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By **MARTIN CLIFFORD.**

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CHAPTER I. Inside and Out.

"Glad you're here," said Lester Lovison.

"Yes, I am," said Tom Merry.

Tom Merry entered as he crossed down the passage in the School House at St. John's. He was hurrying down from his study with a letter under his arm, and Lovison and Minkins were waiting for him at the foot of the stairs. But he passed without the shop, employment office of Lovison of the Fourth. He was just passing that open doorway at No. 2 Study in the Fourth floor passage.

"Welcome to the Fourth," stood in the doorway, looking very red and uncomfortable. Lovison, the omniscient owner's boy at St. John's, and then in the Fourth-floor at St. John's, shared his study with his class, Lumley-Lumley, and with Lovison and Minkins, of the Fourth. Lovison and Minkins were in the study now, and the door was standing.

"Get out!" I've told you before that getting out wasn't wanted in this study. "If you want to, you'll go out on your own."

"But it's my study, Master Lovison," said Wilson.

Lovison smiled.

"Your study or not, you're not reading in here. You ought to be in the fifth at all—and you know it. My hat, my hat, my hat, you were bringing the presents round to the back door! Now you're in the Fourth! Should I know that?" Lovison's voice was in!

"I know it," said Minkins.

"The Head ought to know better, and I don't think Lovison's letter ought to be allowed to go round the school without your consent. Anyway, the letter ought to be in our study. That's my study!"

"I don't know that I've done any 'new' yet," said Grimes. "Well, you're completing the King's English, for one thing, and Lovison's study papers," and you're a member outside the school!"

"I ain't leaving off," said Grimes steadily. "This 'ee is my study, and I'm reading it. You got to do some work."

"You stop work's sweeping out the grocery shop at St. John's, and cleaning the windows," said Minkins.

"And talking round the garden," said Lovison. "If you want to read, Wilson, you can go into the book-room. I dare say they will be pleased with your company. You're not."

"Not a bit!" said Minkins.

Grimes was very odd, but he did not retreat. Most of the St. John's boys had been very kind to Grimes; but the two boys of the Fourth had never been known to be drawn to anybody. But Grimes, though he was very quiet, and had, perhaps, never been a state of ill-humor on a St. John's boy, was certainly bold. He stepped into the study with his hat, looking very square and it glared in his eyes.

Lovison jumped up.

"Are you going out?" he exclaimed.

"No, I ain't," said Grimes. "If Master Lovison's letter's better remember that I've told you once, and you'll go out if you get up too rusty."

"I'm not going to fight with a shop boy," said Lovison loudly.

"You're not a shop boy and I've told you once, and you'll go out three you can't."

"You, rather?" said Minkins. "Are you going?"

"No," said Grimes emphatically. "I ain't."

"Then here you go!"

THE CAPTAIN'S REALM! AND "BIRDS OF PREY!"

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Levinton and Mellick rushed at Grimes together. "William dropped his books, and put up his hands at once."

Mellick staggered back with a yell. But Levinton fastened upon the other's face, and closed with him, and pulled to Mellick for help. In a moment Mellick was struggling with the son of the man.

"Two voices were heard in the passage—the wailing of Mamma and Mamma Levinton, of the Street."

"Tom—Tom Merry! Their long air you going to be with that doctor!"

"What a tick!" shouted Jack Tom Merry.

"Kiss! Back up!" yelled Levinton.

"Can't come!"

Tom Merry dropped the books in the passage, and stepped into St. A Study. Grimes was pouring up a gallant fight, but the two men of the Fourth had him down on the carpet, and Mellick was coming on the floor. Neither of them saw Tom Merry, and had they reached Grimes one at a time, Tom Merry would not have thought of interfering. But here in one moment play, and Tom Merry thought that it was time for a more serious "ship-in."

"I've got him!" cried Levinton. "Now get a cricket-stump, Mellick, and you'll make him. We shall have a chance like this again!"

"You won't have a chance, you little!" exclaimed Tom Merry, grasping Levinton by the back of the collar and wrenching him off Grimes. "Get off!"

"He!"

Levinton rushed across the study with Tom Merry's grip on his collar. Grimes grappled with Mellick, and threw him off, and Mellick rushed on the hamstring. Grimes staggered backwards to his feet.

"Thanky, Master Merry!" he gasped.

Tom Merry laughed.

"You is one's son cricket," he said. "Now, Grimes, I need when was going out, and I advise you to prove to show us matters than you can reap into your own study whenever you like. I'll look after Levinton while you prove it in Mellick." Grimes shuddered.

Mellick stepped on the rug. "Now that the odds were no longer in his favor, he did not seem inclined to go on. There was a small bandage to the passage, and Mamma Levinton and Mamma stepped from the study accordingly."

"You Merry!"

"Tom Merry, you behind!"

"What are you waiting time in study room for, when we're sitting for the hour?"

"Look here, you behind!"

"All wrong," said Tom Merry. "The better one with five shillings. Levinton and Mellick think that Grimes couldn't reap his own study. Grimes is going to prove to them that he can, and I'm going to see him play."

Mamma Levinton grinned.

"Oh, that about the game!" he said. "This is as good as done. Go it, Grimes!"

"This is!" said Mamma. "I'll hold your jacket."

"Let me go!" yelled Levinton, struggling in Tom Merry's grip.

"Did I do you," said Tom Merry cheerfully. "Grimes has a little argument to get through with Mellick."

"I—I—I was only joking," gasped the wretched Mellick.

"I haven't any objection to Grimes coming into the study, only you know. In fact, I—I want him here. I—I—"

"Get up!"

"You too, I—I—"

"I won't hit you, Master Merry," said Grimes. "I don't want to be a chap who don't want to back up to one's words."

"That's where you make a mistake," said Tom Merry calmly. "Mellick wants to have the rights of the master demonstrated to him."

"I—I don't!" stammered Mellick.

"You you do. Get up!"

"You I!"

"Take the cricket-stump to him, Grimes!"

"Oh, Master Merry—"

"Stop, please, my son!" said Mamma Levinton, with a shriek. "If you don't, we'll bring you. Now, then, Mellick, will you have the cricket-stump at Grimes's feet?"

Mellick apparently hesitated that Grimes's feet would be the best position of the bow. He approached to do his duty.

"You him take!" stammered Tom Merry.

"Look him!" said Tom Merry.

"Oh, alright," said Grimes.

And Grimes advanced upon Mellick. Mellick put up his hands, but he fell down at once as Grimes gave him a light tap. He lay groaning on the carpet.

"Get up, you wretch!" yelled Mamma Levinton, stirring the end of the Fourth with his foot.

"Oh!" gasped Mellick. "I—I'm hurt! I've sprained my ankle, I think! Oh!"

"Well, of all the fools I think that never takes the odds!" said Mamma in disgust. "Kick him out, Grimes!"

"Hush to!" said Grimes. "They was going to knock me out. One good turn deserves another."

"Hooray, hooray!"

And Grimes laid his strong hands upon Mellick, and Mellick went writhing through the study doorway. He bumped upon the door with a crash, and with a groan, he lay in a state of insensibility, however, he seemed able to rise now. For he jumped up, and disappeared down the passage at top speed.

Tom Merry returned his eye upon the wretched Levinton.

"How you are, Grimes?" he said. "Now talk it over with Levinton."

"I won't fight this game, and I won't interfere."

"You can please yourself about that, but you're going to be kicked. Go it, Grimes!"

"I don't want to hit you, Master Merry," said the punk-stuffed Grimes. "I don't mind 'em neither one's words. I ain't ashamed of being a grover. I'd rather be ashamed of being down on a game than what ain't no play at all."

"Grimes, my son," said Mamma Levinton solemnly. "Your statements do you honor! They wanted one of a book I read once, called 'Glean by Linn, or Life by Linn,' or something of the sort. But they won't do for the Linn's. We're not good enough for them, and we can't live up to them. Therefore, you'll be a grover, and a grover."

"Oh, she will give to me and give you the bumping of your fist!" said Levinton.

"Put up your hands, Master Levinton!" said Grimes, advancing upon the end of the Fourth.

Levinton put his hands into his pockets. He had the best of reasons for not wanting to fight Grimes. He had tried it many already, and he still had the marks of it upon his face. He did not want a second exposure of the same sort.

"I won't fight you, you said!" he snarled. "I fight with my eyes."

"You don't fight with nobody if you can help it, Levinton, old man," said Mamma Levinton. "If he won't put up his game, Grimes, check him out!"

And Grimes laid hands upon Levinton. Levinton took his hands out of his pockets then, and closed with the new boy, bringing his teeth snapping. They whined round the study, breaking all noise and light for a few moments, and then there was a moment's gap—and Levinton went flying through the doorway.

Jump!

He landed in the passage outside with a terrific exclamation.

"How do you do, Master Merry?" he asked Levinton. "Are you satisfied, Levinton?"

"Oh, yes!"

"You're satisfied that Grimes has come into his own study whenever he likes?"

"Oh, yes! Oh, yes!"

"I suppose that means you," said Tom Merry. "We'll leaving you in possession, Grimes."

"Thank you, Master Merry!"

"Not at all," said Tom Merry pathetically. "Pleased? Come on, you chap! There won't be much more fight for these parties."

And the Fourth Three of the Street left No. 4 Study. Tom Merry passed in the passage to speak a word to Levinton, who was rising up and gasping.

"You'll be Grimes alone now, Levinton," he said. "If you want to tackle him, tackle him one at a time, and nobody will stop you. But if there's any more stinging by two to one, you'll be made an example of. Understood?"

"Oh!" gasped Levinton. "I'll make you sorry for this, Tom Merry! I'll make that grover and carry, too!"

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(See column 2, page 77 of this issue.)



"Stand and deliver!" Trotter was crying the cry, and as he ran panting under the old man's challenge rang out, "Your basket of your glady life!" came Trotter's roar. (See Chapter 2.)

CHAPTER 2.

Lansley-Lansley Has His Doubts!

LANSLEY-LANSLEY, of the Fourth, came into the school-house a little later, and acceded to his study. Lansley-Lansley, the fellow who had once been known as the Octopus of St. Jim's, had since been called the Octopus here, where a third-class gentleman. It was Lansley-Lansley who had brought Octopus to the school—Octopus had saved his friend at a time when he was down on his back—and the Octopus of St. Jim's never forgot a benefit or an injury. He had persuaded his father, the millionaire head of Lansley, Limited, to pay Octopus's bill at the school, and the millionaire had instead Mr. Hobson to give Octopus a chance there. It was the chance of a lifetime for the once-time greener's lad, and Octopus certainly was very grateful, and was trying his best to do Lansley-Lansley credit. And yet a doubt crossed the Octopus's mind at times as to whether he had done wisely. He had meant well by Octopus, but he wondered, St. Jim's had supposed Octopus only work with a few exceptions like Lovell and Helton and Crocker. And Octopus was not of this stamp, and Lansley-Lansley would not want him to suffer by his selfishness with the new lot. If he were not satisfied, he might not say so, for fear of creating suspicion. Lansley-Lansley continued:

Several Lansley-Lansley had known that the world a great deal better to come to St. Jim's. He had not always been rich; it was not so very long ago since he had stood on the First Step, in Paris, with a six-month price list before him and stamps. They were the days before Lasswell Lansley-Lansley had made his pile. His pile was made easy, and it was a tremendous one. But Lansley-Lansley, in his heart, often regretted the peaceful life of plenty and comfort with the old millionaire Octopus, when he did not know where he got next was coming from, but was then, as first and afterwards in the hands of St. Jim.

Lansley-Lansley's growing suspicions had given him a knowledge of the standard in a boy of his years. He knew that wealth and status do not make happiness. He knew that crags made in society has probably about as much happiness

as any other, that the difference in the lot of a duke or a duchess counts richly in wealth. Each has his own set of troubles—very different sets generally, but just as troublesome to the possessor. Lansley-Lansley drew the different chance in life of a St. Jim's fellow and of a greener's lad. But he knew too, that a greener's lad was quite as likely to be happy as a St. Jim's fellow, and what did the new matter? He had begun to doubt his wisdom in taking Octopus away from the employment where he had been cheerful and jolly, always with a cheery smile and a cheery word, and placing him in a new life, where the work was new to him, and more trouble than any of his labors at Mr. Hobson's shop had been. And he knew that Octopus's ideas, too, were not just those of St. Jim's. Octopus was contented to do his work, and to handle every hour's work on the new unexcitable side of goodness. He didn't get any extra night, but certainly hard work was not the order of the day at St. Jim's. And it had struck Lansley-Lansley, strongly enough, that Octopus was a little excited at some of the things he did at the school. The St. Jim's fellows would have started if they had passed that they fell short of the standard of the greener's shop! Lansley-Lansley himself glanced at the idea, but he felt that something of the sort was working in Octopus's slow, steady mind.

Lansley-Lansley passed in the doorway of his study, and watched Octopus at work. The one-time greener's boy sat at the table, patiently waiting until the first easy steps to Patience. Octopus did not take kindly to the station. His private opinion was that the fellow were better, to sell to one another in such a very extraordinary hope. He did not see how they could have got on without a definite article, and the one-thing worried him, but made him wrinkle his young brow.

He was wondering to himself why he work at the Octopus looked in Lansley-Lansley's presence as an unpleasable man. Octopus was talking to his friend, "Jim, Jim, Jim," and it troubled him more than it troubled the "father" in the First Form.

"Ho!" muttered Octopus. "Leave me, that seems low! This time Lansley-Lansley, No. 222.

Swamp, Lane, Complete Tale of Tom Tiddler & Co and Others, the Captain of St. Jim's. By MARTIN LLOYD, 22

Money, it means this 'ere! That's right! His—the 'er money—that mean that there! I've getting an! His—money—there—the money! Surely like a drink, it then! I—look, Master Lumsby!

He caught sight of the friend in the doorway. Lumsby-Lumsby greeted, and came into the study.

"Writing away, Grimsy!" he asked. Grimsy sighed.

"Yes, Master Lumsby!" he said. "Mr. Lathom 'ave been so kind as to set me this 'ere copying! There Lathom master speak same as we do in some ways. I'm anxious, where we say this 'ere—"

"No, no, no!" cried Lumsby-Lumsby. "It's the other jobs, Master Lumsby!" he asked.

"I guess you don't say 'this 'ere' in English—and in real English!" said Lumsby-Lumsby. "Grimsy said! How are you getting on with the giddy processes?"

"It's bad!" said Grimsy. "It's coming worse!"

"Yes, I 'ope so!" said Lumsby-Lumsby.

Lumsby-Lumsby looked at him keenly.

"Are you glad you came to St. Jim's, Grimsy?" he asked. Grimsy hesitated and coloured.

"That is off your chest, old fellow!" said Lumsby-Lumsby. "I'm tough, you know, I like the facts!"

"It was worse kind of you, Master Lumsby, to bring me 'ere, 'ind every kind of your father—I come, your father—to see the best way with you?"

"I didn't ask you that, Grimsy! I asked you whether you were glad you had come to the 'im's, I guess!"

"It's a good chance for me, Master Lumsby!"

"I didn't ask you that, either! Are you glad you came to St. Jim's?"

Grimsy's colour deepened.

"I'll be disappointed to say I wasn't!" he replied at last.

"I hope I sha'n't never forget 'ow kind you've been to me, Master Lumsby!"

"That's nice 'er, Master Grimsy!" said Lumsby-Lumsby. "Well, never mind now! Grimsy, old man, about these giddy processes in the 'ere, and come out to the better practice! It might light enough to punt about!"

"Right, Master Lumsby!"

Lumsby-Lumsby slipped his arm through Grimsy's, as they walked down the Fourth-Floor passage. His doubts as to his wisdom in changing Grimsy's sphere of activity had deepened.

"I saw your 'old pal, Flibber, in the village this afternoon, Grimsy!" he said.

Grimsy frowned up.

"Flibber?" he said. "I sha'n't ever 've done I like to this 'ere school, Master Lumsby!"

"He was your 'old regard?"

"Good old Flibber!" said Grimsy, with conviction. "There sha'n't a better teacher's boy nor Flibber in Sussex! Master Lumsby! Are you ever change, too?" he asked before the end of the sentence he said, "I'm glad!"

"No, I guess I haven't, no change!" said Lumsby-Lumsby. It occurred to the teacher for the first time that, in coming to St. Jim's, Grimsy had necessarily begun with his school pals, the fellows he had known from childhood; and perhaps his days with poverty and distress in their houses beside his.

"Grimsy is right!" said Grimsy, with enthusiasm. "I'd you ever 'ave 'em for laugh with Master Gay, of the Grammar School? I think that was about your time 'ere, p'raps. Flibber reminds they 'ad, all his 'ind square, the both of 'em with-drawing, and neither was 'atted. And about 'em, after a, the real experience, they did I think not, Master Gay, of the Grammar School—any of them Grimsy? I you should see Grimsy 'emself! I play, too, and I play for the 'ellows in 'emself! I play, too, and I play for the 'ellows in 'emself! I play, too, and I play for the 'ellows in 'emself!"

"Grimsy, stop that!" said Grimsy, with a look of sternness. "Grimsy, I sha'n't play for those no more!"

"You'll see them!" said Lumsby-Lumsby.

"Yes," said Grimsy, suppressing a sigh. "They was good work, all of them! 'Atkinson' follows all the work, and plays 'ere on Saturday afternoon; that's my way!"

"What's your best enough for you here, Grimsy, I guess!" said Lumsby-Lumsby good-humouredly.

"Well," said Grimsy slowly. "It do seem a bit like waste a day's life, don't it, Master Lumsby?"

The St. Jim's junior started.

"Hasting a player's life?" he said.

"Something like that!" said Grimsy. "Follow by my class I see things very well, Grimsy. It makes a difference if

you've been sick, I 'guess; but it always seems to me that of fifteen a better ought to be 'ailable of work, and think of public, in way in the world!"

"Perhaps he ought," said Lumsby-Lumsby thoughtfully. "Well, here we are! You know 'atted!"

"Tom Merry & Co. were coming off the boat-ground."

"You jolly dash to keep it up!" said Tom Merry. "Ever mind, we'll give you a kick as good if you like, Grimsy!"

"Thank you, Master Merry!"

"You'll have to stick to practice, you know!" added the junior captain of the school team. "We've playing you against the Grammar School on Saturday!"

Lumsby, who was standing by the ropes, burst into a smiling

"Playing that green against the Grammar School!" he exclaimed.

"Yes," said Tom Merry.

Lumsby nodded.

"If I were in the Grammar School eleven, I'd refuse to play!" he said.

"My dear chap, you'll never be in any eleven!" said Lumsby-Lumsby. "If you get into one, there'll be ten resignations, I guess!"

"Don't you, Lumsby?" said Jack Blake, of the Fourth. "Stand up, or we'll knock you!" My John!" he added, as an afterthought. "I'll knock you, anyway! Collie has!"

"That's another!" said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "Collie the old, that's another!"

But Lumsby had vanished.

Masters went back into yard, and Tom Merry found the ball in Grimsy. Masters put it all his power to keep the ball out, but he had no chance. Grimsy beat him every time, and Masters was a good goalkeeper, too! With a crowd gathered round to watch the performance of the green's boy.

The following day stopped the practice. Tom Merry slipped Grimsy on the shoulder with enthusiasm.

"You'll be a real in pickle for the Grammarians!" he said.

"I'm glad if you're not a giddy bloomer! Next week we're playing Robinson-Woods, and you'll show the giddy fellows what you're made of!"

"They know already!" shouted Grimsy. "I was shipped off the Grammar School, Master Merry!"

"Oh, if you don't want to play against your old club, of course, you'll let you off!" said Tom Merry. "But you're going to give the Grammarians a lesson! Come in to see me."

And Grimsy was coming off to Tom Merry's study to talk with Lumsby-Lumsby and all the fellows, too, of the school house. And if it should had been going on Grimsy's leave, they were shared your own. It was impossible for anybody not to be jolly in Tom Merry's study with the chance of the school team to see.

CHAPTER 2.

Grimsy in the Rowing!

TOM MERRY looked round the study, and looked into the cupboard, as the crowd of juniors, both and twenty from the boat-ground, crowded in. Besides the Twelfth there, there were Blake and Winton and Dicky and D'Arcy, of the Fourth, and Holly and Kenneth and Bannister, of the Sixth. It was a good-sized party for tea, and the contents of the study cupboard were comprised in half a loaf, half a tin of marmalade, and three lumps of sugar.

"Grimsy!" said Tom Merry.

"Thank, both!" said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy cordially.

"Eaten?" said Winton. "What's the food?"

"Grimsy."

"Bacon?" said Bannister. "I'm hungry!"

"Grimsy, you will have to wait a bit while we get some thing from the boat-house! You can wish to eat by the table, and under the tent, and eat the tent, while I send Toby down to the boat-house for the trophy!"

"You won't send Toby!" said Henry Lumsby, with a grin. "Toby's away on his holiday, instead! That fellow Theobald's been, instead of Toby; but he's just arrived. I'll whistle him up."

Henry Lumsby stepped into the passage, and put his finger to his lips and blew a shrill note. One of the third put his head out of the work shed.

"That's that one," he called.

"That?" said Henry Lumsby quickly. "It's a signal, my boy. When I whistle, you see Theobald!"

Turning the page, along about the passage opening, Toby, the house-keeper, was away on his holiday, and the day passed untroubledly. At a quarter of ten, he had only a few scraps of news from Tom Merry & Co., and he was only the ready to answer Master Lumsby's whist.

"The I see, Master Lumsby?" he said.

"That's that," said Lumsby. "Are you off duty?"

Toby's shoulders.

"I've come out," he explained. "I'd have anything to do for you, my good master."

ANSWERS

The Gun Lesson.—No. 22.

"Just here!" said Missy Lowther. "I don't know where the corkage and the house-charge would best be charged if that's the way you see the bill, Tom?"

"Here it is," said Tom Merry. "Want half-a-quid, too?"

Missy Lowther laughed.

"I've got a tuppence," he said.

"Nonsense, old man!"

"Nonsense!" said Missy Lowther. "I wanted my last three bits in a new sort of style to-day."

"Well, of all the ones!" said Tom Merry wrathfully. "To show the last of the steady steady in fifty three when we've got a fifty-two!"

"But five!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "I should like you to allow me to lend you a half-crown, don't you?"

"Half-quad!" corrected Lowther.

"Half-crown, Lowther!"

"Half-quad!"

"Half-crown!"

"Half-crown, you like!" roared Tom Merry. "Hand it over—hand it over!"

"Handy, Tom Merry!"

"Hand it over!" yelled Blake. "Can't you see we've something to pay?"

"Waddy, Blake!"

"Shall you?"

"I was just to ask Tom Merry to accept a slight loan!"

"No need to ask," said Tom Merry briskly. "I'm ready. Hand it out!"

"Thank you, Gussy!"

"Get the corkage and come to the cash!"

"Ho, ho, ho!"

"Waddy, you fellows!"

"I wish to see you going to lend me a half-quad, or any other sort of loan or half-quad?" demanded Tom Merry.

"Half-crown, don't you?"

"Half-crown, then, you see! Hand it over!"

"I am every way ready!"

"Nothing is heavier about that, if you see. Check it over!"

"I am sorry, but I am quite steady," said Arthur Augustus. "My pocket has failed to send up a receipt, and I am quite steady."

Tom Merry glared at the word of St. Jim's.

"You mean hollowhead!" he ejaculated. "If you're steady, what are thirty odd you after in lend me ten bits for?"

"I didn't, don't you. I was just to say, when I was interrupted waddy, that I should like you to allow me to lend you a half-crown, if I had one!"

"You—yes—yes—yes!"

"Waddy, Tom Merry!"

"You learning waddy!" said Blake indignantly.

"I wish to be called a terrible' duffin!"

"Duffiness," said Tom Merry, money wanted; "Any small loan you proposed to this steady will be repaid without fail on Saturday. I am quite sure that it is not the usual thing to set people to lend me the bits to provide their tea, but necessary loans make, and a silly chap has wanted all the available cash in dispersing them. They say! Small contributions liberally received—larger ones in proportion!"

"Ho, ho, ho!"

"Here you'll let me lend you a half-quad, Master Merry," said Gifford indignantly. "If you wouldn't mind take a loan from me, now!"

"Gifford, old man, you're as lively as you are beautiful!" said Tom Merry affectionately. "I said all along that it was a ripping scheme of Lowther's to bring you to St. Jim's. I said all the time that you'd do the school credit."

"Ho, ho, ho!"

"Cash as well as credit," said Missy Lowther solemnly.

"Gifford, we've paid of you. Come to my seat, and be my like you on your last bit!"

"Oh, Master Lowther!"

"Hand over the half-quad, Gifford!"

"Half-crown, don't you!"

"Cash is, Gussy! Hand on the cash, Gifford!"

Gifford groaned sheepishly and handed in his pocket. He turned a half-crown out of one and a whole crown out of another. He held up the latter and looked at it, and stared at it as if hypnotized.

"My hat! Why, he's getting in fifty three!" exclaimed Missy Lowther. "A quid and a half!"

"A sovereign and a half, Lowther!"

"Ho, ho!" said Gifford.

"Hand over, Gifford," said Tom Merry. "What are you staring at that quid for? It's a good one, is it?"

"It's a good one right enough," said Gifford; "but it ain't mine."

"What?"

"It ain't mine," said Gifford, with a shake of the head. "It's one of your young gentlemen that I gave my pocket for a half-quad, you see, and I had taken it back!"

"But here! I should not expect that as a job in good taste!" said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

"What do!" said Missy Lowther. "If the quid's in your pocket, Gifford, it's yours. How could you possibly have another fellow's quid in your pocket?"

"I'll give it a job," said Gifford. "I ain't never to give half—two bits of my own and a half-quad that Mr. Lowther Lowther sent me to keep my allowance. You know Mr. Lowther Lowther is making me an allowance as well as payin' my tea too. Well, there's the half-quad, but this one I think you, then, it's mine. Somebody's showed it into my pocket for a job."

"That's a jolly good thing," said Tom Merry. "I don't understand it. However, don't have a sovereign of your own?"

"Quite so, Master Merry."

"Well, hand over the half-quad, and you can think over the sovereign. Blessed if I know how I got into your pocket if it ain't yours."

Gifford tossed the half-crown to Tom Merry, who caught it and turned to Trotter, who was making in the passage, giving it to him at the door.

"There's the lot, and there's the cash," said Tom Merry. "The lot comes to nine bob, and the other lot is yours, Trotter. Bye-bye!"

"Van Master Merry."

And Trotter "bowed off."

CHAPTER 4. No Thanks!

LEVINSON and Mellick were in the school yesterday when Trotter came in with the bill-merchandise, and a better than anything was serving the two ends of the French Press, and Lowther was paying. They looked round at Trotter, who saluted them respectfully.

Trotter knew Levinson of old, and Levinson knew Trotter, and yet not glad to see him at St. Jim's. Before coming to St. Jim's, Levinson had been at Gussy's, and he had had to leave that school under circumstances that did not redound to his credit. He had tried at times to keep the matter a secret at St. Jim's, but the attempt had failed, for he had been recognized by a Greyfriars fellow who had visited Tom Merry at St. Jim's. But Levinson held as high as possible in his mind about his position as a Greyfriars; and when he returned home to see his father, he carefully avoided them. And he had his bit to say when Trotter first appeared at the Nelson House in the place of Toby the house-keeper. For Trotter, like Toby, was having his natural holiday, and when in his place, he was paid as Greyfriars' school. Trotter was having what might be called a "business" holiday. He was a relative of Toby's, and he was acting as Toby's substitute while that young gentleman was away. Trotter had recognized that old Greyfriars' boy at once; but Levinson's expression when he saw him, warned the Greyfriars' page to keep his distance.

Trotter held the bill in the counter, and Missy Taggle began to hand out the good things, and Trotter thanked them into the basket. Levinson and Mellick watched him.

"What's that looks for, Trotter?" asked Levinson.

"It's for Master Merry," said Trotter.

Levinson nodded.

"Master Merry, is it?" he said. "Are they having a bed?"

"Yes, sir," said Trotter.

"Is that not Gifford in Merry's study?"

"Master Gifford is there, sir," said Trotter.

"Master Gifford?" asked Levinson. "Master Gifford is a Greyfriars' boy—what class are you at, Trotter?"

"Thank you, Master Levinson," said Trotter calmly.

"You're not on the upper to teach your way to him, or to call him Master Gifford," said Mellick. "Call him Gifford."

"I can't know my place, Master Mellick," said Trotter; "and I'm taking my cousin Toby's place, and I don't want to give no trouble."

"You'll be making an epitaph out of your own class, I suppose?" suggested Levinson.

"I never had credit on you at Greyfriars, Master Levinson," said Trotter.

Levinson turned red.

"Why, what do you mean, you said?" he shouted. Mellick then came forward—No. 102.



checked, and then suddenly became quite grave as Leville glared at him.

"I mean what I say, Master Leville," said Trotter. "You ain't no right to go for to try and make me disrespectful to Master Ottum. He's give me a job, anyway, and just ever give me a job of the time you was at Grayville when you was master!"

Mallick chuckled again.

"How you been and telling the folks here that I was nacked from Grayville? It's a lie."

"It ain't a lie, Master Leville," said Trotter steadily. "But I ain't told nobody. It ain't my business. You be up alone, that's all. If I was to be read in a school like this, I should expect the paps to tell me Master Trotter. It's only a matter of speaking, and it's right. Anyway, I ain't going to get myself into trouble among you don't like Master Ottum. It ain't good enough. Another job of 'em, please, Mr. Taggles."

Mr. Trotter
Leville looked at the page with glancing eyes. He was strongly inclined to punch him, but he would guess that if he attacked Trotter he would have to reckon with Tom Merry & Co. afterwards.

"You're a rotten wame, Trotter!" he said.
"Yes, Master Leville."
"And a liar and!"
"Yes, Master Leville."
"And a dirty mean!"

"Thank you, Master Leville," said Trotter impudently. "If I wasn't a servant here, Master Leville, I'd say the same to you."

"You-yes better than that!" said Leville.
"I ain't a thief," said Trotter, "and you know it. And I ain't ever been nacked in my life. You was nacked three three-days, with your fine and your expiring trips, and your getting fellows here trouble with your little games?"

"You young rascal, I've a jolly good mind to wipe up the floor with you!" yelled Leville.

"You'd better let me alone," said Trotter. "I ain't doing nothing to you. I ain't said a word about your getting nacked out of Grayville yet. I can't if you like, but I'm a servant here, but I'll complain to the York-master if you don't see, and tell 'em that you was master! of me again Master Ottum—my boss!"

Mallick drew Leville away by his sleeve.
"Master by his sleeve," he whispered. "Come away. I've got an idea."

The new ruler of the Island House took the back-door, leaving Trotter still sitting in the chair in the hall.

Leville's face was black with rage. It was too humiliating to be worried in an armchair with a new page and book-boy; but he had brought it upon himself.

He gripped his brother-in-law and led him to the deep tank of the wash-house.

"What's the idea?" he growled.
"Mallick checked."
"Figger!" he said.
Leville stared.

Figger of the Fourth was the leader of the juniors in the New House as Mr. Jim's, the deadly rival of Tom Merry & Co., of the Island House.

"What about Figger?" snapped Leville. "How Figger?"

"How like as much as you like," grinned Mallick. "But if that New House thing knows that Tom Merry was lying in a bed, what do you think they would do?"

"I don't know," said Leville.
"Exactly. You can't see, you know. Let's tell them."

Leville hesitated. The rivalry between the juniors of the top houses at St. John's was never-ending. It was again in order the Figger & Co. to resist a food of the rival juniors; but he felt a fellow to league with a rival house against his own was unusual.

Leville did not object to treachery on his own account, but he knew when the truth was likely to be of Tom Merry & Co. discovered how the information had been needed to Figger.

"Make Figger promise he won't tell," suggested Mallick. "You set over to the New House and see him, and—"

"Good egg," said Leville. "You set over to the New House and see him."
"No time," said Mallick.

"Why can't you do it as well as I?" demanded Leville.

"Because I don't choose to," said Mallick coolly. "If you want to set up the flag for Tom Merry and Ottum there's your chance; but I'm not making any."

And Mallick walked the other way, walking away. He disappeared into the dark under the door, leaving Leville looking and despondent.

Out the end of the Fourth quickly made up his mind. From Tom Merry Library, No. 112.

where he stood he could see the lighted window of Tom Merry's study, and he caught a glimpse of Ottum near the window.

The light of Ottum determined him. He started at a run in the direction of the New House, and went to a wooden back as he ran into three juniors in the shadows.

Three pairs of hands seized him, and he was caught all his feet.

"It's a fellow Ottum and!" cried the voice of Figger of the Fourth. "Hurry him to show him that he wasn't was about on the respectable side of the yard-thing!"

"Hurry, hurry!" said Figg.
"Hurry up, hurry!" said Fatty Wynn. "Or rather, you can hurry him while I get on to the back-door—"

"Hurry on!" purred Leville.
"We're waiting on!" exclaimed Figger. "Now, hurry—hurry—hurry!"

Leville descended upon the ground with a sudden vengeance.

"You!"
"You never," said Figger. "It's Leville. I know his exact voice. Now hurry—"

"Stop it!" purred Leville, writhing in the grasp of the New House boys. "It was looking for you, hurry!"

"Well, you're done up," said Wynn.
"No, he is not!"
"Yes," exclaimed Leville. "I've got something to tell you. It's important. Hurry!"

"What is it?" asked Figger emphatically.
"The new want to send a word from Tom Merry!" said Leville rapidly.

"What is it?" exclaimed Fatty Wynn immediately.
"You've got a chance," said Leville hurriedly. "They let me Trotter down to get in a supply of fresh-baked supplies. He's just going to leave the shop with it, and if you back up you'll get it."

"Well, you better!" said Figger, in disgust. "Fancy a shop giving his own Master away. Hurry him for being a traitor!"

"No, he is not!"
"Oh!" roared Leville. "You can't see! You noticed! You!"

"Hurry! Hurry! Hurry!"
"Wait!"
"And, having administered justice to the juniors, Figger & Co. hurried in the direction of the wash-house."

Leville remained grating on the ground. He sat up and graped and panted. His only consolation was that Figger & Co. were on the brink of the bed. They had administered justice to Leville, but they were not likely to let the booty escape them, and that was a consolation to Leville.

CHAPTER 8.
The Election.

"STAND and deliver!"

Trotter had finished packing good things in the basket, and had left the building. He was walking towards the school House, and as he passed under the eaves of the old building three figures leaped up at his back.

The challenge was not in Figger's voice, and Trotter halted in astonishment.

"Stand and deliver!"
"You better, or your giddy life!"
"Hurry up!"
And then there was a clink.

"Oh, it's Trotter, Figger!" said Trotter.
"No, he is not," said Figger sternly. "I am Dick Toppin the Second. This shop is Dick Merry's, and he's not here but he's under the cloak of the juniors. Now! and the fact before we before our hands in your grip and show your blood and your buttons!"

"No, he is not!"
"No word the grub," explained Fatty Wynn. "This is a House rule. Hand over the basket, or we shall slaughter you!"

"But the grub belongs to Master Merry," said Trotter in disgust.

"It's a mistake," said Figger hoarsely. "It belongs to us. Hand it over!"

"But, Master Figger—"

"Take the wretched stuff!" said Figger, in a deep voice. "Show us out of! Show the hungry child-ghost with his hands!"

Three pairs of hands seized Trotter.

"You see me, Master Figger!" purred Trotter. "I've got to see old Master Merry that you can talk the grub!"

"You, Figgie, you can talk him we have said," chuckled Figger. "Tell him we'll be pleased if he'll come over to see us."

"No, he is not!" roared the Co.

"Master Henry will be wild," said Trotter. "He'll discover a half-gallon of Master Gwynne for this one grub, Master Piggins."

"Good!" said Trotter. "The man says to me, too, but he's got my name for a name," said Piggins.

"He has," said Trotter. "And Piggins & Co. disappeared in the direction of the New House with the old John books."

"Well, my boys?" said Trotter, who was not so accustomed to his prominence in the possible little ways of the justice of St. John's. "My handy boys!"

And Trotter returned to the kitchen (House) rather discomfited, and made his way to Tom Merry's study.

He found the justice ready for tea, and in a state of great expectancy.

All eyes were turned upon the page as he appeared in the study.

"How do you do, Tom?" said Master Leather, who was making tea. "You've been a jolly long time, Trotter. Today would have been back in half the time."

"I'm sorry, Master Leather."

"Where's the dog?" asked Tom Merry.

"I'm sorry."

"You are!" exclaimed Master. "Have'n't you got

Master Piggins?"

"Pigs!"

"Master Piggins and Kew and Flynn—they've took it!"

And Trotter,

"There was a man."

"Piggins!"

"Dashed eye-balls!"

"Oh, crumbs!"

"But Jerry!"

"You are, Trotter!"

"You change!"

"You would have changed them!" roared Master Leather.

"You wouldn't see! You wouldn't see! You wouldn't see!"

"You wouldn't see!"

"You wouldn't see!"

"You wouldn't see!"

"You wouldn't see!"

"You wouldn't see!"

"You wouldn't see!"

"You wouldn't see!"

"You wouldn't see!"

"You wouldn't see!"

"You wouldn't see!"

"You wouldn't see!"

"You wouldn't see!"

"You wouldn't see!"

"You wouldn't see!"

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"You wouldn't see!"

"You wouldn't see!"

"You wouldn't see!"

"You wouldn't see!"

"You wouldn't see!"

"You wouldn't see!"

"You wouldn't see!"

"You wouldn't see!"

"You wouldn't see!"

"You wouldn't see!"

"You wouldn't see!"

"You wouldn't see!"

"You wouldn't see!"

"Puffed, fluffed, duffed, and done!" groaned Dicky. "You, Trotter!"

"Goodness!" said Tom Merry. "under the painful circumstances of the case, I don't think it worth it to do more but to call upon Trotter once more. Trotter, old man, we are all expecting large developments of mine at the justice on Saturday. Saturday is coming day. What do you say?"

"Yes, Trotter! I shall not, Trotter!"

"Trotter, Trotter!"

"But I'll not let my evening's rest be spoiled by this sort of thing that I'm taking to you, what I think is my job."

"Piggins, Piggins," suggested Master Leather. "Of course, it's according to those papers you find it in."

"He has," said Trotter.

Tom Merry took the envelope and turned it over in his hand. It was certainly a good one, and bore the image of his general Majorcy King George the Fifth. There was a deep scratch upon his Majesty's breast, as if someone had been scraping the sword with a keen penknife.

The envelope was genuine, and it represented twenty old days' worth of work at Justice Trotter's little shop.

"Goodness!" said Tom Merry. "we'll remember that by a most genuine and mysterious combination of circumstances"

"Oh!"

"At a time when the birds are few, and the state of gold is depressed, and credit is in a somewhat exhausted state."

"Oh, Trotter!"

"At a time, to be brief, when we are strong birds, and laid up for a feed, we supposed that Justice Trotter's goldmine in his pocket."

"He has," said Trotter.

"Now, when a fellow finds a sovereign in his pocket, the natural conclusion is to suppose it is that he's hit the gold."

"Good!" said Tom Merry. "I don't want to appear to be a party to any of it, but I must state that my opinion is that this gold mine is his, and that he has forgotten his own name by it. Well, don't forget to tell his friends of their own mind. I think this gold mine is his, and he's a good fellow that Justice has forgotten. Very truly he made a good profit out of it, or at least he's a good fellow, and a good fellow about it in the way of making up his mind to be a good fellow."

"Oh, Master Henry!"

As all events, if the case isn't done by Trotter, it must have been done by the justice's pocket by some goodly quantity of gold in his pocket. He was quite sure where the gold mine is, and he's a good fellow about it in the way of making up his mind to be a good fellow. He was quite sure where the gold mine is, and he's a good fellow about it in the way of making up his mind to be a good fellow.

"He has," said Trotter.

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"The team's broken," said Monty Lester. "By the way—"

"Ho, ho, ho!"

"Are?" said Tom Merry. "Goodness, a ho!" Here's a thingy, the hoards of the ho, and they're always had a spell in the pocket when his pants are laid up."

"Ho, ho, ho!"

"Ho, ho, ho!"

And the team was drunk with laughter.

CHAPTER 5.
Old Pat.

"Hullo, Plicker!"

Plicker, the teacher's boy, passed in the old High Street of Rotherham, with his hands on his ears, and regarded Thomas of St. Joe's with a peculiar expression. It was the day following the day in Tom Merry's study. Thomas had a pain out, and had gone down to the village to get some of his belongings from his old quarters, and his face looked up very much as he caught sight of Plicker. Plicker did not seem to notice Thomas's bright look or his unsteady hand.

"Ho!"

"Ho, ho, ho!"

"What's your name, Plicker?" he said.

"No," said Plicker.

"Well, ain't you glad to see an old pal?" demanded Thomas warmly.

"Oh, yes!" said Plicker.

"Oh, so young for, then," said Thomas.

Plicker gave Thomas a look that was somewhat queer from something in the water. Thomas did not notice the pucker. It was the hand of an old chum, and that was enough for him. Plicker's handshake was very firm.

"You don't seem very well, and above pleased to see me," said Thomas, looking at Tom.

"There ain't nothing the matter," said Plicker.

"Was any one looking around at us for, then?"

"I ain't looking around at you, as I know."

"Look, you, Plicker—"

"I'm looking," said the teacher's boy calmly.

"I think you might be a bit more chummy with an old pal and Thomas." "What 'ere I done?"

"You ain't done nothing."

"Then ain't the new?"

"Then ain't my new."

"You're jolly."

"I ain't."

Thomas was a very good-natured fellow, and he felt very friendly towards Plicker. But he felt really somewhat surprised and suspicious when the teacher's boy at that. The bright look looked out of his face.

"I'm in a hurry," added Plicker deliberately. "I've got to get these few things changed down to Mrs. Washfield's."

"Oh, alright!" said Thomas. "If you ain't got time to speak to an old pal, you can get on. You never need to be in such a hurry to get things done, I remember."

"Prize an old pal ain't got time to speak to me," said Plicker.

"What do you mean?"

"Prize anybody is better," says "Up up in the world now to you to a my school," said Plicker calmly. "Prize to 'old' teacher be seen talking to a common teacher's boy?"

"I say, Plicker—"

"Prize, somebody's reading, talking to an old pal you ain't be for to look at how he's got expensive clothes and a 'ho-ah' suggested Plicker, in the same casual way.

"How the 'ho-ah'!" said Thomas. "I've never 'oo the eye, and my teacher on my own instead of a rotten Latin grammar in my pocket!"

"Common!" said Plicker.

"Honest!" said Thomas.

Plicker looked suspicious.

"Then you ain't partial on side and wouldn't even an old pal?"

"I'll jolly well punch your silly nose if you say I'm common!" said Thomas indignantly. "I've got to do this now. Who says I'm common?"

"Well, if you ain't—"

"Thomas I ain't," said Thomas. "What are I got to speak about?"

"People don't always want to have something to speak about when they speak," said Plicker angrily.

"Well, I ain't that way," said Thomas. "I don't see why we can't be chummy just as we used to. Side's to the big school don't make no difference to me."

"If you say you've jolly well with me?" said Plicker.

"Who says?"

"You'd say yes."

"Let you?"

Tom Merry's name—No. 101

"Then you ain't going to come over your old pal?" said Plicker.

"Course I ain't. Fact is, Plicker, do you," said Thomas. "I'd rather be alone; you and those fellows playing the tummy-to-tummy. But you know our Monty Lester has done it for me!"

"It was a big thing to do for anybody," said Plicker.

"I know it is," said Thomas. "And I can't just appreciate, but you know I'd rather have it with me, and we could I believe?"

"You wouldn't?"

"Course I wouldn't," said poor Thomas. "It looks up of I'd be in my mind about the future. I don't be able to forget that getting along I was sent up for. I guess I shall be alone then when I have St. Joe's, and I guess I shall get something to do to make my living. I don't know. I've that lot of public school things can't get into. Come why? They're too slow to turn to work, and there ain't enough any place to go to."

Thomas looked somewhat bitterly.

"Come on," he said. "I know you I was a bit sorry at first. But I ain't got to think of that. I thought I would be alone then when I have St. Joe's, and I guess I shall get something to do to make my living. I don't know. I've that lot of public school things can't get into. Come why? They're too slow to turn to work, and there ain't enough any place to go to."

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Apparently the boys had not been feeling so pleased for these few days as the change of things. Mrs. Washfield was waiting for these things down, and Washfield would be the get into the things down with no likely to be delivered for some time yet. The two old pals turned into River Lane, and dropped into the little shop which had been set up in the window of the house, and to the happiness who worked on the river. Thomas gave a sign of satisfaction as he caught the odour of the fresh fish, and the two boys set down in a moment with the business allowance of exchange with between them—then the shop, enough to make it look happy, as Plicker remarked.

"Oh, ain't it prime!" said Thomas, as he helped himself with his fingers, after impressions not being supplied at the establishment.

"Prime about the word," said Plicker. "It's nothing!"

Plicker had put his hands under the table for safety, and he got the fish in it as made some of the change down were not satisfied by the shop. The fish were upon the strong change. Fortunately, Mrs. Washfield was not there to see it.

"That's all," said Thomas.

"What? Don't you get enough to eat at the school?" asked Plicker.

"Oh, yes!" said Thomas. "It ain't that. I get plenty and the young girls stand back, and ask me to be."

"Oh, they don't, do they?" said Plicker, with a reassurance of nature.

"But it ain't like this," said Thomas.

"Not so good!" said Plicker, all smiles again.

"No, they don't."

And Thomas's face worked away as they had not worked in Tom Merry's study at the school.

"And work at the school?" asked Plicker, in a pause.

Thomas smiled.

"What's that?" he said. "That's in my line, you know. I've always been thinking of important matters, such as learning business, and vitals and spirit of goods, and that kind. It comes to me almost without me a lot of better things of better but better and useful 'berry and early life."

"They don't know any better," suggested Plicker.

Thomas smiled.

"That's it," he said. "They don't know any better. They would that I—It's the way they've been brought up. They've got their own way, and they've been brought up to do. You or have to do it. And Thomas looked heavily over the fish, and said: "I've come on in the world, anyway. I'm not a boy I want with St. Joe's. What about the school?"

"Not much," agreed Plicker.

"You mean more things, Plicker?"

"Plicker, Don't they do 'em things 'ere?"

"Honest?"

"Course, you ain't to say a word what I say to you," said Thomas. "I ain't got to be so much as Mrs. Washfield. He's a splendid chap, though, for don't understand. I'd rather stay at the school all the rest of my life than 'ere be feeling," said Thomas bitterly.

"You ain't so well to stand it, Grimsy. Pick it to him plain."

"Grimsy shook his head. "I wouldn't 'let his feelings, and he wouldn't understand neither. He would I tell him, even all his feelings, and his father says 'em down with as much energy. That I had as I'm reading you 'em there? I couldn't do it."

"Yes, he's well," said Grimsy, with a sigh. "But it does me good to see a jaw with you, Flibber. Look 'em, wouldn't it be to let me to play for the Windows as usual in the morning? I got to play for Tom Shew's team to-morrow, but who that—"

"Couldn't he show," said Flibber. "Most of the fellows would think you was petting 'em, and they would cut up with."

"It's best not to play for the old team," said Grimsy. "But I s'pose you're right. It ain't possible to 'cut with the 'ave and the 'ave with the 'ave."

Flibber nodded sympathetically, and finished the fried fish. The two lads left the dining-table, and appeared in the street. "Come and see us one week, Grimsy," said Flibber, as they passed.

"Can't," said Grimsy. "Myself allowed out next dark." "I'll come if I can," said Flibber. "Aye, no," said Grimsy. "But I'll see you again next Wednesday, Flibber. That's a 'at Flibber, and you'll be off early, too. I'll meet you and Grimsy, and we'll 'ave a time for it as you go to."

"Flibber!" said Flibber. And they started. Flibber resumed his interrupted journey to Miss Pennington's residence, as to the dining-chamber, and thence to his room. And when he got to his room next Levison's evening glass, the thought of next Wednesday's meeting with Flibber and Grimsy comforted him, and he fell. Levison's supplement looks with great contentment.

CHAPTER 7. Levison's Lesson.

"I would look forward to to-morrow," Arthur Agassiz D'Arcy remarked to himself. "Looking forward to being left out of the eleven playing the trapezium I should think surely."

"If any man's his complaint take his mind, and his change a whether look, I should greatly rejoice to be left out of the eleven, Blake."

"Can't be helped. Somebody will have to be left out. If Grimsy is going to, and I certainly trust Tom Shew say that the third man would be left out."

Herrie and Dicky chuckled. "You speak us, Blake!" said Arthur Agassiz D'Arcy. "Well, I can only say what I've heard," said Blake philosophically. "I thought I'd let you know, as that you can go and buy two lappas to-morrow, as Foster will be all."

"I would you to do us, Blake. I am little" forward to to-morrow, because I expect I shall get a visit in the morning." "Oh, good!" said Blake thoughtfully. "Now you're talking, Foster will be all with it, you change."

"Wendy, Blake!" "What's a new shape?" said Dicky. "What's a new color by Fyrene," said Herrie. "And mine's a new pair of books here," said Blake. "I hope your governor won't disapprove on this time, Blake. He might go round to the House of Lords about some one like the Ignorance Bill, and forget to pass the law."

"Why ain't he talk out of the bank of your neck, duck boy?" murmured Arthur Agassiz D'Arcy. "I want that duck very particularly in the morning." My notice has asked me for his bill. I expect that as watch within of him, because I only see him four pounds, and it has only been with a few weeks, you know. Of course, I can not afford to say that Shew's talk, but Mr. Wagg in Wycombe. I remember."

"And if the first don't come, he'll very likely put in an objection, and near your bill talk and recitals," said Blake solemnly. "Oh, Grimsy!"

"You speak a knock at the door of the study, and Levison of the Fourth got his hand in. The change of No. 4 looked at him glancing. Vain from the end of the Fourth was not welcome in No. 5. "You fellows want a coverage?" asked Levison. "Yes," said Blake. "Where?" "In London!"

"Oh, no!" "I saw him in a procession," explained Blake. "His name is George."

"He, he, he!" "Oh, don't be fancy," said Levison loudly. "I've lost a good coverage, duck boy!"

"I've lost a good," repeated Levison. "I want to know if you fellows have any one lying about anywhere. Somebody might have picked it up."

"If anybody has picked it up, Levison, he'll have handed it to the Commissioner, and you know that fully well, unless he knew the owner," said Blake.

"Well, it hasn't been handed to Mr. Halliday. I've asked him."

"Then it hasn't been picked up."

"I'm not accusing you of stealing it," said Levison, with his supplement grin. "I suppose it's about the house somewhere."

"Go and look for it, then," yawned Blake. "Don't the door after you," said Herrie.

Levison bowed.

"I had it in my hand yesterday. I've never lost money out of that pocket before."

"Perhaps it's then you started, then."

"Well, Levison, your remarks would imply that you suspect that somebody has picked your wallet pocket!" said D'Arcy severely.

Levison shrugged his shoulders. "Well, I shouldn't be surprised at that," he said. "All sorts of such mistakes seem to be admitted to be almost these days."

"Yes, some chaps who have been expelled from other schools, it seems," said Blake contentedly.

Blake.

The door closed slightly after Levison as he retired. The change of the Fourth chuckled. They did not see the Fourth, and they were at no pains to conceal the fact.

"I wonder if he's really had a coverage, or if it's only gas?" said Dicky, with a yawn.

"Oh!" said Herrie contentedly. "Don't trust a word he says. He's a rascal. You know how Tom's can't stand him."

"The door reopened and Levison looked in again. He regarded the change of No. 4 with a sneer.

"Talking about me, I suppose?" he said.

"Yes," said Herrie, in his slowest way. "I was just saying that you are a rascal, and that one can't believe a word you say."

"He, he, he!" "Yes, without!"

"Thank you," said Levison. "It's about time about the quilt. The second time about the quilt. The first time, I can't afford to let it. My father doesn't read me from his D'Arcy's paper, and I want that quilt. I was going to mention to you that it was marked, that's all, as you'll know it if you happen to see it."

"Marked!" said Blake, in surprise. "Yes," Levison explained. "There was a silver buckle put on the back side. I noticed it when I had it. You see, I don't have so many coverings as D'Arcy, and I look at all mine."

"You don't take much care of these, duck boy."

"Well, you'll know that quilt if you do," said Levison. "It is don't look up to night. You going to put a notice on the board to recover ownership and offer a reward?"

"Thank you!" asked Blake. "Oh, yes!"

And Levison went out with another class. Blake and Herrie and Dicky were chuckling. It was the characteristic face of Arthur Agassiz D'Arcy was only grave.

"Wherefore that silver buckle, Gustave?" Jack Blake inquired.

"My name is not Gustave, you see!" "My mistake. I mean Adolphus."

"Wendy, Blake!" "What are you speaking about?" demanded Blake. "I wasn't mistaken. For every I was looking thoughtful."

"Oh, yes!" said Blake immediately. "I was thinking of that coverage Levison says he's lost!" "The quilt, you mean?" "Fancy he serious, Blake. This is a serious matter. You remember that somebody Gustave found a coverage?" Blake started. "My hat! Is he?" "That Grimsy will be found that quilt in his pocket, and never know how it came there."

"I know. It's very odd. Suppose it should be Leveaux's message?"

Blake looked very uneasy.

"Oh, what?" he said. "How could it be? Leveaux must have dropped the message somewhere, and we know that Grimes wouldn't pick it up and keep it. If he was going to do that, he wouldn't mention that it wasn't his, I suppose. We should know that he had taken a message as well as the bank's teller."

Arthur Augustus D'Arvy nodded.

"Quite so, dear boy, and I think it is worth looking for Grimes that he did mention it."

"Why?"

"Because it's pretty certain that that message and Leveaux's message are the same message. How it got into Grimes's pocket I don't know, unless he picked it up in a moment of absent-mindedness."

"That?"

"Well, it's the same one. If a message is lost, and a message is found, it's a pretty close proof that it's the same message. My suspicion is might be a practical joke put through the mail, in the case of the post, but, if so, he hasn't succeed yet."

"My only last," said Blake, with a few shrugs. "If this message of Leveaux's little paper, I wonder! He's very bitter against Grimes, I know."

"I don't see how he could get the gold into Grimes's pocket," said Arthur, with a thoughtful look.

"Well, somebody got it there?"

"Yes, that's true."

"And if Tom Merry had's been here last night, and asked Grimes for a loan, Grimes might's have found it then," said Blake suddenly, "and then, if it was found on him after Leveaux complained of losing a gold—"

"That's true," said Arthur, "but what else either marked it for. He probably that it was marked when it came out of the bank, but it wasn't. He couldn't have got it from the Grimes's message, and was going to secure him of placing it. Of course, if there's a loan when happened in Tom Merry's early last evening, and that Grimes told in all that there was a gold in his pocket that didn't belong to him, and that he was ready to return it to the owner if claimed."

"The owner of that gold, I looked at one minute. There was no doubt in my eye at that minute that this was another of Leveaux's business schemes; a scheme to brand the paper he had with invisible figures. But for the accident of the stamp of the bank being wrong, and Grimes offering a loan, Grimes might not have found the message in his pocket in time to clear himself of suspicion. What had happened in Tom Merry's study was a clear proof that Grimes had got under the skin, but it was quite by chance that Grimes had produced it before so many witnesses, and made his statement about it. That chance the printing and of the Fourth had not returned us."

"My last!" said Blake at last, with a few shrugs. "The bank told it. It seems too thick to believe that he'd plant a thing like that on Grimes, but—"

"But it's quite clear," said Arthur, with a court. "You have Taylor wanted to tell him the day he came to St. John's."

"It seems quite clear, dear boy. Let's go and wrap him."

Blake shook his head.

"Hold on!" he said. "It's pretty clear to me, but we've not got proof yet. If we give him rope enough he'll hang himself. We all know the facts in advance. It's plotting against Grimes, but his eye, and let's see what kind of an eye he'll make of himself, and then we'll show him up before all the Fens."

"Oh, yes, but—"

"I'll go and see Tom Merry about it," said Blake, closing.

"He may have noticed whether the coin was marked, I remember to remember it pretty clearly. If it was a marked message Grimes found in his pocket, it makes it all clear."

"Yes, what?"

"The owner of the Fourth looked along to Tom Merry's study. The Twelfth Three were doing their preparation when Blake and he came in. Tom Merry, Maurice, and Leveaux stood in attendance as the four Fourth Persons as they came in, and Blake closed the door mysteriously behind him."

"Hullo! wherever this creature?" asked Tom Merry.

"Here you see the ghost of Nobody's Study again, or is King of the Bank after you with a case?"

"Nonsense, Tom Merry!"

"Nonsense, my son," said Blake. "You remember that?"

"That message, dear boy?"

"That's what I mean, Blake." "You remember that quiet Arthur had you ordered, Tom, the one he found in his pocket without knowing whose it was?"

"Yes, and Tom Merry, I wonder! What about it? Has the silly practical joke turned up, and asked for a look? He'll have it was all over."

Tom Merry looked—No. 100.

"Was it marked?"

"Marked?" explained Tom Merry.

"Yes. Was there a message on the bank side?"

"Yes," said Tom Merry, more and more surprised. "There was a little note on King George's board, I remember looking it at the time."

"That note?"

"That note?" said Blake.

"I don't see how it happened the Twelfth Three all together. It was on the table when you arrived at, Blake?"

Blake looked confused. The owners of the Third looked with surprise that grew into anger and indignation. Tom Merry drew a deep breath when Blake had finished.

"The awful gold!" he exclaimed. "Is it possible that he means to accuse Grimes of stealing the gold?"

"What else can he intend?" said Blake.

"The awful gold?"

"The rotten?"

"The rotten outside?"

"We'll show him up to the whole Fens!" explained Maurice.

"We can all prove that Grimes showed us the message and said it wasn't his. Once you show message don't tell a story about it; they'll not listen, and keep them to be returned to the sender."

"Without?" Grimes started quite dead.

Merry Leveaux burst into a sudden shriek. The justice turned upon him, and glared.

"Truly, Leveaux, this is not a time for laughter!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus D'Arvy severely.

"Oh, he, he!"

"Look here, Leveaux—"

"You go—"

Merry Leveaux waved his hand.

"Fifteen, my children! It's a joke—a page on Leveaux. We'll play him at his own game, and make him look out. Listen, and you'll see the gold!"

Arthur Augustus D'Arvy exhibited his teeth, and Tom Merry & Co. as they looked, checked him.

CHAPTER 6.
Plot and Counterplot.

DAME TAPPER was about to close her book when what Tom Merry looked in from the door of the quadrangle.

Dame Tapper gave him a steady look. Tom Merry this one of his eyes, and he was sure, if he had not been, his handsomeness, money her would have won my old lady's heart.

"The bank are just away, Master Jerry," she said, "but I will get them out for you."

Tom Merry laughed.

"It's not the bank, Mrs. Tapper," he said. "I paid a message over the counter here last evening—you remember?"

"Indeed I do, Master Jerry."

"Here you will get it? I want it."

Dame Tapper hesitated. Tom Merry smiled.

"Not as a loan!" he explained. "I've got a gold's worth of silver, and I want that message back, that's all."

He supplied her pockets on the counter and handed out a bit to hand of his, copper, and brass. The owner of the bank then he turned round and left in the kitchen house to make up the wounded man, and they had succeeded, though not without some difficulty.

"Yes, I think I will have it, Master Jerry," said Dame Tapper. "But I don't know how you will tell it, as I have two others as well. I suppose any of them would do, if it's a message you want?"

"No, I want that one specially," said Tom Merry. "It's marked—there's a mark on one side, made with a penknife."

"I'll look for it, Master Jerry."

Dame Tapper unlocked her oil and searched for the message. As she had only three in her possession, it did not take her long to discover the marked one. She passed it over the counter to Tom Merry, and gathered in the little bag of silver.

"That's it, Mrs. Tapper," said Tom Merry, examining the coin in the light, and comparing the reverse. "Thank you! Look here, it's anybody's guess and you question about it, you won't wonder that I've come to get it back, will you?"

"No, Master Jerry," said Dame Tapper, in wonder.

"It's a joke," explained Tom Merry. "I'm leaving the job against the other fellow, that's all, and I don't want this to get on it."

"I won't say a word, Master Jerry."

"Right!"

And Tom Merry slipped the coin into his pocket and retired to the study. Maurice and Leveaux were waiting for this in the study.

"So it is!" said Leveaux.

"Yes, here it is."

"Good!" said Maurice, with a chuckle. "Now to work up a little message for Leveaux."

"Oh, he, he!"

The strains of the Hall filtered into the School House. Blake and Co. and Laundry-Laudry were waiting for them there, having learned Laundry had been taken into the scene, and so had Collins. Collins was looking very thoughtful about it. It was something to him to discover the impulse to which Laverton's words had led him ever expressing them.

"We've got it," said Tom Merry.

"I guess that's all right, then," said Laundry-Laudry.

"Laverton's in the restaurant. One of you burst all with it while we keep our papers open here."

"Right-o!" said Laundry.

The ladies strolled into the restaurant. There were a good many ladies there, and Great Laverton was among them. Mellick and Crooks were with Laverton, and they were discussing the matter of the missing sovereigns in tones loud enough for the white-crowns to hear. Tom Merry & Co. exchanged a grin.

"Found your girl, Laverton?" asked Blake.

"No," answered Laverton.

"Blissed if I think it ever will be found," said Crooks of the Staff, with a sneer. "There are some shops in the school who may have slipped—on Laverton's study, too."

"That's enough on you, Mellick," said Blake sympathetically.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I don't mean Mellick," growled Crooks, as Mellick turned very red. "You know I don't. I'm alluding to tradesmen's shops who open to the school corridors."

"Mightn't you?" said Collins, turning crimson.

"Yes," said Crooks, indignantly. "If I had you in my study, I should keep my eyes under lock and key, I can tell you."

"Mightn't you?" said Laverton. "I've not accused Collins. I only say it's queer that the girl has disappeared. If I'd dropped it, why hasn't it been seen and picked up by someone? Besides, I know I didn't drop it."

"Perhaps you've still got it in your pocket somewhere," suggested Blake.

"No! I had it in my pocket when I had that tussle with Collins yesterday, and it was immediately after that, that I missed it."

"Oh," said Crooks significantly. "Immediately after Collins had his hands on you."

"Yes, his fingers after all the fuss."

"Looks pretty clear to me," said Crooks. "My opinion is—yes, indeed!"

"Oh!"

Crooks sat down upon the floor of the restaurant, and his head went up to his nose, and he gazed steadily at Collins. The other five were standing over him, with checked hats and blazing eyes.

"Now get up and have some more!" roared Collins. "You'll eat me a third, will you? Get up, and eat some more."

"I'll thank you," roared Crooks, standing up.

Crooks ate a much bigger fellow than Collins. He was not a fighting-man, but he was so much bigger and heavier than the other jacks, that Collins did not look the having much chance against him. But the Fourth Formar was not left to face his bulky enemy unaided. Tom Merry stepped between as Crooks started to the attack, and swept up the Staff fellows' hats, and, crooks, rubbing on, found himself looking into Tom Merry's eyes as they shone at him from Tom Merry's face. "The boss of the Staff studied into him there pleasantly." "Kerry does it, Crooks, he remembers. You're not going to get on a job as a kid. You'd see, if you're quailing for a reason?"

"Oh, Master Merry, I ain't afraid of 'em—"

"I know you ain't, Master Collins, but you're not going to tackle a chap twice your weight, all the same."

"You're not!" If Tom Merry did not intimidate, Gwynne, I should feel bound to give Crooks a handful towards his support."

Crooks' eyes flashed with a three-word.

"You were what he did?" he yelled.

"Yes, and I heard what you said!" said Tom Merry sternly, "and if Collins hadn't knocked you down, I'd have done it."

"Yes, indeed."

"Oh, now!" roared Crooks, and he swung angrily out of the restaurant.

There was some discussion in the restaurant about the missing sovereigns. If it had been Tom Merry or Blake who had lost the sovereigns, the matter would have been taken more seriously than it was. But Laverton was so full of tricks, that no one knew how to take any statement that he made. It was known that he was unscrupulous, and his statement that he had missed a sovereign did not prove to the fellows that he had really missed one. An English schoolmaster, Laverton's word on any subject left that subject exactly where it was. It would be exactly in keeping with what was known of Laverton's character, to pretend that he had missed a sovereign, in order to intimidate that Collins had stolen it; and unless the matter was so profound nobody was likely to take his assertion seriously.

"Oh the discovery Blake & Co. had made of Laverton's half-guineated job and a word was said. "Give a ringer ringer enough, and he will hang himself," is an old saying; and the chief of the School House had determined to give Laverton plenty of rope. And there was no doubt that the end of the Fourth, over-reckoning himself with his usual sagacity, would proceed—unintentionally, of course—to hang himself.

CHAPTER 9. Old Man Out.

THE next morning the janitor of St. Joe's started in the five o'clock train. It was a clear, cold winter's day; just the day for hockey, and in the afternoon was a better match with the Hyde Park Grammar School. The members of the junior eleven were looking forward to it; some of them with a little nervousness. For it had been assumed to give them a show in the town, and Tom Merry had explained that he would not give twelve men without the benefit of applying to the Hockey Association in order that rules on the subject—and very strict they would refuse to do in, Tom Merry had advised with heavy stress.

Somebody would have to stand out to make room for Collins, and there wasn't a fellow in the team who couldn't have stepped in less than two or three others were suitable to be left out than himself. The decision rested with Tom Merry, and he was much exercised in his mind about it. He thought more of that matter during morning lessons than of the valuable instruction Mr. Linton was bestowing upon the Staff. The forward line of the junior eleven, as at present composed, consisted of Blake, Laverton, Tom Merry, Kerry, and Higgins—the junior team being made up of players selected from both Houses.

Collins was a good forward, as Tom Merry had only four to choose from in looking out a player to make room for him. He decided, finally, upon getting it as goodly as he could to Blake. The change was not to his advantage, and Blake naturally couldn't expect to play in every junior match when there were equally good players waiting to take their turn. Only Tom Merry relished the game a little less as he thought of replacing another in Blake. He left his own club (Higgins was of the eleven, because there was better men to be had; Mellick was not fit to play). But Blake—

"Merry!" roared out Mr. Linton.

Tom Merry started out of a brown study.

"Down, sir," he exclaimed.

"I asked you how many."

"Thirteen, sir, Eleven, sir."

"What?" repeated Mr. Linton blankly. "I asked you how many children there were in a Roman cohort, and you say eleven."

"I was thinking of something else, sir. I—I'm sorry," Tom Merry stammered, turning very red.

Mr. Linton smiled grimly.

"I am glad to see that you are frank at all events," he said. "You will take fifty feet for instruction, Merry."

"Yes, sir."

"And you will kindly turn your attention to the lesson now."

"Oh, certainly, sir."

Tom Merry did, Mr. Linton's sharp eye was upon him, and he did not venture to think out the problem of the hockey eleven any more during morning lessons. The Staff were glad enough when lesson ended, and they were free to stream out into the bright, frosty atmosphere. The Fourth was dismissed at the same time, and Blake & Co. joined the Twelve Three in the yard.

"Still going to play Gwynne?" asked Blake cheerfully.

Tom Merry nodded.

"You'd like to have me out one of the chaps," said Blake thoughtfully. "One of the eleven as played in the last match, I mean."

"Yes, I can't play a dozen."

"That's the glibby variety!" said Blake. "It is Laverton I shan't say, but you're not very much good, considering—"

Merry laughed.

"You see!" he said.

"Will, that's it then for plain talk—regular heart-to-heart talk, you know, when you're talking a horse race," said Blake. "If I ever shippin, and I was going to leave Tom Merry out, for instance, I should simply say 'Shan't.'"

"Is that all?" asked Tom Merry thoughtfully.

"That's all," said Blake.

"That's a tip," Tom Merry remarked. "Shan't!"

"Shan't!"

"That's it."

Jack Blake ceased.

"What on earth are you driving at?" he demanded earnestly.

"Are you understanding a glibby tip, or have you gone off your chaps?" said Tom Merry bluntly. "Shan't!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Higgins and Laverton.

"Look here," began Blake warmly. "My dear chap, I'm taking your tip. I'm doing exactly the thing you would do if you were master captain." Tom Merry explained.

"You—you helped!"
"I've got to tell you to stand down, you see. So I'm asking you to give me a sign." Blake said.

"Stand down!" roared Blake. "No!"
"Stand back, you!"
"Something else, you. Why, of all the chaps!" said Blake warmly. "Why, I was going to suggest that I explained the team this time, to make sure of beating Gordon Gray. As for standing down, that's impossible!"

Tom Merry looked worried.
"Somebody must stand down, if I'm going to play Gordon Gray's standing out this time, and—what I thought you'd like to keep his surprise, you know."

"I'm not so fond of his company as all that," said Blake. "You could leave Gordon out. He's only a New House chap."

"Gordon's playing tomorrow. I've got to have out one of the first five."
"Well, don't leave him."
"Oh," said Gordon.
"On Friday or Sat," said Blake warmly. "Both New House chaps. New House chaps naturally ought to be the first to go."

"Tom Merry think his head."
"The New House are leaving now because they don't have half the team," he said. "Blake, old chap, stand out as a general favour to me, and don't groan."

Blake groaned.
"If Stanley-Lambert brings any more giddy guests to this school I'll take him into a quiet corner and cuff him!" he said indignantly.

"Oh, no, no," said Gordon. "Blake's playing decidedly." "swallow" when he met Gordon and Stanley-Lambert in the quad, a little later. My game the one under a very great load.

"Anything the matter, Master Blake?" asked Gordon.
"Blake groaned.
"Only you've got my place in the team, you remember!" he said.

Gordon looked dismayed.
"Master Merry leaving you out?" he asked.
"Yes."

"Oh, I'm sorry," said Gordon. "I didn't know. Look you, Master Blake, I'll tell Tom Merry that I won't play, and you can keep the place."
"Blake stared at him.

"You want to play, don't you?" he asked.
"Oh, not much," said Gordon. "Yes—"
"Blake threw into a laugh.
"It's all right," he said. "You'll play. I don't really mind, though, of course, Tom Merry ought to have out one of the New House boys, really."

"I'll speak to Master Merry if you like."
"Oh, yes! Master Merry will very kindly let you on the case, Master Blake, if you tell him you're not going to play when he's put you in the team. It's all right."

Gordon's ally had a something about him, and he continued to take his position from the junior eleven, philanthropically. Arthur Argus had always expressed sympathy when he looked at the eleven's mistreatment.

"It's certainly hard, old chap," said Arthur. "But somebody had to be left out on weaker reasons for Gordon, I suppose. And Tom Merry would have done you."

"Might have done worse, you say?" said Blake weakly.
"None would be worse than you!" said Arthur indignantly.
"Why, he might have left me out, you know," said Arthur indignantly.

"He, he, he!" roared Blake.
"Arthur Argus adjusted his famous spectacles, and stared at the talkative eleven.
"I had to see why some of the lads in that row, Blake," he said, in a steady way.

"He, he, he."
"Well, then—"
"You see, you're not anyway!" roared Blake. "He, he, he."

"I suppose!"
"Have you looked at the bill, dollar?"
"I wish to be called a dollar, and I have not looked at the bill, so I took it for granted, of course, that I should play. I hear that Gordon Gray's team is very hot stuff, so of course all the best men will be wanted on my side."

"Perhaps that's why Tom Merry's left you out," Blake suggested.
"Well, you're not—"
"Well, you're not; but you shall come and see the match with me, and I'll tell you where to shove," said Blake generously.

"I wrapped up in an act, Blake. I may go to speak to Tom Merry." Blake spoke to him very faintly, indeed.

"He, he, he!"
"And Arthur Argus departed to seek the captain of the junior eleven. Blake did not see him again till they were going in to dinner, and then he tapped the wrist of Mr. Jan's in the doorway in the doorway of the dining-room.

"Have Tom Merry?" he asked.
"Yes."
"How do you get on?"

"No. I suggest him to my seat. I tried to point out to you that he was wanting a very-well-known kind of a crumbly drink, but, naturally, he didn't know. I have always suggested Tom Merry as a suitable good British chap, but I am beginning to look up doubts about it now, Blake, don't you?"

"He, he, he!"
"And Arthur Argus looked very serious all through dinner, as he thought of Tom Merry's shortcomings as a team player.

CHAPTER 10.
Mistak Chess.

"He, he, he!"
"Look here!"
"My son!"
"It's true, then!"

Quite a little crowd was gathering before the notice-board in the hall after dinner. The notice-board was some along and pinned there, and they looked at it with interest in the handwriting of Ernest Levison, of the Fourth, with a great deal of interest. The notice written by Levison was:

"NOTICE.—Lost, stolen, or strayed, somewhere in the school house, a NOTICER, some was marked by a scratch on the head side. Anyone finding same is requested to return it to the owner, R. Levison, No. 1 Study, Fourth Form."

"So you're really here, Levison?" exclaimed Kangaroo, turning to the end of the Fourth, who was in the crowd.
"He's a boy before me!" roared Levison.

"Of course not!" said the Cornish boy, with an air of surprise. "How can anybody ever believe you?"
"He, he, he!"

Levison looked his leave.
"Well, I'm not that good, or it's been taken," he said. "I'm going to have it back, or make a new one out. I came out very early before great odds were admitted into the Fourth Form here."

"Just!"
"I guess you'll have to prove that you've lost this!" said Stanley-Lambert.
"Yes, certainly!"

"It's only one piece of Levison's notice," said Gary of the Third. "What's the good of taking any notice of it?"
"Quite right, Good, don't say."

Levison compressed his lips. His reputation in the house was falling very much against him just now.
"Well, this notice is to give the chap who's got my something a last chance to give it back to me," he said. "It is not returned to me by five o'clock. I'm going to complain to the prefects. It's Mr. Merry's business to look into the matter."

"Better not for a detective and have the house searched," Blake suggested. "and while he's here, he may be able to discover whether you ever had a covering or not."

"He, he, he!"
"Levison swung away according. But the prefects had little time to think about Levison and his last covering. It was going now time for the invitation from the Cornish boy to arrive, and Tom Merry & Co. were thinking about the match.

They were on the junior tower ground, all ready, when the Cornishman came. Gordon Gray & Co., of Plymouth Grammar School, had very little to say as they arrived. Gordon Gray shook hands cordially with Tom Merry.

"Ready for a dishing?" he asked cheerfully.
"Yes," said Tom Merry, laughing.
"Yes, watch!" said Arthur Argus of the First. "I do very much about that you will beat on this case, Gray, don't you?"

"Oh, he!" said Gray.
"Yes, I'm standing out!"
"Gordon Gray looked very serious.
"You are playing, Gray?"
"No, don't say."

"Oh? We shall have to look up, you chaps," said Gordon Gray in his usual way. "It will be a hot battle this time."
"Oh, yes, yes," said Arthur Argus.

"He, he, he!"
"Hello, is that Gordon?" exclaimed Gordon Gray, catching sight of Gordon among the St. Jan's footballers. "New match, eh?"

"Gordon belongs to St. Jan's now," Tom Merry explained.
"He, he!"
"I'm in the Fourth Form, Master Gray," said Gordon sheepishly. "I'm a St. Jan's chap now. I hope you don't mind me being in the team."

"Yes, I jolly well do," said Gordon Gray. "I'd rather Gray were in it. It would make it easier for me!"
Tom Merry looked at him.

"Waddy, Gay—"
 "Return to play, Gay!" called out Levison. "I wouldn't play a game with a cat in it, if I were you!"
 Gordon Gay looked toward Levison of the Fourth.
 "Did you speak to me?" he asked.
 "Yes, I did."

"Well, don't do it again," said Gordon Gay. "The rather particular about the kind of person that speaks to me. If I weren't a victim here, I'd say by the ground with you. That!"
 "That more?" The cat's whiskers, as I will wrap up the ground with the scorch!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.
 And D'Arcy did his eyes into his enormous pocket, and his eye fell in a safe place, and pushed back his comb. By the time he had finished these preparations Levison was on the other side of the field, and the swell of St. Joe's lined round him in a circle.

"The first half gone!"
 "Ha, ha, ha!"
 Levison of the Fifth, who had kindly consented to referee the league match, arrived upon the ground, and the crowd went into the field.

Tom Merry was the first, and left the Grammarians in luck of against the wind. Games was outside right in the St. Joe's team.

"Go it, Gwynny!" Lousie-Lousie called out.
 Gwynny glanced towards his stone, who was peated behind the goal to watch.

"Right-in, Master Lousie!" he said.
 "Go it, Gwynny!" yelled Mellick.
 Gwynny did not reply to that.
 "Play up, all upon his collar from behind, and he was jerked over on the ground."
 "Go! Go! Lousie!"
 "Oh, Blake looked down on May with a grin.
 "What did you say, Mellick?" he asked pleasantly.
 "Go! Go!"
 "Ha, ha, ha! I don't mean that! What did you say to Gwynny?"

"I said 'Go it, Gwynny,'" yelled Mellick. "Lousie does it!"
 "Not good enough," said Blake, with a shake of his head.
 "Lousie, and you, will you lend me a hand with this cat?"
 "I'm in, Mellick, don't say."
 "Take his stone now," said Blake. "He's going to show Gwynny, and every time he does it, we're going to keep him."
 "Yes, Mellick!" Ha, ha, ha!
 Mellick was jerked in his hat, with Blake gripping one arm and D'Arcy the other. The coach of the School House graced his work with eyes.
 "Lousie, you beauty!" he gasped.
 "You've got to show Gwynny," explained Blake. "Shoot out, Go it, Gwynny! Go it, old fellow!"
 "I wasn't!" yelled Mellick.
 "None!"
 "You're in!"
 "Will you now?" asked Blake cheerfully.
 "Go! Go! Go!"
 "None!"
 "None!" called Blake, with undiminished good humor.
 "You wouldn't be afraid of trying me, you know, I could go on doing this all afternoon."
 "Yes, Mellick!" Ha, ha, ha!
 "Go!" gasped Mellick. "Go it, Gwynny! Go it, old fellow!"
 "Lousie!" said Blake.
 "Go it, Gwynny!" yelled Mellick. "Go it, old fellow!"
 "That will do," said Blake, with a nod. "You can keep that up. Whenever I pinch your arm, you're in those Gwynny. If I pinch him, so that there can't be any mistake about it."
 "Ha, ha, ha!"
 "I won't!" yelled Mellick.
 "None!"
 "You're in!"
 "Will you now?"

"Go! Go! Go!"
 "None!"
 "None!" called Blake, with undiminished good humor.
 "You wouldn't be afraid of trying me, you know, I could go on doing this all afternoon."
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 "Ha, ha, ha!"
 "I won't!" yelled Mellick.
 "None!"
 "You're in!"
 "Will you now?"

"Go it, Gwynny!"
 "Go, the ball!"
 "Put her through!"
 "Hurray!"
 "You!" gasped Mellick, as Blake pinched his arm. "Owl! Leave off, you beast! Lousie! Lousie!"
 "You're not listening," said Blake.
 "Go! Hurray!" gasped Mellick in English.
 "Go! Go it, Gwynny, old fellow!"
 "Owl! Go it, Gwynny, old fellow!" muttered Mellick.
 "Lousie!"
 "Go it, Gwynny, old fellow!" yelled Mellick.
 "That's right," said Blake. "My only hat! He's got a goal! Goal! Goal!"
 The field opened.
 "Hurray Gwynny! Goal! Goal!"
 Blake led up Mellick to clap his hands, and Arthur Augustus to wave his with his high in the air. Mellick did not lose his cheer. He started away, and vanished round the partition. Blake looked around for him the next moment, but he was gone. And he did not come back in the rest of the Grammarian match. Mellick had had enough.

CHAPTER XI.

The Grammarian Match.

"GALL!"
 "Hurray, Gwynny!"
 "Hurray!"

Gwynny advanced with pleasure as he walked back to the center of the field, with the stones of the St. Joe's fellows ringing in his ears. Tom Merry pinched him on the back.
 "Take care Gwynny!" he said. "You'll soon see your weight in those feet under us today and Gwynny!"
 Gwynny gasped.
 "The other team up again, and when they contacted Gordon Gay & Co. kept their eyes upon Gwynny of the Fourth. They recognized him as a dangerous opponent.
 Gwynny was in his best form.

He had played regularly for the Yorkshire Wanderers on Saturday afternoons, and on other occasions when he could get time. And the village team played very good football. Gwynny had been the Wanderers' great man, and he had often led them to victory. And the boys of the Grammar School found him a hard nut to crack, now that he was playing for St. Joe's.

There was only one goal kicked in the first half, and that was Gwynny's. When he looked down the whistle for half-time, both the teams looked a little "gruffed."
 "Gwynny, my darling, it's a great job now," said Folly.
 "Sure it was a lucky day that Lousie-Lousie brought us back, Gordon Gay and young Wootton now playing so much diligently, but you're the best to beat them."
 "I hope Master Merry is satisfied," said Gwynny.
 "Tom Merry laughed.
 "Master Merry is quite satisfied, Master Gwynny," he said.
 "Play like that in the second half, and we'll wipe the ground up with the Grammarians."

"Yes, Mellick!" said Arthur Augustus, who had started round to talk to the players. "Upon the whole, Tom Merry, I shouldn't be surprised if you beat them, in spite of your weakness in an inferior team. Gwynny is a regular cogswapper!"
 "Thank you, Master D'Arcy!" said Gwynny.
 "Not at all, don't say," said the swell of St. Joe's gravely.
 "The whole well, completely that!"
 "Even Mellick, never in," grinned young Gwynny. "I loved him shooting and making Gwynny his old job."
 "Blake was pinched his arm," D'Arcy explained.
 "Ha, ha, ha!"
 "Blake, ha, ha," said Tom Merry.
 And the eleven went on again.

The Grammarians were looking very grim and determined as they lined up for the second half. Gordon Gay, and Wootton major and minor, and Frank Wood and Lane and Curby, were all good players, but they had all their work set out to keep their feet up against Tom Merry's team. Even when they succeeded in preventing the Grammarians from a successful goal-kicker. Juniors of the New House also related to Gordon Gay. When they had kept goal on a great occasion in the First House, since it was in, and indeed, Peter Wynn's confidence proved quite able to keep goal against a League team. Some of the fellows said the ball had got down to parts less between the posts. Certainly wherever the ball came in, it found some part of Peter Wynn's ample person in the way, and came up again. It was in vain that Gordon Gay went to his free shot—Peter Wynn got "piled" to all of them, and the blood, good-natured referee never allowed on his stamp fan.
 "Play up, you buggers!" exclaimed Gordon Gay, as they noticed the eleven in. "Only twenty minutes more, and they're out!"

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 111.

"That's got to be allowed," said Weston, major detective.

"It will be allowed," grinned Harry Lewton, who leaned the machine. "We're going to make it two up!"

"Ho, ho, ho!"

Then they had no time to reply; there was a rush on the back, and away the ball went, sailing towards the St. Jim's goal. Right through the defense the Commissioner jumped, and shot it into an open Harry Wynn.

But that was again—and the leather did not lodge in the intended Harry Wynn, as it flew in a curve in a few minutes, and Harry's feet cut to the ground, the center back, Weston trapped it, and kept it till the corner was eight yards long, and then, with a splendid aim, slipped it out to Harry on the left, and Harry sent it to Piggins as outside left. Then the St. Jim's forward swept away, and Piggins passed to Kerr, and Kerr control to Tom Merry, and Tom Merry kicked it in. But it came out of the Commissioner's goal again, and as it came out, a little figure leaped up, the leather flung upon a hard head, and stuck into the goal just like a pig from an orange—and stayed there before the tournament public knew what had happened. And then, there was a roar:

"Good old Weston!"

"Hoody, by Jove! Good man!"

"Yes, walloo! Hooway!"

"Hooray!" roared Jack Blake, waving his cap frantically.

"Look you fellows! Well! Hooway! Looked, you see, you're not getting!"

"I'm not going to get either," said Weston, with a shrug of the shoulders.

"You're right," said Blake; "you are!"

"You're!" roared Weston, as Blake grasped his ear. "Leggo!"

"Well, then!"

"Well, then!"

Weston pulled to good account. There was a roar of laughter.

"How do you do for pot, Weston, dear boy?" shouted Arthur Augustus D'Arny.

Weston had.

"Cheer up, you walloo, you're not cheatin'! Bel Jove! let's go!"

"Ho, ho, ho!"

"Hooway, Weston! Good!" yelled Stanley-Lambert.

"Didn't they do you a mischief? I didn't help to turn a quick Weston in sleep!"

"Yes, walloo! Hooway!"

Weston took his finishing because think upon him with booming modesty. He has now finished with pleasure and quietness as he lined up with the St. Jim's juncos again.

"The Commissioner!" growled Gordon Gay, and two to make up for a giddy day! He up his shoulder!

The Commissioner played up hard, and by dint of desperate handling, they got the ball through last. Harry Wynn failed to catch to level, and the ball was in the net.

But it was the only goal that honored the efforts of the Commissioner. And just on the point of time, St. Jim's scored another; this time from the feet of Tom Merry. When Harry kicked the whistle, and the match ended with St. Jim's three to one.

Gordon Gay looked a little red as they walked off.

"Better look next time," said Tom Merry, tapping Gay on the shoulder.

Gordon Gay laughed.

"That's right," he said. "I say, that fellow Weston is just what I like out of the lot."

"One of the best is every way!" said Tom Merry. "Good old Weston!"

"But Jove, you know, you've liked them, Tom Merry!"

Arthur Augustus D'Arny insisted, as he came round to see the players off the ground.

"Yes, I told you what would happen if you didn't play," said Harry Lewton.

"Ho, ho, ho!"

"I'm glad you are an old Lewton! But I must remark that Weston has played up remarkably well. I wouldn't have believed that had into the net would happen."

"So you!" said Kerr.

"Walloo, Kerr, as you don't say statements!"

"I don't, old man!" checked Kerr. "and a bit!"

"Ho, ho, ho!"

The Old Librarian.—No. 227.

"Well, Lewton!" said Arthur Augustus D'Arny. "It has been a good match, and the winner of both sides were jolly good. The St. Jim's team might have been impressed a little, but on another! Goodness, it's been a good game, and now it's over, I leave the house."

"That you have!" said Weston. "We have the house."

"Walloo, Lewton!"

"Ho, walloo, it's because I liked!" said Tom Merry.

"Hooway, West!"

"I love the look!"

"How do you think that out, Harry?"

"I love the look in the old gentleman's present to the St. Jim's!" said Arthur Augustus D'Arny.

"Ah, now you're talking!" said Weston.

"I received a death from my grandpa this morning," said D'Arny, with a bounding smile. "I told him we had a wigan from your school to play us."

"How, how?" said Gordon Gay.

"And he went to the station like a walloo!" said D'Arny.

"Goodness, Twit! has been present!" the two who you've been thinking good, and it's all ready!"

"It's in my arms!" added Weston, begging the coat of St. Jim's.

"Walloo, Weston!"

"Let me wrap upon your steady beam!"

"I'm going to let you do anything of the sort! I say, Weston, are you up?"

"Ho, ho, ho!"

Arthur Augustus jerked himself away from the demonstrative Weston. And the last time, after they had rubbed down and changed, followed Arthur Augustus D'Arny quite cheerfully up to Study No. 4.

CHAPTER 12.

The Pool at the Front!

STUDY NO. 4 in the Fourth Form passage in the School House was a large room for a junior study. But the largest study in St. Jim's, under its name, would hardly have accommodated the number of girls Arthur Augustus D'Arny had brought in. There were eleven Commissioner's players, and five or six of her classmates who had come over with them. There were the St. Jim's eleven, and their friends. They crowded in the passage, and as they crowded into the study after D'Arny, it was only too evident that the dimensions of that famous apartment would not stand the strain.

"Goodness!" said Arthur Augustus D'Arny.

"How, how?"

"Over in lack of accommodation, there isn't much space in the study. Would it be better for us to sit on the outside of the passage?"

"That's all right," said Harry Wynn. "So long as the girls' good, and their's plenty of it, it doesn't matter much where we sit."

"How, how?" said the juncos.

"That you don't mind walloo! cheer out of the study, dear boys!"

"Right, by!"

All the juncos were willing to oblige, Commissioner as well as St. Jim's. They dragged chairs and made use of the cushions, and placed them in the passage, and the Fourth Form passage was crowded from end to end.

Protest, the page, was in Study No. 4 in charge of the Commissioner's department. His presence gave a long way in the passage, and Arthur Augustus D'Arny had insisted upon the whole five or six minutes of the Commissioner. He had prepared only a half-hour as a sign for Weston.

"By George!" said Harry Wynn, as he surveyed the pile on the study table. "Golly, old man, you're a genius!"

"Good old Harry!"

"I want you fellows will be happy to accommodate," said the word of St. Jim's modestly.

"I think the girls' all right."

"Right, as you!" said Gordon Gay. "May your steady beam give me, and may your best never give me!"

"Walloo, Harry!"

"This way, Weston!" roared Harry Lewton. "Hand out the pen."

"Yes, Harry Lewton!"

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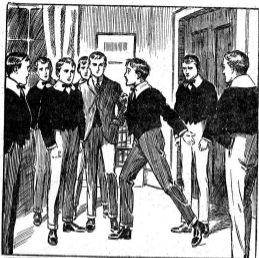
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Levinton speed a haggard look upon the fellow he had always designated as a cad and an ass. "What?" he muttered, thickly. "Speak a word for me, Jack! get me out of the school. Don't!" (See Chapter 22.)

"Bring round those glibly facts, Trotter!"

"Yes, Master Kipling—I mean, Potts."

"I'll help myself, I think," said Fatty Wynn thoughtfully.

"I should have Trotter on the go all the time!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The crowded passage, bright with daylight, rang with merry voices and laughter. Kipling of the Sixth, the captain of St. Paul's, came upstairs to see what the noise was about. He stood at the right of the passage occupied by the passage.

"What's all—what's happened?" he demanded.

"Oh," said Henry Levinton, with the glint in his eye which told that a particularly wretched pun had landed, "it's a long story."

"What?"

"When it's over, it will be a long story," Levinton explained.

"As general it is necessary to get the general paragraph."

"You young men," said Kipling, laughing. "Should I've ever seen a celebration like this before. What's it all about?"

"Celebrating the fact that Gasey had a drive this morning," explained Kipling. "I'll be kept it, he would have it, wouldn't he?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Kipling had been a bit, Kipling, old man!" said a dozen voices. "The Sixth are admitted fans of Gasey."

"Yes, wasn't it? I shall be finished, Kipling, don't let it pass will you?" said Arthur Waggoner D'Arcy.

Kipling smiled.

"Thank you," he said. "I appreciate the interest, but I have Darcy to see in my study. And I must see much more."

"Right!"

And Kipling departed, laughing. The justice gave him a shove on his way.

"Now, Kipling would have made trouble," said Darcy.

"Kipling's a bit of a cad!"

"Yes, wasn't it?"

Trotter was very long. The justice-off had good appearance, especially Fatty Wynn. Fatty Wynn showed feeling after his lecture in keeping good, and, as he explained particularly, he had a book in his hand and a hat. He was looking up for it now.

The crowd of justice-officers was at its height when Levinton came upstairs, and tried to make his way along the passage. There was one much more in the passage. There had been a double bang of quarters, and justice-officers were sitting on their feet on the floor, or leaning against the walls, or sitting on other fellows' knees. It would have been a matter of difficulty to get along the passage, with profit on the part of the occupants. But no one felt inclined to inconvenience himself for Levinton.

"Let me get by, command you?" growled Levinton, looking up.

"Waddy, Levinton!"

"Don't let it!"

"Oh, no!"

"Yes, indeed!" suggested Mandy Lawther.

Levinson stared at the fragment of the shell eagerly.

"Here was I go round!" he demanded.

"Walk!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Walk round the house, and get in at the back window window—the same window you sat when you're breaking breads to go out for snuff," said Lawther indignantly.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look here, I want to know by!" shouted Levinson. "I've got into my study to see."

"Stay and have tea with us, Levinson, dear boy," said D'Arny, with a subtle offer.

But his offer was not appreciated by Levinson.

"I don't want tea with you, D'Arny."

"Study, you walk home—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Now, will you stand on one leg, or will you have some more?" asked Mandy Lawther politely.

"Yes! No, I won't!" "Good!"

"Order him an' give him—"

"Hold on!" shrieked Levinson. "I—I—I'll do it!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

And Levinson stood upon one leg, and held the offer in the air, at the same time clanking away the jam on his face. His aspect was so strikingly ridiculous that the jokers simply started with merriment. Even Fatty Wynn was observed to grin in his operations upon a steak pie for some moments.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"But here!" I suggest that so funny! Ha, ha, ha!"

Everybody seemed to regard it as funny, with one exception—that of Levinson. Levinson stood upon one leg, keeping in keep himself from falling, with the least pretence with great enjoyment and plenty of wit.

CHAPTER 18.
The Prefects Called In.

THE best of things must come to an end at last, and so did the feast in the Fourth Form passage. It was a great feast, long remembered by both St. Jim's fellows and Grammarians. And when it was over, the Grammarians had to walk to their beds, and Tom Mory & Co. escorted them as far as the gates. Levinson was released from his captivities ordered at the end of the feast, and he proceeded to a bath-room to wash off the jam and the lemonade and the jelly. His state of the bath-room, as at last, looking in an almost unendurable state of mind, and his temper was not improved by the path of laughter that greeted him when he appeared in public.

"But Jim!" It was a funny experience, dear boy," Arthur Augustus D'Arny remarked. "You looked as awful as you have."

Levinson grunted his teeth.

"Hang you!" he continued. "Hang you! I'll make you sorry for it—and your great friend too! You'll see!"

"Friend that never gets you," added Blake, with a grin.

"No, I'm going to accompany to the prefects about it."

"Better send for the police," Blake suggested severely.

Blake, of the police, was a little away. He had to find a study. None of the boys, was a prefect, and the most conspicuous one in the United House. He was an good man, though with Levinson. They were both of a brother.

"But here!" said Arthur Augustus D'Arny. "The prefects come tomorrow, you know."

Blake shrieked.

"Looks like it."

"Prefects tell D'Arny?" suggested D'Arny.

"Yes, rather. Got him ready for the gaily school?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

And the chosen of the Fourth made their way to No. 4 Study. Lumsley-Lumsley and Grimes were there. Lumsley-Lumsley was talking (being in a personally circulated treat through the hierarchy of the Latin grammar, and Grimes was supporting a strong thesis as to go to sleep in the presence.

He was keeping words with Lumsley, often, however, and doubtless including considerable knowledge from his slum.

Blake and D'Arny grinned as they looked into the study. Grimes did not show up to its much advantage there as on the latter side.

"Now, make sure!" said Lumsley-Lumsley.

Grimes looked round the table.

"Some what, Master Lumsley?" he asked.

Lumsley-Lumsley shrieked.

"The very best, you see, Grimes. Don't let it show, now."

Yes!

"Oh, I!" said Grimes. "Is that a verb?"

"Yes."

"So I decline it!"

"So, you see, I've conjugated it," said Lumsley-Lumsley.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Blake. "Grimes would rather decline it, wouldn't you, Grimes? You'd like to decline the whole gaily grammar."

"Yes, Master Blake," said Grimes, with a sigh. "This 'ere is 'adder than weight' up sugar and taker' shadders down."

"It comes under in this," said Lumsley-Lumsley.

"Yes, I s'pose it does," said Grimes. "I'll take your word for it, anyway, Master Lumsley."

"Now, what does your mean?"

"I mean if I know, Master Lumsley. I ain't looking at the book."

"I see!" roared Lumsley-Lumsley.

"Yes! but I ain't!" said Grimes.

"What?"

"I ain't looking at the book, if you see, Master Lumsley."

"But I'm not, either," said Lumsley-Lumsley.

"You said you see—I mean you see!"

"Ha, ha, ha! I was giving you the counter, you see! There—"

I am!

But his offer was not appreciated by Levinson.

"I don't want tea with you, D'Arny."

"Study, you walk home—"

"Walk round the house, and get in at the back window window—the same window you sat when you're breaking breads to go out for snuff," said Lawther indignantly.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look here, I want to know by!" shouted Levinson. "I've got into my study to see."

"Stay and have tea with us, Levinson, dear boy," said D'Arny, with a subtle offer.

But his offer was not appreciated by Levinson.

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"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look here, I want to know by!" shouted Levinson. "I've got into my study to see."

"Stay and have tea with us, Levinson, dear boy," said D'Arny, with a subtle offer.

But his offer was not appreciated by Levinson.

"I don't want tea with you, D'Arny."

"Study, you walk home—"

"Walk round the house, and get in at the back window window—the same window you sat when you're breaking breads to go out for snuff," said Lawther indignantly.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look here, I want to know by!" shouted Levinson. "I've got into my study to see."

"Stay and have tea with us, Levinson, dear boy," said D'Arny, with a subtle offer.

But his offer was not appreciated by Levinson.

"I don't want tea with you, D'Arny."

"Study, you walk home—"

"Oh!" said Collins.
 "Excuse me."
 "Oh—I say," agreed Collins.
 "Oh, there are, indeed!"
 "Yes, Master Kildare."
 "Yes, there are, indeed."
 "Oh, he is!" cried Kildare. "You'd better not put it that way for Lefferts, though. Look here, you change, it's time to think over, or not. Something more important."
 "Yes, wait!"
 Lefferts-Lewis opened.
 "What's the trouble?" he asked.
 "Lefferts?"
 "I guess Lefferts can go and get out."
 "He's calling to the prefects to look for the missing quill,"
 "Is he, is?"
 "But Jerry! And here he comes!" said O'Leary.

Those were footsteps in the passage, and they stopped at the door of Mr. S. Lefferts. Of the Prefects, looked to unpleasantly, and Knox and Kildare followed him into the study. Knox, the prefect, was not looking displeased by any means. Knox was very much "up against" Jerome Lefferts-Lewis and his brother, Tom Jerry & Co. And Knox was as much down on the ground with Lefferts now. But Kildare was looking neutral and composed. Kildare had had no quarrel with the master, in fact perfect of the House, but he did not like the look.

Whims looked rather nervously at the prefects. Lefferts-Lewis invited to them with perfect coolness.
 "Come in, kids," he said cheerfully. "Have you come to have some more chocolate?"
 "None of your chest, you young cad!" growled Knox.
 Kildare smiled.
 "No, Lefferts," he said. "It's a more serious matter than most chocolate. Lefferts has lodged a complaint with the prefects. We declare that he has had a souvenir, and that it has been found, he believes it is being taken back by Lefferts."

"Lefferts is a faithful servant, drink, say," said Arthur Augustus O'Leary.
 "Gimme has got my quill!" said Lefferts. "It was in my pocket when I was straggling with him here the day before yesterday. I missed it immediately afterwards. He got up that row with me to pick my pocket."
 "You got up the row with him," said Kildare. "I know all about it."
 "I suppose there's no track in this, Collins?" said Kildare.
 "No, Master Kildare."
 "I detected a mark," said Lefferts. "The souvenir happened to be marked, and there was no doubt about it if it's found. I detected a scratch of Collins's notebook."
 "Batten!" said three voices in unison from the passage. The Terrible Three had arrived upon the scene.

Lefferts looked at Tom Jerry & Co.
 "You said you saw business?" he asked. "This is nothing to do with you. Collins has got my quill, and he's going to hand it over. I accuse him of stealing it."
 Kildare compressed his lips.
 "You have no evidence to make an accusation like that, Lefferts," he said.

"I think the evidence is clear enough," said Lefferts. "Collins ran me past the advertisement in my pocket, and he had a row with me a few minutes afterwards. We struggled, and he pinched one of the corners of the paper. Then I missed the souvenir from my pocket. I came back and searched the passage and the study, and there wasn't a sign of it. Where was it gone if Collins hadn't taken it? I didn't hear out of the House—I hadn't even been downstairs. There isn't any lock in the study of the passage where the souvenir could have disappeared."

"Looks to me like a good case," said Knox. "Collins ought to be searched. If the quill's marked, and it's found on him, that will settle the matter."
 "It won't be found on him," growled Kildare. "I believe the kid's as honest as the daylight."

"Thank you, Master Kildare," said Collins gratefully.
 "Hold on!" exclaimed a voice in the passage. Tom Jerry and Mamma and Lefferts had come back the study, and now Kangaroo of the Staff appeared in the doorway, dragging a plump youth bristling with buttons by the arms. It was Twister, the minister of the absent Telly, and he was looking very surprised and flustered.
 Kildare frowned.
 "What about this case, Kildare? What have you brought that kid here for?"
 The Generalist smiled.
 "Evidence!" he said readily.

"What evidence?"
 "On this case—the case of Lefferts's quill!"
 "Oh!" said Kildare. "Does Twister know anything about that?"
 "He knows something about Lefferts," shrieked Kangaroo "and that's just as much to the point."
 Lefferts turned pale.

CHAPTER 18.

The Souverain.

THWISTER pulled himself away from Kangaroo and peered for breath. As soon as he had heard what was on in Lefferts-Lewis's study, Kangaroo had pulled the page up to the Fourth Form passage, much to Twister's astonishment.

"Oh, Master Noble!" gasped Twister.
 "Do you know anything about this, Twister?" asked Kildare.
 "No, Master Kildare."
 "Hold on!" said Kangaroo. "Just give me one question less, and we'll have it all out. He knows more than he knows himself."
 "Has Jerry?" said O'Leary.
 "No, Twister!" said the Generalist, waving his hand as if the page, you were page at Greyfriars before you come here to be held at Twister's disposal!"
 "Yes, Master Noble."
 "You saw a bit of Lefferts when he was a Greyfriars boy?"
 "Yes, Master Noble."
 "He was spotted from Greyfriars, wasn't he?"
 "Well, he had to leave," said Twister.
 Lefferts looked out pensively.
 "What's all this got to do with my souvenir being lost?"
 This he wanted to do with the master, Kildare. "I guess—" "I can't see that this bears on the case at all, Noble," said the captain of St. John's.

"You will soon," said Kangaroo. "Let me go on. Lefferts has started this thing, and if he doesn't repent himself, he should himself. It was I, he believed. Father shouldn't get mixed from this, though it may be, but it isn't about it afterwards. Now Twister, isn't it a fact that Lefferts used to play table tennis on the lawn at Greyfriars, and made himself one popular?"

"Yes, Master Noble."
 "It's his," said Lefferts.
 "It's yours," said Kangaroo. "I've had it from Greyfriars since I came here, who says you have the better. I'm only calling in Twister as a witness—a slightly eye-witness. Now Twister, among Lefferts and other wonderful accomplishments, such as selling his and listening to boys' talks, isn't he a clever conjurer?"

"Yes, Master Noble."
 "So used to play conjuring tricks at Greyfriars, making things pass into fellows' pockets without their knowing it, and that kind of thing?"
 "Yes, he did, Master Noble."
 "You'll show a row now among the famous fellows at Greyfriars, through Lefferts making something appear in somebody's pocket?"

"Yes, there was."
 "Oh!" exclaimed Kildare.
 "There you are!" said Kangaroo triumphantly. "Lefferts has done conjuring tricks since he's been here, as we all know. But what I wanted to get at was, that he got into people at his old school for making something turn up in a fellow's pocket without the fellow's knowledge. And if he did that, surely, trick on Greyfriars, he could do it at St. John's. If that marked quill was in Collins's pocket at all, Lefferts put it there by sleight-of-hand."

"By Jerry!" said Kildare.
 "It's a lie," screamed Lefferts.
 "Whom I believe it's true," said Twister. "It would be just the Master Lefferts. I know he's done the same kind of thing at Greyfriars, and that I can swear to."
 "It's a lie!"

"It's a lie," said Kildare steadily. "It's the truth, Lefferts. Thank you, Twister; you can go. I'm much obliged to you. Lefferts, this is to settle him in the matter. Your spite against Collins is well known, and as a fellow who knows you will be declared that you are a conjurer, and can put things into people's pockets without their knowing it, and that you've been known to play such tricks—well, even if your marked coin is found on Collins, I shall not believe that he stole it. You are as full of tricks as a conjurer, and this looks to be the number of them."
 "Yes, Twister!"



Levison ground his teeth. He was pale with rage. Trotter's suspended sentence had indeed, as Kildare said, led to a flood of light on the subject.

"Do you want him to go any further, Levison?" asked the captain of St. Jim's.

Levison pointed. If he dropped the matter there, he would be pointed to as an abject, to know that.

"Yes," he said, loosening his teeth. "Grimm has got my gold, and I want it back."

"You want Grimm arrested?"

"Yes."

"Quite right," said Knox. "Let's search him."

"Hold on!" said Tom Merry.

"Mind your own business," said Knox, with a sneer. "In fact, you fellows had better clear out of the study altogether."

"You got something to say," said Tom Merry.

"Hold your tongue!" roared Knox.

"Let him speak, Knox, if he's got anything to say about the matter," said Kildare quietly.

"I've got this to say," said Tom Merry. "Levison says he's had a gold. Well, we'll take his word for it that he had it gold. But he's got to prove that he's got it."

"Yes, without!"

"I suggest, therefore, that Levison is searched first," said Tom Merry.

"How low!" exclaimed Levison angrily.

"If the accused sovereign turns up in Levison's own pockets, we can remember the matter as closed," said Tom Merry emphatically.

Kildare looked at him sharply.

"This is getting extraordinary!" he exclaimed. "Does this mean that you have some reason to suppose that Levison still has the sovereign about him?"

"Yes," said Tom Merry.

"What sense has that?" Levison exclaimed.

"There are your pockets, then," said Tom Merry.

"But!"

"Yes, without!" said Arthur Augustus D'Arvy, smiling.

"You've got your handsy pockets, you wretched wretch!"

"You've got your pockets!" shouted Henry Levison.

Kildare nodded.

"You're not," he said.

"But look here—"

"Do as I tell you!" said the captain of St. Jim's calmly.

Levison, with a sudden gasp, turned out his pockets. He could not understand the man who was talking. Why Tom Merry should want him to turn out his pockets he could not understand, but he did as he was told, whatever he could not understand, he was afraid of.

"In that case," asked Kildare, to be correct.

"That's all," said Levison.

"There's a half-sovereign in your bag," said Henry Levison.

"I never saw anything like it," said Levison.

"You're not, are you?"

"Oh, yes!"

"So do you've said, Levison," said Kildare.

"Oh, all right!" growled the end of the Fourth.

He groped in the tanned pocket, and an expression of blank amazement came over his face. He tried to compose his features the next moment, but it was too late.

"You have something there!" asked Kildare.

"Yes."

Levison withdrew his hand, and there was a glimmer of gold in the daylight. He held a sovereign between his finger and thumb.

"Hand it to me," said Kildare.

The captain of St. Jim's took the coin. He held it up to the light and glanced at it. There was a shry out on the board of the office of his Majesty King George the Fifth.

"The coin is wanted!" said Kildare.

He held it out to Levison to see.

"Is that the sovereign, Levison?"

And Levison admitted.

"Yes."

CHAPTER 18.
The Quality of Money.

THEY were all alone in the study for a full minute. Kildare stood with the sovereign between his finger and thumb, and then slowly gathering on his brow.

The justice was glaring, and Kildare had to suppress a shudder.

(Continued on page 128.)

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More heated angry and accused. He had hoped that the matter would turn out to the disgrace of Gilmore, and he had been disappointed.

His anger turned against Levison now.

As for Levison, he seemed to be disconcerted. He knew that the marked messages had been in Gilmore's pocket—but the fact of reason—he had put it there. "You can't defend in daylight based on Ernest Levison that had been quite easy. How the message had come back into Gilmore's pocket in his own was a mysterious mystery. Some amazing chance had happened, evidently to turn his capturing trick back on himself.

Levison would only stand thinking at the message as if he would certainly believe his own.

"Well," said Kildare, at length. "That is the message, Levison."

"Yes, I suppose so," stammered Levison.

"I suppose you did not happen to have any marked messages?" the captain of St. Joe's asked sarcastically.

Even Levison could not venture to make such an assertion. He shook his head.

"Then how comes it that you have the message. In your pocket all the time, while you are assuming Gilmore is stealing it?" demanded Kildare sternly.

"I—I don't understand it," gasped Levison.

"You have been lying," said Kildare contemptuously.

"Give the young rascal a kicking for bringing us up here and making game of us," growled Steve Taggart.

"I don't think I know the spel was there," stammered Levison.

"You had forgotten you had it?"

"I never saw that pocket. I don't know how it got there?"

"And you assure Gilmore of sending it as soon as you see it, without taking the trouble to go through all your pockets?"

—said Kildare.

"—I—"

"You have stammered Gilmore," said Kildare, "and you will have to leave that accusation of theft until he brought on lightly as this against a fellow. You have accused Gilmore of stealing a message that was in your pocket all the time. I shall give you the biggest kicking you have had since you've been here. Come to my study."

"I—I—"

"Follow me!" demanded Kildare.

—said Kildare, "I say," growled Levison.

Kildare's strong grip dropped upon his shoulder.

The end of the Fourth walked in the group of the St. Joe's captain. His face was deadly white now. The truth of his plotting against Gilmore was being for himself, and the expression of Kildare's face showed that it would be well laid on.

"Hold up!" said Tom Merry, with a scornful look at the shivering end of the Fourth. "There's a little bit more to tell you, Kildare, now that the end has been shown up."

Kildare paused.

"What is it?" he asked.

"The other day I was alone in my study, and Gilmore kept on talking a good deal."

"What sort of talk?" demanded Arthur Argus's D'Agos.

"About you, you see?" growled Jack Blake.

"Yeah, Blake."

"Gilmore, like an old-time," said Tom Merry, "at the same time, he found a message in his pocket, and he was surprised to find it there. He told us of that it wasn't his, and we all supposed that it had been slipped into his pocket for a joke. It was a marked message. Piquet & Co. rubbed our eyes, or something like that, for the purpose, intending to repay it to him some day. It belonged to us Saturday, when we should have seen each other. We only supposed it was a practical joke, so that, though we couldn't see any sense in it."

—Yes, we said.

"That probably Levison complained of being his message, and asked that Gilmore had taken it. Then we knew it was a message of his. He had slipped it into Gilmore's pocket, and he had wanted to give him a chance of spending it. Like the cat he is, he figured that Gilmore would be glad enough to be a message victim, and wouldn't say anything about it. Gilmore hadn't noticed it was marked, but I did. If he spent it, or kept it about him, it could be traced by the mark, and Levison didn't suppose that the message Gilmore found it in the pocket he showed it to all the fellows who were with him and said it wasn't his."

"Oh!" stammered Levison.

"An ass as we know that Levison was getting at us played the little game on him," said Tom Merry. "I got the spel that was Mrs. Taggart, and Merry Lawford showed it in the Fourth's face, where Blake would find it. Blake put it into Levison's pocket while the matter was away, so that he had his message with him without knowing it."

"Oh!" stammered Levison again.

Jack Blake paused.

"I couldn't have done it while Levison was awake," he explained. "It was a pretty cunning."

"That was on Levison, eh?" said Tom Merry cheerfully.

"As he wanted to call the fellows in and make a false accusation against Gilmore, we thought we'd let him call 'em in, and show himself up as a shabby one and a trickster."

—Yes, we said.

"Levison's been his share by half, as usual," said Jack Blake.

"He's always laying some little scheme, and always getting it worked up by being too jolly about it. We've given him every chance, and he's always blundering."

"It's all the first directed Levison. They—they know Gilmore had stolen it, and so they put it back in to get him out of trouble."

Kildare looked at his fingers.

"You assure all these fellows of being in league with me?"

—Yes, we said.

"You see Gilmore showed you the message and said it wasn't his," said Kildare to Tom Merry. "A story of witnesses?"

"Surely a witness. All three fellows, and some others."

"That was some after his words with Levison?"

—Yes.

"That settles it," said Kildare. "You shouldn't have played this trick with the message. You should have come and told me about it. But I am understanding your wanting to take a little out of that rascal and Levison. It seems, then, that Levison was not making a mistake in supposing he had lost the message, but he deliberately planned it on Gilmore, and then complained of being it."

—Yes, we said.

"That settles it, Kildare, that settles it. If the Head knew about this the matter would be settled from the school."

Levison stammered.

"I—I—I see, Kildare, tell the Head!" he groaned. "I—I don't mind being kicked, Kildare, but don't tell the Head I—I—I don't deserve to go home!"

Kildare gave him a scornful look.

"You should have thought of that before you played this little game," he said.

"I—I— Don't tell the Head!" wailed Levison. "I—I won't do it again. And—and it was really only a joke! I—I should have stood up, you know. I—I was really only playing a cunning trick on Gilmore, and I was going to own up about it, and we would all have had a good laugh over it."

"Do you expect us to believe that?"

—No, we said.

"Well, there, that they get a Nigger like every day," said Arthur Argus's D'Agos, in contemptuous.

"I would like to see a man!" I should not have imagined that any story could well out-Whisper like that."

Kildare fixed his eyes upon the trembling end of the Fourth.

"I shall leave it to Gilmore to say!" he announced. "I shall take you to my study, and give you the hiding of your life, or else I shall report the whole matter to the Head. Gilmore has a right to ask that it shall be reported, as he was your victim."

"My life!" said Gilmore.

Levison fixed a happy look upon the fellow he had always despised and was not a mistake. There's message was certain enough, and he had some about that Levison's was depended upon the fact he had written and delivered, and understood to deliver. It was an important one for Gilmore, as any of all old news with a terrible importance. If the matter had been reported to the Head there was no doubt that Levison would have been turned out of St. Joe's. He had staked that position before by his cowardly, and it would have fallen upon him this time without hope. That depended upon a word from Gilmore, and the fellow in the study all looked anxiously at the new judge.

Based on Levison was the justice did not want to see him expelled. A good thing he understoodly deserved, but they did not want to be too hard on him, and they were anxious to hear what Gilmore would say. If even any fellow had a right to be vindictive, every fellow would justify any, with the proper word. "I do not wish to be angry," it was Original of the Fourth.

But Tom Merry & Co. need not have had any doubts in the matter. There was no hesitation about Gilmore. There was no difference in his looks. Play for the wretched justice who had ordered and talked would be used to Gilmore's own face, play might with one stroke, but nothing like the vindictive.

"Kildare," stammered Levison stammering, "speak a word for me. Don't get me expelled from the school. Don't!"

"I can't say anything," said the rest, said Gilmore. "I don't want anything to be said about this matter. I don't hear nothing, that's all I can say. I only want that you won't say anything about this matter, or any more of it. I am sure Kildare won't say a word about it. That's all I've got to say."

"You hear that, Levison?" said Kildare sternly. "If you're not kicked out of the school you see it in Gilmore's face!"

Levison followed the captain of St. Joe's without another word.

In Kildare's study he had a most tremendous looking, and like the

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the Captain of St. Joe's. By MARTIN CALDWELL.

how could he stand for and while; but the matter ended there, and he came home afterwards knowing Lavinia was in a very satisfied state. Whether it was due to repentance or the fact of having trouble, cannot be said, but certainly he was careful to give no further offense to Gertie of the Fourth.

CHAPTER 10.
Honest Lavin.

DURING the next two or three days Oswald Linsley, Linsley often regarded his class with a very thoughtful look.

Gertie was getting on in the Fourth. The first exercises of the Latin tongue had been penetrated, and he was beginning to take part in the regular work of the recitation.

As Linsley felt as good as anybody in the Fourth, and he was growing in popularity.

The pretensions by Lavinia and Madeline was open. Lavinia carefully avoided giving trouble, and never allowed even a word to escape her, and Madeline followed the example of her sister.

It seemed as if the three had been gathered from the parts of the new planet, and that all was plain sailing before him.

But Linsley-Linsley had his doubts. The recitation had been growing in his mind that in bringing Gertie to St. Joe's he had done an unwise thing.

Linsley-Linsley was a practical fellow himself. If anybody had offered him a chance of any kind he would have accepted it if it could be had without objection. But he realized that Gertie was a different kind of fellow. That a fellow could take up a trade of his he did not care to believe then appear ungrateful to a friend who was trying to benefit him seemed impossible to Linsley-Linsley at first, but he gradually came to realize that it was not the case. That a fellow could prefer the prospect of a grocer's bill to those of a public school chief seemed Linsley-Linsley, but he was not philosophical to be long unswayed. He was mainly the man in all sections of society. Different kinds of pleasures and different kinds of trouble delighted him, but in each with the same. And Linsley-Linsley supposed that Gertie preferred his way (his life, and that he was far from regarding his transition to St. Joe's as an improvement in his lot.

But Gertie did not say so, did not give the least hint, and if Linsley-Linsley had not had a very keen fellow he would not have suspected it.

Linsley-Linsley, in his direct way, determined to have the matter out, and a few days after the close in his study, he invited Gertie upon the subject. Gertie was in the study, and wearing with him, a table, and corner of a table, and corner, a table, when Linsley-Linsley came in. Gertie looked up from his grammar absently, but the keen eyes of the Outside noticed that the attention was forced.

"Getting on, Gertie?" he asked.

Gertie smiled.

"Yes, I think so, Master Linsley," he said. "This 'ere ain't so bad when you begin to get used to it."

"Oh, you like it?"

"Oh, I like it all right, Master Linsley! Anyway, it's a awfully useful thing to know. Not much use in business, of course."

Linsley-Linsley grinned.

"No, you're not likely to have many Latin correspondents when you've got a big grocery business going," he remarked.

"No, Master Linsley. Well, I regard it's a useful thing to know. Anyway, I'm getting used to it, and I'm growing on. It's awfully kind of you to teach me as you do."

"Oh, ho!" said Linsley-Linsley.

There was a pause. Linsley-Linsley sat on the corner of the table and swung his legs. Gertie returned to his work, and Madeline, by, with, or from a table.

"I guess I want to have the truth, Master," said Linsley-Linsley.

Gertie looked up again.

"The what, Master Linsley?" he faltered.

"The truth, Master Gertie."

"Oh!" said Gertie.

"You know I've learned about the world," said Linsley-Linsley. "I've rich, and I've been poor. I've seen queer sights, and a good many countries, and different kinds of people. I know that money don't purchase don't make happiness. The happiest man I ever saw was a hawker in San Francisco. The happiest time in my life was when I hadn't a dime in my pocket and my hands were tied on with string. Gertie, old man, I had forgotten what I've learned by experience, and was thinking that it would probably be the best way of thinking when I thought that it would be a big thing for you to come to St. Joe's."

"No, Master Linsley, I'm glad that you're coming to St. Joe's. I've been thinking in case, I guess, that you, Gertie, you've got to tell me exactly how it is. Please brighten, would you rather be at St. Joe's, or back in your old business?"

Gertie was silent.

"I guess it's getting over what you've got in your mind," said Linsley-Linsley, smiling. "or you'd answer up at once."

"Yes, Gertie Linsley," he said.

Gertie smiled.

"I don't want to seem ungrateful, Master Linsley," he said.

"I guess it's not a question of that. I want you to do up your job. If you want to stay at St. Joe's, here you are. If you'd rather have the grocery business, then you do it. You've better get to my, 'Master bright,' you know."

Gertie drew a deep, deep breath.

"You wouldn't be offended, Master Linsley?" he asked.

"No, I wouldn't be."

"And—and you won't think me ungrateful?"

"I guess not, said Linsley-Linsley, grinning. Gertie's question showed pretty plainly what his answer was going to be.

"Well, Master Linsley—"

Gertie hesitated.

"Oh, ho!"

"Well, it's wrong to get an awful waste of time 'ere," said Gertie, hesitatingly. "I'd like to be 'ere about the future even to be 'ere about it, but I know and guess, then in in preparing to save their living in the future is called work, and if there's something better about 'ere work. And the reason they do seem to me all about it."

"All about it," grinned Linsley-Linsley.

"All right," said Gertie, coming out with great frankness now that he had seen started. "I was ordered that I had given a good deal of my time, there's a lot of work in the future to the world, Master Linsley, and they ain't 'ere 'ere in the way of it. They're only 'ere 'ere to live without their 'ere, if they're not in the right."

"No, ho, ho!"

Linsley-Linsley smiled. It struck him that he would have liked the Head and the Board of Governors to hear Gertie's reasoning of public schools and their methods.

"That's, we I look at it," said Gertie cheerfully. "I know it's awfully close to come 'ere. But I was never in in the 'ere's shop. When I start in business for myself, I shall not good about it a little more than you can't do more than that. And don't think that an honest grocer is more up to the place to live in than a hawker or a stock, Master Linsley."

"Ho, ho, ho!"

"It's, we I look at it," said Gertie cheerfully.

"But I'm not," said Linsley-Linsley, clapping his hands on the shoulder. "I shouldn't wonder if you're quite right, Gertie. You'd do better in the grocery line, I guess. And so we'll tell the Head. And Mr. Board will give you your job again."

Gertie started to his feet.

"You mean it, Master Linsley?" he exclaimed eagerly.

"I guess so."

"Oh, but I don't want to."

"Then I don't care that I'd rather be in my old business," said Gertie. "I must get it done to me soon trouble and trouble."

"Now, how?" said Linsley-Linsley. "Good with me to the Head."

And he marched Gertie off at once to the Head's study.

Tom Merry & Co. had the news with regard.

They were aware to have Gertie of the Fourth.

But, as Madeline sagely remarked, very likely Gertie had his own business first, and the Co. agreed that very likely he did.

Gertie made a most affectionate farewell to his friends at St. Joe's.

"I shall see you again, of course, both boys," said Arthur Augustan D'Arcy, as he shook Gertie by the hand.

Gertie smiled and grinned.

"Yes, Master D'Arcy, if you want to, I shall bring the groceries, you know."

"But how?"

"And I shall be playing in the Hydraulic Warehouse, too," said Gertie. "We'll meet on the boiler ground, Master D'Arcy, I'm sorry to leave all you fellows." Gertie went on, but a clap net to make his way in the world, you know, and it's been to begin young. But I 'ere we'll always be good friends when we meet, you know."

"Yes, Master,"

The next day Gertie reappeared at St. Joe's, but he was not in the Fourth, and he had a basket on his arm, and he came to the headmaster's entrance. But his basket had looked very bright and happy, and he greeted cheerily at Tom Merry & Co, when they walked round to speak to him. Fourth-Former of St. Joe's, or grocer's had with a basket, Tom Merry & Co. were agreed that Gertie was One of the Best!

THE END

It is published, long, unexpensive rate again next Wednesday at Tom Merry & Co. and Arthur Augustan D'Arcy, who has been the "Best" Library in advance. From Tom Merry & Co.

PLEASE NOTE: THE XMAS DOUBLE NUMBER OF "THE MAGNET" LIBRARY IS OUT NEXT MONDAY

OUR SPLENDID NEW SERIAL.

BIRDS OF PREY



A Thrilling Story Dealing with the Adventures of Nelson Lee, Detective.
By MAXWELL SCOTT.

NEW READERS SHOULD START HERE.

Jack Langley, a young engineer, falls into the power of an infamous crowd whose king is the Order of the Ring, of the kind of which you may know, known as the Chief, the Captain, and the Doctor. When a prisoner he, heard the truth, Langley, belonging to the Order, Jack Langley escapes by plunging headlong, only to be picked up by the latter Philip, who found by the crowd society. The Philip, under the command of the Doctor, is run offensively as a pleasure-steamer, but an every voyage one or more passengers is "removed"—removed by the accordingly bodies, in compensation for large sums of money paid to the Order of the Ring. On board the Philip Langley finds the famous detective, Nelson Lee, who is on the track of the infamous Order. Joining the passengers is also Miss Edith Dolman, Jack's fiancée. Little as she guesses it, her work, Mr Philip Aylmer, has paid the Order of the Ring a thousand pounds to have her "removed" during the Philip's voyage. Trouble is started up among the passengers by Langley and the detective, and the Order determines to make the ship sink, all on board. They even, therefore, abandon the Philip, and go on board the Dolphin, taking Edith and

Jack with them. A great storm springs up, and the Philip goes adrift on the rocky coast of Cornwall, close to the Philip Aylmer's home. The passengers are all saved, Nelson Lee being married before departure, and the voyage ends in a highly unusual way. The news is brought that the Dolphin has also struck, and goes down with all hands. As a matter of fact, however, the Chief and the Doctor, with their two principal and five of the crew, manage to save themselves, and find refuge at the Philip Aylmer's home. Nelson Lee suspects the Philip's connection with the Ring, and shadows him one day to Dunderwood House, a large mansion standing in Chelsea Place, London, and supposed to be owned by a certain Mr. Stephen Meredith. Nothing occurs to arouse the detective's suspicions, however, and he returns his steps to his rooms. There the Captain attempts, unsuccessfully, to murder him, but goes clean away. Nelson Lee continues to watch Dunderwood House, but learns nothing more than the information that Mr. Stephen Meredith has gone abroad.

(Now go on with the story.)

Nelson Lee is Trapped

As a last resort, Nelson Lee went down to Turkey, where he spent another week in exploring the country adjacent to the railway-line, between Chesterfield and Sheffield. Day after day he was doomed to disappointment. There were six or seven country mansions in the neighbourhood of the line, any one of which might have well been the house in which Jack Langley was imprisoned. But the brief description which Jack had given Nelson Lee was not sufficiently precise to enable the detective to identify the particular house in which the underground visit was situated, and the consequence was that he returned to London no wiser than when he left.

It must not by a moment be supposed that his opinion left him in peace during the time that he was making these investigations. On the contrary, the Doctor's unceasing attempt to murder him was only the prelude to a long-continued series of attempts upon his life.

On one occasion an exploded bomb was thrown through his bed-room window, and would certainly have ended the career on this point if it had not been for the fortunate fact that he had, at the time, had a minute previously, in search of a box of matches.

An apparently decisive war looked up against him in February, in broad daylight, and calmly there a gunned assault into his arm. In the confusion which ensued the man

escaped, and the detective spent ten days in St. George's Hospital.

Twice he was set upon by gangs of so-called hoodlums, when returning to his rooms at dead of night, and once he was fired at from the upper window of an empty house in Gray's Inn Road. The man who fired the shot was captured and convicted, but was to go off without revealing the names of his confederates.

Undaunted by these dastardly attempts upon his life, supported by the warnings which attended upon him through the post, the detective calmly and cheerfully planned his investigations, but always with the same result. The clue for which he was seeking, the clue he had sought so long, eluded his grasp like a will-o'-the-wisp.

And when his light went at three lowest ebb, just when a feeling of hopefulness was beginning to dawn once again, an incident occurred which fired him more than with ordinary enthusiasm.

It was towards the end of January. He had returned to his rooms, after a highly unproductive sojourn at Scotland Yard, and was sitting down to his supper when his landlady announced a visitor.

"There's a lady downstairs who wishes to see you, sir," she said. "She says that her name is Mrs. Fawcett, and that she comes from Hampton-on-Thames. Her husband has

mysteriously disappeared, and she fears that he's been murdered.

"But you know that I'm not talking any fresh cases at present," said Nelson Lee, who had declined to deliver the words of his name in announcing the Order of the Ring. "Why don't you tell her so?"

"I did, sir," replied Miss James. "But the queer thing is in such trouble about her husband, and she cried so bitterly when I told her that I didn't think you'd see him, that I didn't get the heart to send her away till I'd heard what you said. Should I tell her that you cannot see her?"

"No, you may see her up," said the detective. "I'll explain to her how matters stand."

He rose from his chair, and went into the room where he usually received his clients. A moment or two later he had fully entered in a young and strikingly handsome girl. Her features were very well set with regular nose, and her beautiful, olive-complexioned face was pale with anxiety.

"Good-evening, Mrs. Brewster," said Nelson Lee, offering her a chair. "You wish to consult me with reference to your husband, I believe?"

"I do," she replied, with just a suspicion of a sob in her voice. "We were only married three months ago, and now I have lost him!"

She began to cry; the detective walked over to her and held her hand in a kindly fashion on her shoulder.

"Don't be despondent," he said. "The case may not be so bad as you imagine. Your husband, I understand, has disappeared, but it doesn't follow that he has been murdered."

"But he hasn't been here for just a suspicion of a week or two, and they would surely find him?"

"They'll find Nelson Lee interrupting her. "Do whom do you believe?"

"The Order of the Ring."

The detective started.

"The Order of the Ring?" he cried. "But what had your husband to do with the Order of the Ring?"

"He was one of its members," she said. "I wasn't aware of this fact when he married me, but it wasn't long before I discovered that he was keeping something back from me. For instance, he had some books and papers which he kept in a secret drawer in his writing-desk, and, although I kept him again and again when the papers were, he would never tell me, and would never allow me to see them. Then, again, once a week he came up to London to attend a meeting, but he would never tell me where the meeting was held."

Yesterday morning, in a fit of remorse, he threw himself at my feet and confessed everything. He told me that he was one of the divisional secretaries of the Order of the Ring, and that the books and papers in his writing-desk were his register of members. He said that he had helped the Order in a manner of reckless desperation, and that he would now give all he possessed to try and get it off."

"I saw that he was in earnest, and that he was gradually getting to shake himself free, and had no honest aim. But he wasn't a man of very strong will, Mr. Lee, and when I suggested him to resign, he refused, he replied with a smile that he didn't do. He said that he had just once joined the Order of the Ring was ever allowed in Harry J., and that if he ever learned of such a thing, he would be murdered on the spot."

"At last, however, I managed to persuade him to do the thing that was right, and at half-past three yesterday afternoon, he left home with the firm intention of going to Scotland Yard, denouncing the Order to the police, and placing himself under their protection. From the moment he stepped into the train at Hampton, all trace of him is lost."

"Have you inquired at Scotland Yard?"

"Yes, he had never been there."

"You are sure he left Hampton?"

"Oh, yes! One of the porters at the station who knows him by sight saw him get into the train."

"Don't you think—"

"I don't think—I am sure!" she cried, with a fresh burst of tears. "His conduct may have defied the intelligence of denouncing them to the police, and have murdered him."

"I'm afraid it looks rather like it," admitted Nelson Lee. "What about those books and papers in his writing-desk? Did he take them with him?"

"No. They are still in his desk."

"The detective's eyes lit up with a gleam of satisfaction. "It is possible only get hold of that register of members? He mentioned his watch."

"A quarter to eight," he said. "We have just time to catch the 8.15 from Waterloo."

"Then you will help me?" she cried, springing to her feet, and taking his hands.

"I will," said Nelson Lee. "I will go back to Hampton with you now."

"But surely you do not think that my husband is there?" she asked.

"No," said Nelson Lee. "But I wish to secure those books and papers at the earliest possible moment. If they contain the names of the members of the Order of the Ring, there is no doubt that the society will strike every nerve to prevent these falling into the hands of the police. It is quite possible that your house may have been broken into, and the papers stolen, whilst you have been in London. In any case, the sooner I secure the papers the better. Where that has been done, I will not wish, to find out what has become of your husband, and if he has been murdered, as you suspect, I will do my best to bring his murderers to justice. Did you drive here?"

"Yes, my last is waiting outside."

Two minutes later, Lee and his little companion were on their way to Waterloo. An hour or so later they were standing on the platform of Hampton Station.

Mrs. Brewster led the way out of the station, and along a dark, deserted path that stretched away to the north. For nearly half an hour they trod along this road in comparative silence. Then Mrs. Brewster passed outside the garden gate of a lovely-looking house.

"This is where I live," she said, as she opened the gate.

"But—but the house appears to be empty!" said Nelson Lee, with a sudden vague suspicion that all was not right.

"But it isn't, I assure you," said his companion. "I haven't a servant, and I've been in London since early this afternoon; that's why the house is so dark."

Only slightly reassured, and with his hand on his revolver, the detective followed her up the short and narrow path which led to the house. Upon reaching the door, she unlocked the steps and produced a key. Then she suddenly whirled round, and called out in a ringing voice:

"As if by magic, four men sprang up from behind a choice of evergreens in front of the door. One of them had a sword, which he skilfully swung over Nelson Lee's head, and, with lightning-like rapidity, the detective tore the cloth aside, and whipped on his revolver. Before he could fire, however, the four men flung themselves upon him in a body, and by their force of numbers he was swept off his feet, and lay on the ground.

It was before apparent that the four men had received instructions to capture Nelson Lee alive, for though each of them was armed with a revolver, he made no attempt to use it.

Then, of course, was all in the detective's hands, and, in spite of the wild agonies him, he made such excellent practice with his feet and feet, that for nearly five minutes he more than held his own.

At the end of that time, however, he was overpowered and thrown to the ground, and one of his assailants was about to bind him with a coil of rope when the clatter of boots and the rattle of cartridges was heard coming down the road from the direction of Hampton.

Quick to thought, the detective opened his mouth to shout for help. Alas! he was silent, for the same instant, the barrel of his revolver stopped him, for the throat for the purpose of keeping him quiet. But the instant after two other rifles the villain's fingers closed on his wrists, and the detective was held a shuddering rigging cry, and a moment later, in the continuation of his fight, the weapon—for such it was—came to a halt inside the gate.

With a groan, each one of the assailants struck the detective a brutal blow across the face that momentarily stunned him.

An instant later a number of young fellows, who were on their way to a football display at Wandsworth Park, dashed through the gate, and came running up the path.

For a moment, but only for a moment, the four men were arrested.

Then they revolved their way out, and the little band of would-be rescuers immediately fell back in confusion.

As a matter of fact, none of the young fellows had been his first before they had recovered from their panic the hour ago, with "Mrs. Brewster" in their midst, charged through their ranks, springing into a stone carriage which was standing in the shadow on the opposite side of the road, and rapidly drove away.

Mystical Disappearance of Nelson Lee.

Almost before the rattle of the carriage-wheels had died away, the detective was on his feet again. By this time, of course, his watch had got so good a way that he was out of the question, and, consequently, when telling he may be his return, and thanking them for their timely

fully, he hoped back to the station, and caught the 8.30 for Watford.

"I need scarcely be said that he had no hesitation whatever in attributing his latest attempt on his life to the Order of the King. This simple answer satisfied Mr. Watson, but apparently he was selected on account of his familiarity with the purpose of an ambush. The four men who had been taken for to capture him had possessed a knowledge, obvious from their conduct, that he had left his flat standing outside, whilst their accomplices remained behind the dummy of a policeman in the garden.

Mr. Watson, whom the night had, had been sent to have Nelson Lee to Hampton by means of an aerial party about the disappearance of her "husband."

In order to make the bait more effective, she had told the detective that her husband was a very important member of the Order of the King and that valuable documents relating to the Order were still concealed in the house. If her capturing plan had succeeded, the detective would doubtless have been bound and placed in the basement, and would thus have been driven away on a train which he considered to be dangerous.

In any respect the episode was not without its advantages. It taught the detective a lesson, and it opened his eyes to take a step which had long been in his thoughts. In other words, it decided him to disappear—leave his room in Gray's Inn Road, and vanish like the public foe.

"I'll stay no longer!" he muttered to himself, as the train sped on towards Watford. "I'll disappear this very night. I ought to have done it before. It stands to reason that so long as the criminals know where I am, and can keep watch on my movements, my investigations are bound to be thwarted at every end and turn. Besides, by remaining at Gray's Inn Road, I'm practically inviting them to come and murder me, and, although I've been lucky enough to escape up to now, it is by no means certain that my run of luck will last for ever. Yes, I'll hasten on longer. I'll do it tonight."

It was a quarter-past eleven when the train arrived at Watford, and half an hour later the detective was standing in a private sitting-room at No. 10, the Strand. He had engaged it for the night, along with a bedroom, and had given his proper name and address.

"And now, if you please, I should like to see the manager," he said, when the waiter had lit the gas and drawn the blinds.

The manager came and greeted Nelson Lee—whom he knew—with a smile and a bow.

"Good evening, Mr. Lee," he said. "What can I do for you?"

The detective closed the door and drew the manager to the opposite side of the room. Then he placed his hands on his shoulders and looked him full in the face.

"Are you a member of the Order of the King?" he asked.

The manager drew himself up with an air of indignant surprise. Then his features relaxed, and he bowed into a corry chair.

"What's the joke?" he asked.

"It's no joke at all," said the detective seriously. "Things have really come to such a pass that I'm afraid to trust anybody. This distinguished Order of the King has been making its every grade of society, from country squires down to railway porters, and from baronet down to scullion. Only yesterday I've had one of the successful squires I've ever had in my life, and all through putting my trust in a young and pretty girl, with a few lines on a envelope!"

"Well, you needn't be afraid of trusting me," said the manager good-humouredly. "I'm not a member at present, and I give I join, I'll be your friend."

"Thank," said the detective dryly. "And now to business. I've made up my mind to disappear, to vanish all the face of the earth, to start some way! My opinions are they give my thoughts right and they—probably they have suggested me, to be brought—and I mean to give them the air. Will you help?"

"Certainly, I will," said the manager promptly.

"And you'll keep my secret absolutely? That is to say, you won't let on that you know how and when I disappear?"

"I'll be as tight as the grave."

"Good! I believe you. I have selected your hotel partly because I knew that I could trust you, and partly because I noticed yesterday evening that you have the manager at work on the roof. I intended to stay here tonight as Nelson Lee. I intend to leave to-morrow morning on a message out of a job. For this purpose I shall need a disguise. Of course, I have plenty of disguises at my room in Gray's Inn Road; but the house is watched, and I don't want to go near it again until I have finished my work. Can you supply me with a suit of workman's clothes—something heavy and comfortable, but not too conspicuous?"

The manager thought for a while.

"This I shall need to make ready alterations to my personal appearance," continued the detective. "In other words, I want a wig and an actor's make-up hair. Mr. Watson, the stage-manager of the Haymarket Theatre, is a personal friend of mine, and will readily lend all I want if I'll give him a note from you? I don't want you to send it, for fear of discovery. I want you to take it yourself, and I want you to take it at once before Mr. Watson leaves the theatre. Will you do so?"

The manager promised, and presently left the hotel with the note. He returned to his own's place with a wig and a box, and a pencilled note from Mr. Watson, stating that he would be "most" of the detective give him provisions to wear.

"I have still another favour to ask of you," said Nelson Lee to the manager of the hotel. "I cannot carry on my investigations without money, but I don't want to keep going to the bank. I want everything, including my landlady and all her friends, to think that I am dead. Can you cash me a cheque for a couple of hundred pounds? None will do if you haven't got it."

The manager studied the cheque, partly in awe and partly in pride. He then accompanied the detective to the book-room, where the latter took of his clothes, pulled them into a bundle, and gave them to the manager to keep—said rather for "The manager, in return, presented him with a pair of corduroy trousers, a tweed jacket and waistcoat, a flannel shirt of crimson hue, buttoned boots, and a great cap. Then they took each other goodnight, and the detective retired to bed.

At half-past six the next morning he rose and donned his Japanese. Having put on his wig, and having made certain alterations in his face by means of the greases which he had made up for, he placed the letter in a building provided by the manager the night before, and cautiously opened the book-room door. The corridor was deserted, and three minutes later he was standing in the yard at the back of the hotel, where several of the men were already at work. He snatched up to the foreman and asked for a job. Being told to "clear out," he touched his cap and shuffled away.

Passing through the wooden gates at the end of the yard, he entered into Middleborough Lane. On the opposite side of the road stood a tall, old-fashioned house, the name in charge and the constant were a member of the Order of the King, and they had adopted this important device for the purpose of keeping watch on the back door of the hotel. Two other men were waiting passed in the Strand.

With his handbag slung over his shoulder, and with a clean shaven face, the detective climbed past the red-brick wall, past the man in the Strand, and over the garden bridge. At St. George's Circus he turned to his right, along Lambeth Road. In Lambeth Road he looked at the door of a house which displayed the legend, "Lodgings for Single Men."

He gave his name as Robert Lawrence, and stated that he was a member out of work. He had left his lodgings in Whitechapel Road because of a dispute with one of the other lodgers. Could he have a bedroom and a sitting room, for which he was prepared to pay rent for in advance? If he could, and the rent was reasonable, he would return to his former lodgings for his box of clothes and books.

Yes, he could have both a bedroom and a sitting-room. The rent was discussed and settled. He went for his belongings he purchased, together with his contents, from a second-hand dealer in Whitechapel; and by ten o'clock he was comfortably settled in his new quarters.

Next morning the papers were full of the "Mysterious Disappearance of Nelson Lee." Interviews were published with his landlady, with the street-collector of Hampton Station, with the manager of Gray's Inn Road. He had left his room in Gray's Inn Road at a quarter to eight, in company with a lady who had given her name as Mrs. Hutchinson. It was known to have arrived at Hampton, and to have been twice searched there. He had been traced to Gray's Inn Road, and was known to have spent the night there.

When the books had called him at eight o'clock the next morning, the book-room had been found to be empty. Nobody had seen him leave.

By the public the news was received with profound regret. The later news set on its immediately, amongst the conviction that the popular detective had at last been shown to death by the Order of the King.

But the Order of the King have better. By them the news was received with indifference, and when they had found the power of Nelson Lee, even when they had been able to keep him under observation and to spy upon his movements. You times more did they dread the detective's skill now that he was bent to work against them, unknown, unwatched, and untraced.

"Hushh!"

It is high time, now, that we return to the Chief and the Doctor, whom we left, along with Jack and Edith and five of the Dolphin's crew, in the lee-ward wing of Feathered Wings.

In obedience to the Chief's instructions, the Squire took Mr. Meredith's yacht down the Thames in Feathered Wings, and anchored just outside the bar. On the first dark night after the yacht's arrival a green light was displayed at the yacht's masthead; and, in response to an answering signal from the lighthouse, a boat was lowered and swung to the front of the ship. Half an hour later, the Chief and the Doctor, Edith and Jack, and the command of the Dolphin's crew were safely aboard the yacht.

"And what are your plans now?" asked the Squire, when the yacht had put to sea again. "Are you coming back to London?"

"Not at present," said the Chief. "There are too many of the Squire's emissaries looking about in London—to say nothing of Nelson Lee and his crew. In some cases we pleased it the Doctor and I were recognized. We're talking the matter over, and we've decided to go for a trip abroad until our heads have cooled."

"Then what do you propose to do with Langley and Miss Aythya?"

"We're going to put them ashore at Southampton—Langley is going in the ship, and Miss Aythya to your house. You will be responsible for their safe custody until the Doctor and I return."

The Squire smote the saloon table with his fist. "This is a handsome—shrew business!" he cried. "All our social troubles have arisen through your insane determination to make Jack Langley job-son. Let us have someone of this stuffiness! Let us put a bullet through Jack Langley's head, and another through Miss Aythya's, and leave them rotting in the sea!"

The Chief regarded him with a cold and haughty glance.

"Am I the Chief of the Order of the Ring, or am I not?" he asked.

"Oh, yes; of course you're here!" said the Squire sulkily. "But it seems to me that you've had your head over the business!"

The Chief heaved a sigh, reflected, vacillated brightly, and a deathly light gleamed in his deep-set eyes.

"I have sworn to make Jack Langley job-son," he said, "and, by Heaven, I'll do it, if it takes me twenty years! It isn't that I particularly resent his job; it's the principle of the thing, and I'll force him to take the path of probity, even if I have to lock Miss Aythya in prison before his very eyes!"

The Squire then yep his shoulders. Argument was useless.

"But I have your own way, I suppose?" he said. "But how are you going to land them? You can't pack them up in boxes, you know, for the Customs House officers would seize upon anything that was suspicious."

"Leave that to me," said the Chief grimly. "The Doctor and I have arranged all that."

The Squire did leave it to him, and the subject was not again mentioned until the yacht arrived in Southampton Water.

The Doctor then administered a powerful sleeping draught to Jack and Edith, who were then unbound and laid in their respective bunks. This kept them quiet until the Customs House officers had been cleared and had completed their investigations; after which the Doctor went ashore, interviewed a Moore in the lower part of the town, and returned to the yacht with a packet of handkerchiefs and terrible powder, which is known to the Arabs as "hushh!"

By means of this subtle drug—well known to the medicine-men of the East—the valiant both Jack and Edith in a state of semi-insensibility.

While they were in this condition they were taken ashore—Jack to the club and Edith to the house in the Strand.

After the Squire's departure, the yacht put to sea again.

For over three months she drifted from port to port; and then, about the end of February, the Chief and the Doctor—who had, meantime, grown magnificently bearded—decided that it would be safe for them to return to England. A telegram was accordingly sent to the Squire, informing him of their decision, and inviting him to meet them at dinner at Dandelion House on the evening of their return.

Thus the yacht's homeward voyage began. Little did either of them dream what a startling reception awaited them.

Continued.

It was on the Friday of the first week in March that the Chief's yacht steamed into Southampton Harbour and berthed alongside the station pier. The Chief, of course, was invited

to see Mr. Stephen Meredith, of Dandelion House, Chelsea Place, London, S.W.

The Doctor, who had quite a foreign appearance, with his coal-black beard and moustache, was wearing an Mr. Meredith's Italian friend, Count Silvio Rappini.

The Squire met them on the pier, and travelled up to town with them. From time to time he had someone or added to the Chief—always in cipher, of course—narrating him of the various attempts which had been made on the life of Nelson Lee.

Such information had necessarily been of the briefest description; but now he told the Chief everything that had happened whilst he had been absent.

"What you never found out what became of Nelson Lee?" asked the Chief when the Squire had finished.

"Never," said the Squire. "It's five weeks tonight since he crossed his bedroom at Bealey's Hotel and closed the door, and from that moment to this all traces of him in London. When you consider the enormous number of spies we possess, and when you know that some of these has ever been able to trace him, I think you'll agree with me that the probability is that he is dead."

The Chief shook his head vigorously and decidedly.

"I wish I could think so," he said. "But he's an unflinching creature with large hopes. We haven't finished with Nelson Lee yet. Depend upon it, he's merely lying low, and some day, when we least expect it, he'll reappear and give us a shock. In the meantime, here's Miss Aythya!"

"So well as you can be expected."

"She's at your house, of course?"

"Yes. I've had two women fitted up for her immediately over the neighbouring gate."

And Jack Langley.

"He was all right when I saw him a couple of days ago. He's imprisoned in one of the cells at the club."

"Good! And now tell me, what do you think of my appearance—my eyes and the Doctor's? Are we sufficiently changed? Should we pose modestly if we happened to meet any of the Squire's emissaries?"

"Rather," said the Squire sulkily. "I wouldn't have believed that a beard would have made such a difference. Both of you are absolutely well and completely shrewish. Even Nelson Lee wouldn't know you."

They continued to chat in this way till the train arrived at Victoria, where they took their seats in a handsomely appointed compartment, and arrived at Dandelion House a few minutes after seven o'clock. Three footmen in gorgeous livery came waiting to receive them; and the moment they stepped into the brilliantly lighted entrance-hall, the Chief observed—very distinctly—glancing at one of the footmen—a slight, but perceptible sign of nervousness.

He noticed this footman his hat and gloves, and at the same time examined him with a glance that was apparently casual, but which was really keen and searching. Then he drew in his breath with a short, sharp, nervous gasp, and his unbuttoned bow went slightly askew. By a mighty effort he recovered his self-control before the footman observed his agitation; and as soon as he had divested himself of his coat, he reentered the house and the Doctor to their rooms, and left them to dress for dinner. He then went in search of his secretary.

"You've engaged a new footman in my absence, I see," he said.

"Yes, sir," said the secretary. "Dinner broke his leg, and had to go into hospital, so I was obliged to advertise for another to take his place."

"What is the new man's name?"

"Robert Lawson, sir. He had excellent testimonials, and was law in the service of Lord Bledley."

"Oh, was he?" said the Chief sulkily. "How long has he been here?"

"About a week, sir. I hope I haven't done anything contrary to your wishes! I assure you that Lawson has given us every satisfaction up to the present."

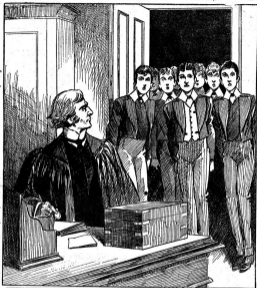
"I don't doubt it," said the Chief. "No, you haven't done anything wrong. On the contrary, I rather think you've done exceedingly well. By the way, will you please arrange with the butler that Lawson brings in the coffee to-night?"

"I'll do it, sir."

The Chief went up to his room, where his maid awaited him in waiting attire. He then dismissed the maid, slipped three sovereigns into his pocket, and went down into the drawing-room. The Doctor and the Doctor had not yet made their appearance, and the only occupant of the room was a young and beautiful girl, the footman who had kept Nelson Lee in Hampton in the guise of "Mrs. Foreman."

The girl went to the door, the spring to her feet, and ran towards him with a cry of delight.

"So you're glad to see me back, are you, little woman?" he asked.



"Do you mean to say seriously, Smith, that you have come to me with this important request—that you really regard Mark Linley to be barred from the examination?" exclaimed the Head. "Yes sir!" answered the Headmaster unshaken. The Head's brow grew dark and frowning. "If you say another word, Smith, I shall cease you!" (An incident from the celebrated, complete tale of the *Chimes of Great Britain*, entitled, "MARK LINLEY'S LAST FIGHT," by Frank Richards, which is serialized in this week's issue of our popular companion paper, "THE MARTINET" (Every. New on Sale. Price One Penny).

"Good you ask?" she replied. "It has been—oh!—it has been terrible to be away from you so long!

"But I haven't been like what you've been away, you know," she added, with a mischievous sparkle in her brilliant eyes. "You heard of my visit to Nelson Cove! Wasn't it a play that we had?"

"It was," he replied. And his face grew dark and stern. "But the ladies had no right to employ you for such a purpose. You are too precious to me to run such risks. I intend to speak to him on the subject later. In the meantime, will you do me a favour? Will you please yourself from dinner?" (—Night.)

"I will," she asked, with a little pout of disappointment.

"For the sake of your safety, he said. "I'm afraid there's going to be trouble after dinner, and I want to spare you the sight of anything that might shock you. Run up to

your room, like a good little woman, and I'll come and see you when it's all over."

The word was law. She bowed low, and left the room. A moment later the Captain and the Doctor appeared, looking crosser-down. A violent commotion took place. The Child gave each of them a revolver. Then the dinner-bell rang, and they went into the dining-room.

There is no need to describe the dinner in detail. The Child was at the head of the table, the Captain at the foot, and the Doctor at one side.

On the other side was an empty chair, originally intended for "Mrs. Beaumont."

Behind each of the guests stood a footman, Larsons standing behind the Child.

Excellent as the dinner was, the three men ate but sparingly, and the wine was probably unshared. At the

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brushed on the wall the footings outside, and the Chief produced his cigarette. The Doctor drew up his chair beside the Chief. The paper ran from his end as the other end of the table, and crossed himself on the other side of the Chief. They lit their pipes. They ate the dinner with satisfaction. The Chief dined with a silver tray, on which were eggs, and Lawrence dined with a silver tray, on which were some tiny cups of coffee, a silver bowl of sugar, and a jug of cream.

The Chief laid down his cigar and moved his chair. The Doctor and the Doctor followed by example.

"Coffee, sir?" said Lawrence, leaning in front of the Chief, with the tray in his deconstructed hands.

"With a swift and sudden movement, the Chief leaped to his feet and whipped out his revolver. His two companions followed suit, and in the twinkling of an eye three gleaming cylinders were leveled at the doctor's head.

"Good-evening, Mr. Nelson Lee!" said the Chief, with a mocking laugh. "Please get up to congratulate you on the excellence of your dinner."

"The doctor sat up in his chair, eye-raised his eyes, and looked at the speaker full in the face. "No, no, I am better better than the day in his life was hanging by the narrow thread, that the slightest suspicious movement on his part would be followed by instant death. Yet, in spite of the peril which surrounded him, his face was as calm and imperturbable as when he had entered the room.

"So you have recognized me?" he said, addressing the Chief, in a clear, unflinching voice.

"Why, certainly!" said the Chief, with a complacent smile.

"I spotted you in the hall when we arrived, and I arranged for you to bring the coffee in, in order that we might settle our differences in a quiet and gentlemanly manner. Sit down."

"Thanked, I prefer to stand," said the detective coolly. "With your permission, however, I will not sit this tray down, and I will not sit this tray down."

"I think not," said the Chief, interrogating him. "You do not come over so with a simple trick like that. So long as your hands are encumbered with that tray, they can't very well get into action, can you? Kindly stand where you are, and hold it in your hands, until I've finished."

"Pardon me," said Nelson Lee, with a winning smile. "From the time of your remarks, I am only thirty feet from you and your pistols are laboring under a slight handicap. Surely you do not think that I have been so foolish as to venture into this house without taking every precaution to guard against being captured? It is possible, then, because you have concerned me with your revolver, you are flattering yourselves that I am in your power!"

"Well, now, if I cannot convince you even under that impression," said the Chief, with a derisive laugh. "If you are after us that we are mistaken, we shall be very much obliged."

"Very well," said Nelson Lee, who was watching in spite of the silent game of hide-and-seek he had been played. "Since you have asked for proof, you shall have it. Listen."

"The three men stepped, but never a one took his eye off Nelson Lee. Each man stood with his revolver on a level with the doctor's head, and each man kept his eye on the detective's face, ready to fire at the slightest sign of an attempt to escape.

"Well, I don't hear anything!" said the Chief mockingly. "But the words that exactly opened his lips on a dropped tray rang out at the end of the room.

"Hear me, all three of you, or I lie!"

"With simultaneous game of alarm, the three men spun round on their heels, and stared in the direction from which the voice proceeded.

"This, of course, was exactly what Nelson Lee had expected them to do. An expert riddler, he had "thrown his voice," as the saying is, to the other end of the room, and the moment his exploit turned round, he dropped the tray and sprang towards the door.

"Quick as thought, the three men turned and crossed him with their revolvers. But they could fire, however, he reached the door and withdrew all the electric light, in consequence of which the room was instantly plunged into total darkness, and the three detectives were blinded from view.

"Despite the darkness, the three men promptly fired, neither at the spot where Nelson Lee had been seen, nor in the direction. However, after withdrawing all the light, the detective had dropped on his hands and knees, and the bullets, having struck the door, had caused the apartment entrance-hall, and were flying down the steps which led into the street.

One Away.

Half-past ten was striking from a neighboring office as Nelson Lee dashed out of the house and into Christmas Place. There were but few people about, but such as there were turned their heads, and stared in unfeigned amazement at the man who dashed out of the house.

the better figure of an obviously washed footman, seeing along the street, with the speed of a practiced sprinter. One or two were inclined at first to stop him, under the impression that he had stolen something, and were making of with his hands full of an ordinary camera, and as the houses in front of him these well-meaning bystanders slowly decided to leave the detective alone.

Unhindered of the curious glances which greeted him on every hand, he sped to the corner of Belmont Square, where his keen eyes had already detected the body, individual figure of a metropolitan policeman.

"Hallo, hallo! Not so fast, young man!" cried the constable, springing on his arms, and bearing the detective's path. "I saw you run out of Madewood House just now. What have you been up to, and what's your hurry?"

"Have you a watch?" queried Nelson Lee.

"Allow your watch! What for?" demanded the constable.

"In common justice," said Nelson Lee, glancing back at the door of Madewood House. "My friend, Mitchell is in the house, and he is waiting for the King. He remains in England in the night, along with the Queen."

"How then?" said the constable contemptuously. "Who are you trying to fool? You can tell that tale to somebody who doesn't know the facts. Everybody in England knows that the two men you have named were drowned in the wreck of the Dolphin last November."

"They were!" said the detective, stamping his foot in his impatience. "I am Nelson Lee, or I know what I'm talking about!"

"Nelson Lee?" continued the constable, staring at him in incredulous surprise. "Nelson Lee, is that right?"

"Certainly," said the detective. "After my disappearance I lived for a time in Lambeth Walk, then I took a situation as bookman at Madewood House. Like everybody else, I believed that the Chief and the Doctor had been drowned, and I never went to Madewood House because I was sure that I haven't time to explain. I must have seen that Mr. Mitchell was in league with the Order of the King. Mr. Mitchell was absent when I resumed his service, and he only returned this evening. He was accompanied by a friend, whom he introduced as an English count, but the moment I stepped upon my steps, I recognized Mr. Mitchell as the Chief, and his friend as the Doctor. How they managed to escape from the wreck of the Dolphin, I don't pretend to explain; but I give you my word that they are both in that house at the present moment, together with the Queen and the woman who tried me to Madewood a month ago."

The constable waited to hear no more. Without another word, he whipped out his whistle, and blew a series of frantic blasts. In less than a couple of minutes they were joined by seven or eight constables of the B Division, and, as soon as Nelson Lee had explained the situation, a crowd was made in Madewood House.

"Do you think we shall meet with much resistance?" asked one of the constables, somewhat nervously.

"We shall meet with none, no doubt," said Nelson Lee.

"The Chief, the Doctor, and the Doctor are all aware of the fate which awaits them if once they fall into the hands of the law; so that, in all probability, they will fight to the last, on the principle that they may as well die fighting as be hanged. The woman, who is known as Lady Trevelyan, may also give us some trouble; for, in spite of her youth and beauty, there is a remarkable tiger in her human form. The only other person who is likely to oppose us is Mr. Mitchell's servant—a young man whom I strongly suspect of being a member of the Order of the King."

"But how about the servants?" asked another constable.

"None of them members of the Order of the King!" cried Nelson Lee. "I am sure of that, and you may take it from me that they're as innocent as I am of any complicity in their master's misdeeds. We've nothing to fear from the servants."

He had scarcely finished speaking on they arrived at the open door of Madewood House. The entrance-hall was lit up with a crowd of excited servants, who held the several of the police with a chorus of cries of protest. They had heard the sound of firing in the dining-room, and some of them had seen the detective half out of the house. But most of them had the mistaken idea of what had happened, so they the detective had summoned the police.

In a few brief, hurried sentences the detective explained the true state of affairs; then he asked for news of Mr. Mitchell, and his two companions. "Where were they?" he asked, with a frown on his face.

"Not there, sir, certainly," said Lady Trevelyan's maid.

"I saw them rush out of the dining room and Jerry upstairs immediately after you left."

Lady Trevelyan's maid, it should here be explained, was a small but handsome-looking dwarfing woman on the first floor of the house.

A NEW FREE
CORRESPONDENCE EXCHANGE.

The only means and address which can be granted in short notices and by free class readers living in any of our Colonies who desire Correspondents in Great Britain and Ireland.

Colombian readers 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.

Wanted: correspondents must send with each notice two copies, one taken from "The Gem," and one from the same week's issue of the newspaper, paper, "The Magnet" Library, Company and always be printed on paper if both papers, and requests for correspondents not containing these two copies will be absolutely disregarded.

Readers wishing to reply to advertisements appearing in this column must point to the advertisement direct. No correspondence with advertisers can be undertaken through the medium of this office.

All advertisements for insertion in this Free Exchange should be addressed: "The Editor, 'The Gem' Library, The Storyway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4."

J. B. Clark, 25, Woodworth Street, Messen Falls, Victoria, Australia, wishes to correspond with a boy or girl reader, age 15-16, living in England.

Miss M. Harlow, Willow Street, Wallara, South Australia, wishes to correspond with a boy reader, age 15, living in England.

E. A. Nichols, Davidson Street North, Richmond, Melbourne, Victoria, wishes to correspond with a female with a view to exchanging stamps.

M. A. Hale, 145, Sander Street, West Melbourne, Victoria, Australia, wishes to correspond with a reader living in England, age about 17 or 18.

H. Smith, 25, Stephenson Street, Richmond, Victoria, Australia, wishes to correspond with a girl reader, age 14 to 15.

A. Chase, Post Office, Largs Bay, South Australia, wishes to correspond with a girl reader.

Miss F. Perry, 14, Street, Scotland, Valpara, Malta, would like to correspond with a boy reader, 12 years of age, living in the United Kingdom.

W. G. E. Smith, Malton Railway St North, Dings Creek, Queensland, Egypt, wishes to correspond with girl readers living in Great Britain.

Shigeo Do, Yamaguchi-ken, Kurai, Japan, wishes to exchange post-stamps with English readers.

H. M. Arnold, 15, Waverley Road, Shanghai, China, wishes to correspond with girl readers, age 17 or 18.

H. Brown, 202, Third Street East, Calgary, Alberta, Canada, wishes to correspond with a boy or girl reader, age 15, living in England.

H. Hatch, c/o J. Brown, "Southboro," Beverly, West Australia, wishes to correspond with his two old friends, Fred Stone and H. Phoenix.

A. Marks, 25, Night Street, Doornfontein, Johannesburg, South Africa, wishes to correspond with a boy or girl reader living in Britain, England, age 15-17.

Miss M. Roberts, 1, New Park Terrace, Shanghai, China, wishes to correspond with an American boy reader, age between 14 and 15.

Miss F. Cohen, 25, Edgely Street, Yeovil, Somerset, wishes to correspond with readers of about 22 years of age.

F. Ryan, 174, Spadina Street, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, wishes to correspond with readers in British Colonies with a view to exchanging stamps.

The Editor earnestly requests Colonial Readers to identify living the Free Correspondence Exchange to the notice of their friends.

"And where is the secretary?" asked Nelson Lee. "Is he in the room?"

"No," said one of the chambermaids. "I heard the manager shout for him as they ran upstairs, and he followed the chambermaid into the lady's bedroom."

The detective walked his hands, and a gleam of satisfaction shone in his eyes. Surely the end of his long task was at hand? The three people whom, above all others, he wished to find, were still in the small room. Surely the Peters had at last delivered them into his hands?

With the police at his heels, he led the way upstairs. On passing the door of Lady Evelyn's bedroom, which was locked, he knocked and entered with a look in the man's face, showing an effort to control his shoulders to the door, and keep it open. Then he stepped back, with a cry of surprise.

There was nobody in the room. A half-smoked, crumpled cigarette still rested on the edge of a dressing table by the side of a rug-covered couch, and the bed, like columns of smoke which ascended from the end of a cigarette, proved that her ladyship had laid it down but a moment or two before. But of Lady Evelyn herself and of the four men who were known to have entered the room, not a trace of a trace remained.

Yet the door—the only door—had been locked on the inside and the key was still in the keyhole. And the windows did not open in the ordinary sense of the word, but were provided with small, square ventilators in the upper panes.

"How did the man who was dressed as a woman get out of the room at all?" "The man who's after never came into the room at all?"

The detective shook his head. "The man who's after never came into the room at all?" "The man who's after never came into the room at all?"

"If they were in here, then, how did they get out?" "Quite enough," said Nelson Lee.

There is evidently a secret door, or a sliding panel, in the wall, and it is that way they have made their going."

"Where is?" demanded the constable. The detective shrugged his shoulders.

"I'll tell you that when I've found the secret door," he said. "In the meantime, since you seem to doubt my theory, you will send your companions search the house from the ground floor to the roof, and see if you can find them."

The police, accordingly, withdrew, and ordered themselves to be ready to start, leaving the detective alone in the room. They first set a watch on all the corners of the room, they started in the others, and worked their way in the other, working every corner in turn, and nothing in a searching examination. Following this, they went outside, and explored the various buildings in the yard at the back. But it was all in vain. The four men whom they sought, together with the girl Evelyn, had disappeared as completely and mysteriously as if they had walked into air.

Called and charged, the police returned to the house. As they searched the door, they heard the detective give utterance to a low, but sharp, cry of triumph, and, on pushing back the door, they were long in time to see him vanish through a hole in the partition in the wall.

While the police had been searching the house, he had found a tiny door, which he looked at as one of the passages of the room, and entered by the door, which he had seen with which the walls were fitted. After many fruitless attempts, he had at last discovered the secret spring by which the door was opened. Upon pressing this spring, the door had gradually swung open, revealing a narrow slit in the masonry of the wall; and, at the moment when the police rushed into the room, he was in the act of squeezing himself through this slit, with a view of discovering what was beyond.

"Where does it lead to?" asked one of the constables, crossing the room and peering through the slit.

"I can't quite make out," replied Nelson Lee. "It's too dark to see. Lead me your lantern."

The constable, accordingly, introduced his lantern, and passed it through the opening. The rest of the police crowded round the slit, and he held their lanterns in varied positions. For a moment Nelson remained. Then the voice of Nelson Lee was heard.

"There's nothing here," he said, "except a strip of stone wall, which apparently leads downwards in the thickness of the wall, to the crypts below. I'm now going down to look."

"May we come with you?" asked one of the constables.

"Certainly, if you wish," said Nelson Lee. And a line of breathless excitement, they wriggled through the narrow slit, one at a time, and followed the detective down the steps. At the bottom, several feet below the level of the cellar floor, was a low-arched opening, which proved to be the entrance to an underground tunnel.

Further thrilling adventures of this sensational mystery next Wednesday.

OUR SPECIAL WEEKLY FEATURE



THIS WEEK'S CHAT.

For Next Wednesday

"THE CAPTAIN'S RIVAL!"

By MARTIN CLIFFORD.

Next Wednesday's splendid long complete tale of the chase of St. Jim's tells of a prison ship in the tracks of the owners of the vessel, which has a disastrous effect upon the St. Jim's First Mate.

Anything that contains the famous story "Tommy" from his, naturally, a personal interest for every boy in the school, as told from Merry & Co. And bound to try these hands at writing letters right, with the most charming results.

However, nature has not all the time in the end, and

"THE CAPTAIN'S RIVAL!"

It was read. Here comes Eric Kildare reigns in peace as the undisciplined captain of St. Jim's.

GOOD WISHES FOR OUR NEW COMPANION PAPER.

My dear little new arrival, I am pleased to see that you have a very nice cover, and telling me frankly, these opinions of the paper. What they like and, occasionally, what they do not like. It can be very interesting, and the publication of "The Friday Herald" may have some more to give my readers. You want they want—would you like to give them to write to me in generous appreciation of our best companion paper.

I have this week selected two typical little notes of the kind—one coming from Bristol, the other from Birmingham. The former runs as follows:

Bristol.

"Dear Editor, I am exceedingly pleased to see that another splendid paper is being published. I think myself that it is an extra special good one. I take in 'The Gem' and 'The Magnet' each week. When I have read them I give them to different boys. Some of my classes call me 'Tommy' and I am an enormous 'Tommy.' I have just received the new issue, but some of the same articles from 'The Gem' and 'The Magnet.' I love 'The Gem' and 'The Boy,' will always be as good as 'The Gem' and 'The Boy.' When I visited St. John's College a short time ago it made me think of Tom Merry and Harry Wharton. I only wished it was St. Jim's or Greyfriars I was looking at instead. I trust you show my letter, thanking you for your good wishes, and hoping to see some more of yours, as an old reader."

G. A.

This is what my Birmingham correspondent says:

Birmingham.

"Dear Editor, I have been a reader of 'The Gem' and 'The Magnet' since they started being published, and have got them all bound up in volumes, from No. 1 of the 'Half-penny Gem' to this week's, and all of 'The Magnet,' and so on, as a reader of a very old standing. I thought I would write to you, and give my opinion. I am sure it would be very interesting, and as it contains a complete issue of 'Tom Merry,' you can let it see with my boys' heads, and the 'Half-penny Gem.' If it were not laid as good as the old 'Half-penny Gem' I am sure it is going all the way. The present number of 'The Gem' is very good, and your stories of Tom Merry can't be better."

"Well, here's my best good wish to the 'Half-penny Gem,' and may it go on well as 'The Gem.'—Yours, P. V. H."

I tender my heartfelt thanks to both my correspondents. I wish the boys that the "Half-penny Gem" will always be as good as the good old "Gem" and "The Magnet" Libraries.

"The Magnet" Library—Special Features.

The current issue of our grand little companion paper "The Magnet" Library, which came out on Monday of this week, is again one which every student should make a point of acquiring. With it is presented, free, another very interesting novelty.

"THE DANCING SCHOOLBOY."

When set out according to the instructions attached, the accompanying free service takes the shape of a well-known character in Frank Richards' famous school stories of "Tom Merry," which appears in our companion paper every week. The figure can be made to dance in the most natural and natural way, and will cause endless amusement wherever it is published.

I will take this opportunity of reminding Gentlemen that the "Magnet" will be supplied by the name of the Grand Christmas Double Number of

"THE MAGNET" LIBRARY.

which will contain an unusually strong programme of school and adventure stories, including stories, and a special "Special Four Stories," consisting of a group of

CHRISTMAS MASKS.

To make certain of getting this magnificent book of 14 things, my friends are advised to order "The Magnet" Christmas Double Number early.

Books in Brief.

Miss E. Larkins, China—Thanks for letter. The week above you mention may, at some future date, be printed in *de la* book form, though, of course, it will not be yet written. I. H. Davis, Chesham, New Zealand—I am very glad you did not forget me to give any hints on composition in the form. You can buy a book called "Practical Hygiene" from Messrs. W. G. Garrage of Holford, London, E. C., England, for 1s. 6d. post free.

"GETTING-UP" EXERCISES.

Many of my readers complain that they get a very great difficulty in getting up in the morning, an ordinary hint cannot they may go to bed, and I am very often asked for some advice which will assist early rises in a systematic but still difficult. A medical authority has come to the rescue by prescribing certain exercises which will help readers to shake off "that sleepy feeling" which weighs them down during the morning.

After the night's long rest the brain is laden with secreted liquor, and the blood vessels which receive such material are constricted and sluggish. This is why so all other matter in a minute is lost, and why most people are so much of a "morning" type. Very slowly the brain gets rid of its material which interferes with its vigorous action, but the process can be expedited.

If the ligaments are placed against the neck just under the ear, and moved softly down to the base of the skull, along the course of the jugular vein, the neck-up blood flows away, and runs left for a fresh supply. This should be done twice at each side of the neck. Then the hands should be placed on the back of the neck just under the skull and moved downwards as far as possible. This draws out the lymph vessels, and effectively prevents another attack, from which so many people suffer.

After two minutes of the lymph vessels return to the jugular vein, and then back to the glands, half a dozen or eight times, until the operations will be found to bring them away of coffee; and afterwards the night is dull through neglecting this massage will be equally effectual.

THE EDITOR.