning," said the Head. "If you had any idea which were the boys in question—"

"I have, sir. I tink it is Gordon Gay and his friends."

"Indeed! Why do you think so?"

"It is like tem—it is like vun of deir tricks."

"I do not think so," said the Head coldly. "If you have been very severe upon them, Herr Hentzel, they might have ragged your tent, certainly. But I do not believe for a moment that they would unlock a box and meddle with private papers."

"I tink—"

"I am sure it is impossible," said the Head. "Besides, their tent was quite dark and quiet when we passed it; they are in bed, and I have never known those boys to break bounds after dark."

The German stared at him.

"Vat!" he ejaculated.

"You heard what I said, Herr Hentzel."

"Ach! Yes, I hear. But you say tat tey not break pounds of a night—"

"I said I have never known them to do so."

"But last veeek," shrieked the German—"last veeek vun night I take you to deir tent, and show you tat tey are out of pounds."

"What?"

"You must remember, Herr Doktor"

"I remember nothing of the sort," said the Head testily. "And I certainly did not visit Gay's tent after lights out any night last week."

"Mein Gott!"

"I cannot tell how such a fancy came into your head—"

"It was te evening you went to Netherby, sir!" gasped Herr Hentzel, wondering whether he was dreaming, or whether the doctor was. "You came paek early, and I take you dere to Gay's tent, and dey are gone. You say leaf to matter in your hands, sir."

"You are dreaming, Herr Hentzel. I came back late that night from Netherby, and Mr. Hilton was with me, and he stayed in my tent till I went to bed," said the Head testily. "I am sure you remember that, Mr. Hilton?"

"Perfectly!" said the Fifth-Form master.

"But—" stammered the German. "It was you—I say tat it was you—you—"

"It was some absurd mistake," said the Head, feeling a strong suspicion that the German master had been drinking; "and if you made such a mistake as that, you may have made a mistake about supposing that you left the papers in the box."

"Ach! Tat was no mistake!"

"Well, the school shall be assembled and questioned early in the morning. I cannot have the boys awakened at this hour."

The Head's tone was very decided, and Herr Hentzel saw that it would be useless to persist. He returned to his tent. There he sat for some time on his bed, his head bowed in his hands, thinking.

"Is it tat I have dream?" he muttered. "I tink tat I take te Head to tat tent—mein Gott! I speak to Delamere, too, and he say he have seen the Head tat night. It is certain tat he vas here. Yet he say he was not here, and Mr. Hilton he say te same. Vat does it mean? Is it tat dere is somevun like him—or—or—"

The German master was still in a maze of conjecture when he went to bed. Herr Hentzel hardly closed his eyes that night, and at the first gleam of the summer sun upon the sea and the shore, he rose.

Herr Hentzel Loses His Temper!

"Something's up!" said Gordon Gay.

And his chums nodded.

Something was evidently "up."

The chums of the Fourth had been down to the beach for an early morning bathe, and the moment they re-entered the school camp, they could see that something unusual was going on.

The masters and the prefects were looking very serious, and groups of the fellows were talking together in low tones.

"What's the row, Monkey?" asked Gordon Gay, meeting Frank Monk as he came in.

"Somebody been ragged over-night, perhaps?" asked Wootton major, with a grin.

Monk looked at him curiously.

"It wasn't you chaps, surely?" he exclaimed.

"Well, as a matter of fact, we ragged Herr Hentzel's tent," said Gordon Gay. "Keep it dark, of course. It was for hammering Mont Blong."

"But the papers—you took the papers?" exclaimed Lane, in surprise.

Gordon Gay stared at him.

"The papers? What papers?"

"Herr Hentzel says he has been robbed."

"Robbed!" exclaimed Gordon Gay & Co., in a breath.

"Yes."

"Last night?" asked Gordon Gay.

"Yes."

"I knew you fellows couldn't have had anything to do with it," said Frank Monk. "But it's rather unlucky you ragged the Herr the same night that somebody else selected to bone his precious papers."

"What papers were they?" asked Jack Wootton.

"Papers and photographs he was collecting for writing a book, so he says. Blessed if I knew he was writing a book. Shouldn't have fancied that he had the brains for it."

"No fear!" said Wootton major.

"It seems that the papers were in a box, which was locked up," continued Frank Monk. "Did you see anything of a box in his tent?"

"Yes; there was an ironbound chest. I remember Mont Blong hammered at it; but it was too strong for him to bust."

"Then, you didn't open it?"

"Of course not!"

"I heard Delamere telling Hake about it," said Monk.

"Herr Hentzel declares that the lock of that box was picked, and the papers taken out."

"Phew!"

"He found it so, when he came back from his walk last night. That must have been pretty soon after you chaps had been ragging his tent."

Gordon Gay looked very grave.

He remembered the keen interest Mont Blong had shown in that ironbound box; and he remembered, too, how Mont Blong had watched and shadowed the German. Was this some sort of the handiwork of the French junior?

Gordon Gay wondered.

"Well, I'm glad it wasn't you chaps," said Monk. "I thought it couldn't be. You'd better keep it jolly dark about having ragged the tent. If they know you went there at all, they'll put the whole bizney down to you."

"What ho!"

"Hallo! There goes the bugle for assembly."

And Frank Monk hurried off.

Gordon Gay followed more slowly, with his companions. His face was grim and thoughtful.

"I say, this is pretty rotten!" muttered Wootton major. "We could stand the racket for the ragging, if it came out; but it would be too thick to be suspected of meddling with a man's private papers."

"And stealing them, too!" said Jack gloomily.

"Herr Hentzel will put it down to us, if he can," said Gordon Gay. "We shall have to face the music."

"But, who could have got the papers?" asked Jack Wootton.

"Blessed if I know."

"Why should anybody steal his silly papers? Looks to me as if it's a wheeze to get somebody into trouble," growled Wootton major. "We've only got Hentzel's word for it that there were any papers in the box at all, and he's not exactly a George Washington, you know. He might make up a yarn like that to make things extra bad for us for ragging his quarters."

"Well, he's rotter enough," said Gordon Gay.

Mont Blong had not said a word. When the Form assembled with the rest of the school, the French junior did not stand with his tent-mates. The school were assembled in the open camp, under the blue sky, all the Forms in their places. There was a good deal of anxiety in the faces of most of the fellows.

The fact that a robbery had been committed was enough to send a very unpleasant thrill through all the fellows.

Until the thief was discovered, every fellow felt that, in some degree, suspicion rested upon all; and the German master had declared in plain terms that it was a question of theft. Why anybody should want his papers was a mystery; but certainly Otto Hentzel appeared to regard them as very valuable.

(An exciting instalment of this splendid serial again next Thursday, when more light is thrown upon the mystery of Herr Hentzel's stolen papers!)

A NEW FREE CORRESPONDENCE EXCHANGE.

The only names and addresses which can be printed in these columns will be from those readers living in any of our Colonies who desire Correspondents in Great Britain and Ireland.

Colonists sending in their names and addresses for insertion in the columns of this popular story-book must state what kind of correspondent is required—boy or girl, English, Scotch, Welsh, or Irish.

Would-be correspondents must send with each notice two coupons. One taken from "The Gem," and one from the same week's issue of its companion paper, "The Magnet" Library. Coupons will always be found on page 2 of both papers, and requests for correspondents not containing these two coupons will be absolutely disregarded.

All requests should be addressed: "The Editor, 'The Gem' Library, 23, Bouverie Street, London, E.C., England."

FOURTH LIST.

Miss E. West, Napier Street, Stawell, Victoria, Australia, wishes to correspond with a boy reader over sixteen years of age.

Miss E. Suter wishes to correspond with a boy or girl reader living in Scotland or Ireland, age 17—18. Address, 70, Osmond Terrace, Norwood, Adelaide, Australia.

W. S. Inglis, Oakdale, Avon Plains, Victoria, wishes to correspond with some readers living in England.

H. and A. Stack, Primrose Terrace, Ithaca, Brisbane, wish to correspond with two girl Gemites, age 14 to 15.

Miss V. Coleman and Miss V. Simpson of Greta, Ocean Street, Bondi, Sydney, Australia, wish to correspond with two boy readers of "The Magnet."

W. Short, 153, Victoria Parade, Fitzroy, Melbourne, Australia, wishes to exchange picture-postcards with any girl readers in England, age 16—17.

B. S. Lawrence, Box 26, Te Aro, P. O., Wellington, New Zealand, wishes to correspond with readers with a view to exchanging stamps.

R. Dodds, Dart Street, Boulder, Australia wishes to correspond with one or two "Gem" readers, age about 26.

W. F. Ashley, Fire Brigade Station, Esk Street, Invercargill, New Zealand, wishes to correspond with a girl reader, age about 15½.

Miss M. Williams, of Azalea Street, Prospect, South Australia, wishes to correspond with a girl reader in the British Isles, age 13—14.

Miss V. Curran, 129, Market Street, South Melbourne, Victoria, Australia, wishes to correspond with a girl reader, age 13—14.

E. J. Davies, Box 270, G.P.O., Adelaide, South Australia, wishes to correspond and exchange postcards with a girl reader age 15—16, living in London.

Miss M. L. Bryant, c.o. Union Electric Co. of Australia, Margaret Lane, Sydney, New South Wales, Australia, whose age is 16, wishes to correspond with a boy or girl reader of "The Gem," in either Wales or England.

J. O'Neill, of Albert Street, Daylesford, Victoria, Australia, wishes to correspond with Catholic readers, age 15.

C. Usher, c.o. Smith & Caughay, Queen Street, Auckland, New Zealand, wishes to correspond with girl readers between the ages of 17—19.

E. Jones, c.o. G. L. Perrett, Loch Lomond, Larro, Via Newcastle, N.S.W., Australia, wishes to correspond with a reader.

M. Sterrett, Elderslie, Rathmines Street, Fairfield, Melbourne, Australia, wishes to correspond with a girl reader living in England, about 16 years of age.

M. Horne, 30, Dry Street, Inveresk, Launceston, Tasmania, wishes to correspond with readers in the British Isles.

C. E. Edwards, 40, Theatre Chambers, Dunbar, Natal, South Africa, wishes to correspond with readers in England.

Miss S. I., "Rheinland," 124, Sivewright Street, Doornfontein, Johannesburg, South Africa, wishes to correspond with readers in United Kingdom.

J. Johns, P. O., Box 52, Beaconsfield, South Africa, wishes to correspond with readers in England.

F. Hudson, 15-16, Ware Chambers, King William Street, Adelaide, South Australia, wishes to correspond with readers in Ireland.

W. H. Cullen, 53, Julia Street, Quebec, Canada, wishes to correspond with readers in England.

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NEXT
THURSDAY:

"STAGE STRUCK!"

A Splendid, New, Long, Complete School Tale of the Chums of St Jim's. By MARTIN CLIFFORD.

OUR SPECIAL WEEKLY FEATURE

**"STAGE STRUCK!"**

This is the title of the magnificent new, long, complete tale of Tom Merry & Co., of St. Jim's, written by Martin Clifford, for next Thursday's "Gem" Library.

Monty Lowther, the humorist of the Shell Form, is for once in deadly earnest, and his strange and sudden infatuation for all things theatrical causes great trouble, not only for himself, but for his chums also.

My readers will find

"STAGE STRUCK!"

an absorbingly interesting school story, with glimpses of theatrical life—a tale they will thoroughly appreciate.

Ask for What You Want.

I am glad to say that I have had many letters in response to the invitation I recently extended to my readers in these columns to "ask for what they want," and a number of them contain valuable suggestions, which I shall be glad to carry out as opportunity offers.

The letter published below is one of the sort I like best to receive from my reader chums, inasmuch as the writer states plainly what characters in the two famous Companion Libraries appeal to him most, the sort of article he considers most suitable, and so on. This is my correspondent, E. W. C.'s, cheery letter in full:

Wimbledon, S.W.

"Dear Editor,—I am writing these lines to tell you what I think of 'The Magnet' and 'The Gem' Libraries. By far the best books for clean, healthy stories of school life are, I am convinced, the above-mentioned splendid books. Of course, there are many so-called school stories appearing now, but still I don't think any of them touch 'The Magnet' or 'The Gem.'

"My favourite characters in 'The Magnet' are the Famous Four, and Mark Linley and Wun Lung, Hurree Singh, and Dick Russell. Billy Bunter, with his postal-orders and stupidity, is extremely funny. In 'The Gem,' I like the Terrible Three, Jack Blake & Co., and Figgins & Co., and Redfern & Co. A. A. D'Arcy, with his elegant attire and pronunciation, is very humorous. I should like to hear more of Buck Finn.

"Referring to your letter in this week's 'Gem,' in which you tell us to ask for what we want, I think that hints upon the following would be very useful to your readers: Photography, Running, Swimming, etc., Stamp and Coin Collecting, etc.

"I think the idea of 'Magnet' leagues is a good one. As for that boy who a little time ago formed an 'Anti-Magnet' League—well, to say the least of it, I think he must be slightly mad! But for every one reader it lost, I expect, 'The Magnet' got perhaps a hundred new ones!

"Well, wishing you every prospect of good luck, and also long life to 'The Magnet' and 'The Gem.'

"I remain, dear Editor,

"Yours sincerely,

"E. W. C."

Many thanks, E. W. C., for a particularly bright and interesting letter. All the subjects you suggest for articles are most appropriate, and those that have not been covered already will certainly be dealt with in due course.

Back Numbers Offered and Wanted.

A. Lynch, 198, Valley Road, Streatham, S.W., wishes to obtain any twenty numbers of the halfpenny series of "The Gem" Library. Will pay half price.

P. Currie, care of McDougall, 8, Lynn Gardens, Hillhead, Glasgow, wishes to buy all the early numbers (up to 165) of "The Gem" at half price.

V. Delaney, The Bungalow, East treet, Selsey, wishes to obtain No. 205 ("His False Position"), of "The Gem" Library.

(This column, which has now been open for many weeks will, in future, be discontinued.)

Diving Hints for Beginners.

As soon as a boy knows how to swim well, he should learn diving, as this increases his confidence in himself—improves his nerve, and his general athletic ability, and, what is more, adds a great charm to the water pastime. These remarks apply equally, of course, in the case of girls; therefore, a graceful and pleasing method of entering the water, such as diving is, should be well cultivated.

Some beginners are very much alarmed on first being told to dive into the water, and usually end up with going in feet first, which method, although very handy when the depth of the water is unknown, is not to be recommended. It is not diving at all, as this latter is the act of springing into the water head first.

In learning to dive, the best way of getting hold of the correct movement is for the pupil to stand upon the edge of the bath, where the water should be at least five feet deep, place his hands above his head, with the thumbs touching, and bend his body over slowly until he falls headfirst into the water. Several attempts will have to be made before the movement can be accomplished correctly. Then, when thoroughly accustomed to the headfirst plunge, the beginner should go to the diving-board, and stand on the end perfectly erect, with his legs together. As the spring is made from the board, the arms must be swung round to the front, and the legs thrown up, thus bringing the body into a straight line.

The chief points to be remembered in diving are to keep the body and limbs perfectly rigid; the hands, too, must be kept straight, with the palms facing downwards. The head should be so placed between the arms as to strike the water with the forehead, and not with the top of the head.

One of the best and easiest dives is the "swallow" dive, in which the head is well thrown back, the legs stiff and together, and the arms stretched out horizontally with the shoulders, and the back well hollowed. After springing off the board this position is kept until within a few feet of the water, when the arms must be brought together sharply above the head, so as to strike the water first. This dive can be performed from a standing position or with a sharp run. It is better with the latter, as more force can be put into the spring, which throws the diver outwards and also upwards, so resulting in a better dive.

The "swallow" dive is one that is perhaps most used, but another that is popular amongst swimmers is that known as the "plunge" dive, which is performed as follows:

The swimmer should stand as far upon the edge of the bath as possible, with legs stiff, and the toes projecting over the side, balancing himself upon the balls of his feet. As the length of the plunge depends partly upon the amount of breath in the lungs, the pupil should make sure that his lungs are well filled before starting. If the arms are swung above the head it will greatly assist the operation. The next thing is to bend the body until the arms are stretched horizontally above the water. Then spring from the side of the bath, keeping the body stiff. Do not dive too deeply; practice will show the proper depth. At the end of the dive the arms and head should be on the surface. This position should be kept until it is found necessary to raise the head for breath, or until the force of the dive is spent.

The above two methods of diving are most generally used, the more difficult dives being gradually acquired as the beginner becomes an expert in the art of swimming.

THE EDITOR.