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FREE INSIDE!



T. BROWELL
(Manchester City F.C.)

THE ST. JIM'S RUNAWAY!

(An Incident from the Thrilling Long Complete School Story Inside.)

TOMMY BROWELL.

(The "Boy" Centre-Forward of Manchester City F.C.)

THE manager of any football club will assure you without the slightest hesitation that there have been plenty of good footballers spoilt by being elevated to first-class teams at too early an age. There are two reasons for this, one being that if the young player is successful he is apt to get a very bad attack of the disease known as swelled head, and that is fatal to his prospects of advancement. The other reason is that, if the young player elevated to the top class should fail to make good, he is apt to be keenly disappointed and lose heart.

In football of the present time, however, there are several cases which could be cited of "infant prodigies" who have made good, and one of the most striking of these is Tom Browell, the Manchester City centre-forward. He comes of a footballing family, and a few years ago—in 1910 to be precise—there were three brothers Browell on the books of the Hull City Club, Tom, who was then a mere lad of seventeen, being the youngest of the trio.

There was an idea at that time that "boy Browell," as he has been known throughout his career, might make good at outside right, and it was in this position that he made his first appearance in the Hull City League team. It can scarcely be said, however, that he even threatened to set the Humber on fire in this position; but then, in an emergency, he was tried one day at centre-forward, and, like many another footballer, the emergency made the man, for the minute Tommy was put to lead the attack he started on a wonderful career of goal-scoring.

In his very first match as leader of the Hull City forwards he scored three goals, and going on to find the net with splendid consistency, he became recognised as one of the wonders of the game—a boy of seventeen who could hold his own with the best.

As a matter of fact, it was as a centre-forward that Browell had earned fame with his local team in the mining village of Walbottle, and it is as a centre-forward that

his name will go down in football history, even though last season he played more than one First Division game at inside-right, and is such a good natural player in these times that he could scarcely let his side down wherever he appeared.

After a couple of seasons with Hull City, Browell was transferred to Everton, Hull being at that time in need of cash, and the boy player himself being anxious to progress in the game. For the greater part of four seasons he led the Everton attack, and was then again transferred, this time going to his present club—Manchester City.

As showing in the most convincing way that right through his life as a footballer he has gone on studying and improving his game, it may be mentioned that, on behalf of the Hyde Road team, he has scored more goals in a season than ever he did either at Hull or at Everton. In the season before last, by way of example, he played in every League match in which Manchester City took part, and finished with 31 goals to his credit. Last season injuries kept him out of the side on several occasions, but none the less he found the net 21 times in League games, and was the club's highest scorer. Naturally, he has lost some of his boyish dash, but in its place has arisen greater subtlety and a keener appreciation of the finer points of the game. He is still known as the boy, and looks the part, being possessed of a happy disposition, so that it is said that he never fails to smile whether his side wins or loses.



GEORGE WILSON
(Wednesday F.C.)

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J. FORT
(Millwall F.C.)

"MY READERS' OWN CORNER!"

Tuck Hampers and Money Prizes Awarded for Interesting Paragraphs.
(If your name is not here this week it may be next.)

THIS WINS OUR TUCK HAMPER.

HER MISTAKE.

Bill Smith went to London to buy goods for his shop in the village. The merchandise reached his home before he did. When he entered the shop he saw his wife, red of face, hacking away at the biggest packing-case with a hatchet. "What's the matter, Maria?" asked Bill. Mrs. Smith stared, dropped the hatchet, and threw her arms round her husband's neck. "Look at the label!" she cried. "I thought you were a prisoner in the case!" The writing on the label, sure enough, ran, "Bill inside."—A Tuck Hamper filled with delicious Tuck has been awarded to W. Meyer, 267, Harrow Road, Leytonstone, E. 11.

TONGUE TWISTERS.

Can you pronounce the following sentences quickly and repeatedly? Sarah, in a silk shawl, shovels soft snow slowly. A growing gleam glowing green. Grimes' great gilt gig whip. He ate some fresh fried fish, cold boiled fowl, and mixed biscuits. Say—should such a showy sash shabby stitches show? The silly thistle shifter took her sieve of sifted thistles, and mixed them with her sieve of unsifted thistles.—Half-a-crown has been awarded to H. J. Longthorne, 5, The Crescent, Tadcaster.

A GROWING BABY.

The teacher noticed giggling in class. "What are you laughing at, Tommy?" she inquired of one boy. "Please, miss," said the lad, "Billy here says he knows of a baby who was fed on elephant's milk, and gained ten pounds in one day!" "Turner," said the teacher sternly, "you should not tell tales." "But it's true," protested Turner. "Whose baby was it?" "The elephant's."—Half-a-crown has been awarded to S. Knight, 32, Oxford Street, Darlington.

CHEMISTRY.

Chemistry is a grand hobby. Have you ever tried making your own test tubes? Almost every sweet-shop sells tubes of sweets. These tubes can be bent, spouts made, and lips, etc., in fact all that is necessary. Place the part of tube to be altered in naked gas flame. The glass will not crack, so when red hot a knitting needle will bend the glass on giving a little pressure. The novice will soon be able to make all the kinds of tubes he requires. One warning—do not put glass after burning in cold water, until quite cool.—Half-a-crown has been awarded to B. G. Stoner, 33, Windsor Road, Bexhill-on-Sea.

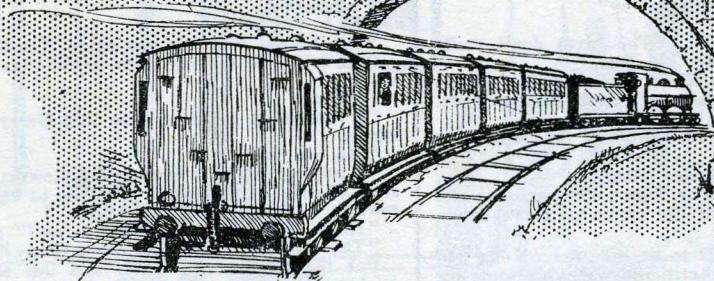
NO DETAILS.

As the powerful motor-car dashed along the French country road in a smother of dust, the owner leaned forward and shouted to his chauffeur: "Where are we now?" "Just approaching Paris, sir," came the reply. "Oh, don't bother about details!" cried the passenger. "I mean, what country?"—Half-a-crown has been awarded to N. B. Parker, St. Winifred's, 27, Pier Road, Rosherville, Kent.

TUCK HAMPER COUPON

THE GEM LIBRARY,
No attempt will be considered unless accompanied by one of these Coupons.

The St. Jim's Runaway!



A Grand Long Complete Story of the Chums of St. Jim's, telling how Arthur Augustus D'Arcy flees from school to escape a licking at the hands of Mr. Railton.

By MARTIN CLIFFORD.

CHAPTER 1.

A Box From Knox!

"WHAT twice ducks' eggs?" Arthur Augustus D'Arcy of the Fourth asked that question quite loudly.

"Cheap, to-day!" grinned Blake.

Knox of the Sixth looked round, with an angry scowl. He had caught D'Arcy's words. They were not exactly intended for Knox's ears; but certainly Gussy did not care whether he heard them or not.

School House seniors were playing New House seniors on Big Side at St. Jim's. Blake & Co. of the Fourth had honoured the senior match by giving it a look-in.

There was no junior game that afternoon, so Study No. 6 strolled on to Big Side to encourage the mighty men of the Sixth and the Fifth with their presence.

Kildare, the School House captain, was always worth watching—so were Darrell, and Langton, and most of the School House side. Study No. 6 were quite pleased with the School House innings, until Knox of the Sixth came to the wickets.

Knox, the bully of the Sixth, was not in high favour with the heroes of the Fourth. Still, they were willing to cheer him if he played up well for his House—which was also their House.

Naturally they wanted their House to win—it was up to the School House to beat the New House all along the line. And Knox, instead of putting up a good innings for his side, fell to the first ball, bowled by Monteith of the New House.

Knox had rather a swaggering manner as he came to the wicket, and he took up his stand there with the air of a fellow who was going to knock the bowling over every point of the compass.

But it proved a case of pride going before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall!

Monteith of the New House dealt with him quite easily. Knox's middle stump was neatly lifted out and laid on its back; and Knox stared at his wicket blankly.

His manner was much more subdued as he travelled back to the pavilion. As Tom Merry of the Shell remarked to his chums, Manners and Lowther, he looked quite deflated.

It was hard on Gerald Knox, for he had intended to distinguish himself in the House match. Kildare had been rather dubious about playing him—and Knox had intended to justify his selection by performing mighty deeds on the pitch. And the outcome was a duck's egg. Between what Knox had intended to do, and what he actually did, there was a fall from the sublime to the ridiculous.

He tramped off with a scowling brow, with many chuckles echoing in his ears. And then he caught Arthur Augustus' question regarding the market value of ducks' eggs.

He gave Arthur Augustus a black look. Chuckles from the Sixth and the Fifth were hard enough to bear, but cheek from a fag of the Fourth Form was "the thing too much."

Knox even took a grip on the cane handle of his bat, and made a motion towards the group of Fourth-Formers, as if to take summary vengeance on the spot. Blake and Herries,

Digby and D'Arcy eyed him very warily. But Knox thought better of it, and tramped on.

"Man in!" rapped out Kildare; and Langton of the Sixth went to the vacant wicket.

"I had rotten luck!" Knox mumbled to his captain.

Kildare gave him a rather grim look.

"You're in rotten form, you mean," he answered. "There are fags in the Fourth who could have played that ball."

Knox's scowl grew blacker.

"Accidents will happen!" he muttered.

"Well, it can't be helped now," said Kildare shortly; and he turned away to watch the batting, repenting him—to late—that he had given Knox his chance in a House match!

Knox threw aside his bat, and stood watching the cricket with a black brow.

The game was a closely-contested one, and every run counted—the loss of a wicket without a score was serious. Knox knew that he oughtn't to have lost that wicket. Eye and hand had failed him—and it was his own fault, and he knew it. He ought to have taken more care to keep in his best form for such an occasion—above all, he oughtn't to have sat up late in his study the previous night, smoking cigarettes. It was too late to think of that now; and Knox could only repine.

"Looks wathah wotten for the School House!" Arthur Augustus D'Arcy remarked to his chums. "The New House are goin' all out to win, you know. I wondah why Kildare played Knox. If he had consulted me, I should have advised him against it, you know."

"It's an odd thing," said Blake gravely, "that the captain of the school never does consult the Fourth."

"Weally, Blake—"

"Better ring off, Gussy!" murmured Digby. "Knox can hear you."

"And he's looking like a giddy demon in a pantomime!" whispered Herries.

Arthur Augustus gave a sniff.

"Knox is vewy welcome to heah my opinion," he answered. "A fellah has no right to let his side down like that. A fellah who can't play ewicket shouldn't butt into a House eleven."

"Dry up!" murmured Blake.

"I wufuse to dwy up. It will be touch and go now, owin' to Knox. If the New House win, Figgins & Co. will be ewowin'. I wegard Knox as havin' let the House down!"

Jack Blake seized his noble chum by the arm, and fairly dragged him away. Gussy's remarks were well-founded; but such criticisms were injudicious in Knox's hearing, considering that Gerald Knox was in the Sixth, and was a prefect. Knox was only too likely to "take it out" of the Honourable Arthur Augustus later for his criticisms.

Study No. 6 joined the Terrible Three at a little distance. Tom Merry and Manners and Lowther were smiling.

"Our old pal Knox has distinguished himself, what?" grinned Manners.

"Or extinguished himself!" remarked Monty Lowther.

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Must be an ass!" said Tom Merry. "Grundy of the Shell could have played that ball, and it knocked Knox right out."

"Such knocks for Knox—" began Monty Lowther. "Oh, don't!" said all the juniors together. They had heard Monty make that pun before—more than once.

"I am really disgusted with Knox," said Arthur Augustus, shaking his head. "He looked vewy watty when he heard me make a remark about ducks' eggs—"

Tom Merry laughed. "I should fancy so!" he said. "The Sixth don't really enjoy criticism from the Fourth, old bean."

"Howevah, I am vewy glad Knox has heard the opinion of his wotten display!" said the swell of St. Jim's firmly. "I wegard Knox—"

"Chuck it!" said Blake. "He's coming this way." "Wats!"

Arthur Augustus glanced round. Gerald Knox was coming away from the pavilion, and coming almost directly towards the group of Lower boys. He was already within hearing.

But Arthur Augustus was not to be deterred. Knox had let down the House, and severe criticism was wholesome for Knox, whether he liked it or not. So the swell of St. Jim's ran on:

"I see no weason whatever to considah Knox's feelin's in the mattah. He has played wottenly, and let down his House— Yawooooooop!"

Arthur Augustus broke off with a sudden, wild yell. Knox had turned towards him as he passed, and let out his right, which landed with a terrific smack on Gussy's ear.

The smack rang loudly, but Arthur Augustus' wild yell rang more loudly still.

"Take that for your cheek!" snarled Knox. And he strode on.

Arthur Augustus staggered and sat down in the grass.

CHAPTER 2.

A Question of Dignity!

ARTHUR AUGUSTUS D'ARCY sat and blinked and rubbed his noble ear, which was a beautiful crimson. He was hurt by that vicious box on the ear, but more astonished than hurt. He could scarcely believe that such a thing had happened. Fellows' ears were never boxed at St. Jim's—the most irritated master would not have dreamed of it. And for a fellow like Knox to arrogate to himself the right of boxing a fellow's ears was outrageous—unheard of—in fact, incredible. Most serious of all, it was Arthur Augustus' aristocratic ear that Knox had boxed. In the case of any ear the affair would have been an outrage. In the case of Arthur Augustus' ear, outrage was only a feeble word for describing the deed.

"Bai Jove!" said Arthur Augustus dazedly. "Bai Jove!" Tom Merry & Co. glared after Knox of the Sixth. Prefect as he was, the angry juniors would probably have collared and bumped him if he had remained on the spot. But Gerald Knox was walking away rather quickly, perhaps regretting that his anger and malice had led him into that hasty action.

"The cheeky cad!" ejaculated Blake wrathfully. Blake gave Arthur Augustus a hand up. The swell of St. Jim's stood and rubbed his glowing ear.

"Hurt much?" asked Tom Merry sympathetically. "Yaas, wathah! The pain, howevah, mattahs vewy little!" said Arthur Augustus. "But I have had my yah boxed!"

"You have, and no mistake!" agreed Monty Lowther. "It is an outrage!"

"Rotten!" said Manners. "I'd jolly well go to the Housemaster," growled Herries. "Railton would pretty soon stop Knox smacking a fellow's ears."

"I do not care to weport the mattah to the Housemaster, Hewwies. It is a personal mattah." "We'll take it out of Knox somehow," said Digby. "We'll fill his boots with gum, or something—"

D'Arcy shook his head. "A jape on Knox would not meet the case, Dig," he answered. "I have been insulted."

"H'm!" said the juniors dubiously. They were angry with the bully of the Sixth, and sympathetic to the injured Gussy. But they were rather dismayed at the signs that Gussy was getting on the high horse. For when Gussy was on his noble dignity, his loyal chums only described it as the high horse. They never did take Gussy with all the seriousness that was his due.

"Knox, as a pwefect, has the wight, or at least the powah, to cane juniahs," said Arthur Augustus, still rubbing his "yah." "I do not wholly approve of it, but it is so. But nobody has a wight, or can have a wight, to box a fellah's yahs. That is an insult to a fellah's personal dig."

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Monty Lowther glanced up at the blue summer sky overhead so intently and fixedly that the other fellows followed his gaze.

"What is it, an aeroplane?" asked Manners. "No." Lowther concentrated his gaze. "Do you fellows see any sign of loosening in the giddy firmament?"

"Loosening?" ejaculated Tom Merry. "Yes. As if the whole contraption was coming down on our heads?"

"Eh! What?" "Bai Jove! What do you mean, Lowthah?" "Isn't it time for the skies to fall?" asked Monty innocently.

"What?" "I thought it must be, now that Gussy's ears have been boxed."

"Ha, ha, ha!" "I wegard you as a funnay ass, Lowthah," exclaimed the swell of the Fourth hotly. "I wefuse to have this extremely sewious mattah turned into a joke!"

"Hallo, there goes Lefevre's wicket!" said Blake. "The cricket's worth watching, Gussy!" murmured Dig. But the swell of St. Jim's had lost all interest in the cricket. His personal dignity had been outraged. Even House matches sank into insignificance compared with that.

"I have been insulted, you fellahs!" he said calmly. "There is only one weource when a fellah has been insulted. The insulter must be made to give satisfaction!"

"Coffee and pistols for two?" asked Monty Lowther. "Ha, ha, ha!"

"Weally, Lowthah—" "Those New House bounders are fielding rather well!" remarked Tom Merry.

"I am going to thwash Knox!" "Eh?"

"What?" "Thwash him!" said Arthur Augustus. "Thrash a Sixth Form prefect?" roared Blak

"Yaas, wathah!" "Can it!" suggested Lowther. "You see, even if the Fourth were allowed to thrash the Sixth, you couldn't thrash one side of Knox."

"I wefuse to wegard Knox as a pwefect in this mattah. If a fellah acts like a wuffianly hooligan, he must expect to be tweated like a huffianly wooligan—I mean wuffianly hooligan. 'I am goin' to give Knox a horse-whippin'!"

"Oh, my hat!" said Blake faintly. "Do you think he will let you?" inquired Manners.

"I shall not ask him! I shall wush on him, and seize him, and thwash him with a horse-whip!" said Arthur Augustus.

"You ass! You'll be flogged if you go for a prefect!" yelled Blake.

"Wats!" "You might be sacked!" "I am pwepared to wisk that, or anythin' else, wathah than allow a wuffian to outwage my personal dignity with impunity."

And with that Arthur Augustus walked off. The senior House match had lost all its attraction for Gussy, at least. It still attracted the other fellows, as it was close to an exciting finish. But in their concern for Gussy they turned their attention off the cricket.

"Well, my hat!" said Tom Merry. "I—I suppose Gussy won't be ass enough to go for Knox when he gets cool."

Blake made a grimace. "There never is any telling what Gussy may or may not do," he answered. "When Gussy gets on his high horse, he's quite capable of tweaking the Head's nose. I suppose I've got to get after him and soothe him, or he'll get into trouble."

And Blake reluctantly turned his back on the cricket field, and followed his noble chum; and Herries and Digby loyally followed Blake. They were rather anxious about Gussy. They came on him near the School House door, just as Knox was coming out of the house. Arthur Augustus' eyes flashed at the bully of the Sixth, and he halted directly in Knox's path. What would have happened cannot be said. For Blake & Co. fortunately arrived at the psychological moment, and they seized Gussy and walked him on into the house by main force.

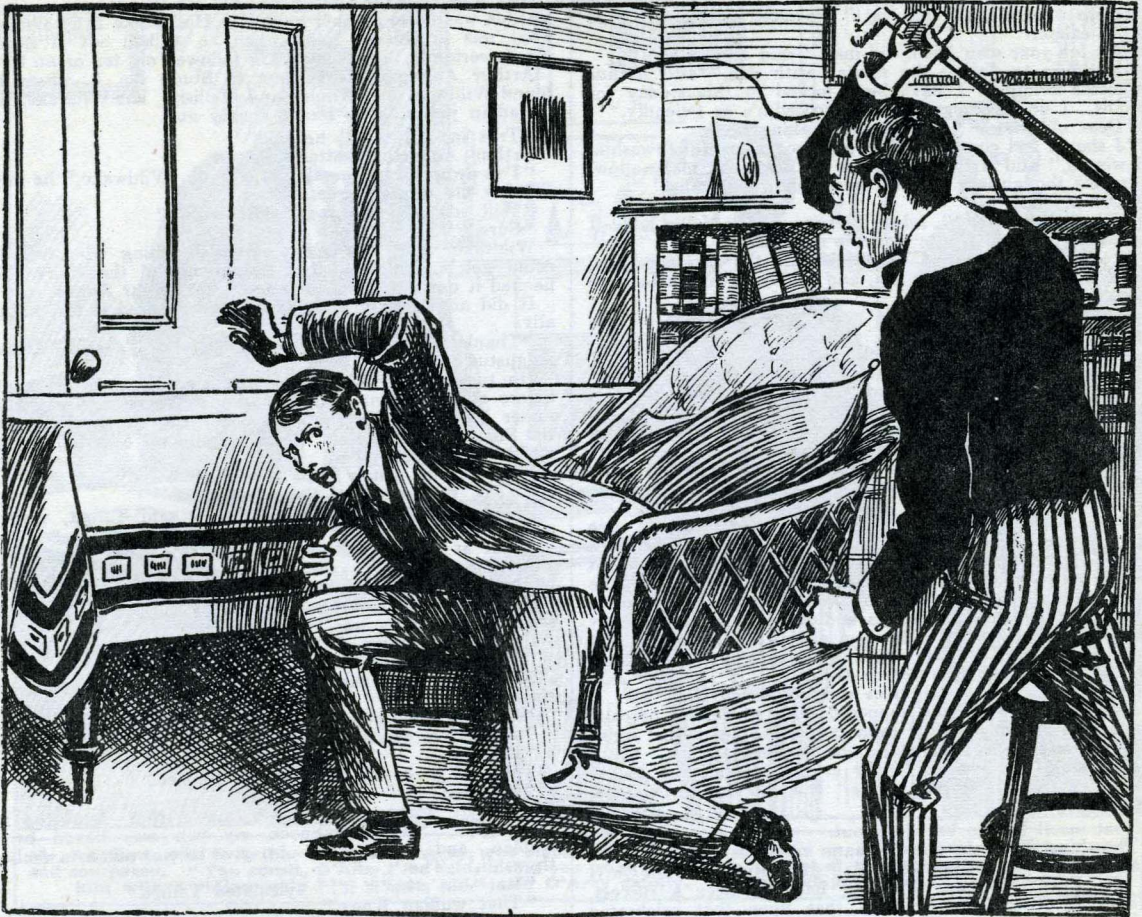
Arthur Augustus wriggled in the grasp of his devoted chums. "Welease me!" he panted.

"Not until the coast's clear!" grinned Blake. "Weally, you uttah ass—"

"Mustn't punch prefects!" said Digby soothingly. "We'll take it out of Knox in our own way."

"Wats! I insist upon thwashin' Knox—" "Come up to the study!" said Blake.

"I wefuse to come up to the study!" In spite of Arthur Augustus' refusal, he went up to the study. It was really too difficult to avoid it, with three



Arthur Augustus D'Arcy let the riding-whip slide down into his hand, and strode straight at the bully of the Sixth. Lash! The whip came down across Knox's shoulders as he sat. He leaped to his feet as if he had been electrified. "You—you—I—I'll—" he spluttered. Arthur Augustus lashed out vigorously with the whip. (See page 7.)

pairs of hands urging him on. He was plumped down in the armchair in Study No. 6 in the Fourth.

"Now take it calmly, old chap!" advised Blake. "You see—"

"I wefuse to take it calmly!" yelled Arthur Augustus. "I am goin' aftah Knox this minute—"

Blake made a sign to Herries, who put the study door-key on the outside.

"You won't take it calmly?" asked Blake. "Then you'd better think it over till tea-time, old bean."

"Look heah—"

Arthur Augustus jumped up. His faithful chums collared him, and plumped him into the armchair again. Then three juniors scudded out of Study No. 6, and the door was slammed and locked on the outside.

Like a jack-in-the-box, Arthur Augustus bounced out of the armchair. He rushed to the door and dragged at it furiously.

"You wottahs!" he roared.

Only the sound of retreating footsteps answered. Gussy rattled the handle of the door.

"Blake! Hewwies! Dig! I wefuse to wemain in this studay! You uttah wottahs!"

But answer came there none! Blake & Co. were returning to Big Side to watch the finish of the House match; satisfied that they had done the best thing possible for their chum—in the circumstances. Arthur Augustus, in unspeakable and inexplicable wrath, had to wait for tea-time.

CHAPTER 3.

Arthur Augustus on the Warpath

"BRAVO!"

"Well done, School House!"

"Hip-pip-pip!"

There was a roar on Big Side, and Tom Merry & Co. let themselves go in great style. The House match had reached a thrilling finish; School House were the winners

by one wicket. After the ups and downs of that interesting match, the School House crowd rejoiced in the narrow win—and they signified the same in the usual way.

Tom Merry & Co. came off the grass with the crowd, in the summer sunset, and inward warnings reminded them that it was long past their accustomed tea-time. The thought of tea reminded Blake & Co., too, of the swell of St. Jim's, locked in Study No. 6. In his keen interest in the cricket, Jack Blake had actually forgotten Gussy. He remembered now, with a start, that Arthur Augustus was still under lock and key.

"My hat—Gussy!" he ejaculated.

"By the way, where is Gussy?" asked Tom Merry. "I suppose he has slain the jabberwock by this time—I mean, thrashed Knox of the Sixth?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"We locked him in the study out of harm's way," explained Blake.

"Great Scott!"

"I dare say he's calmed down by this time," remarked Herries.

Tom Merry chuckled.

"More likely to have reached boiling point," he said.

"Better make it pax through the keyhole, before you let him loose, or he may thrash the whole study before he thrashes Knox."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The crowd of juniors poured into the house, and dispersed to their studies. The Terrible Three went on to Study No. 10 in the Shell. Blake and Herries and Dig stopped at the door of Study No. 6 in the Fourth. They could hear no sound from within.

"Gone to sleep, perhaps!" suggested Dig.

Blake unlocked the door, and the three juniors entered. Arthur Augustus had not gone to sleep. He was sitting in the armchair, and he turned a look of frozen dignity upon his chums.

"So you have returned!" he said.

"Here we are again, old top!" answered Blake. "I hope you're calmer."

"All for your own good, old man," said Digby.

"I refuse to discuss the mattah with you," said Arthur Augustus coldly. "I have been locked in this study for houahs. I do not wegard such pwoceedin's as fwienly."

"Dear old ass——" said Blake soothingly.

"I should feel constwained to give you a feahful thwashin' all wound," said Arthur Augustus. "But I can make allowances for thoughtless and iwresponsible youngstahs."

"Oh, my hat!"

"What about tea?" asked Herries. "It's jolly late. I say, Gussy, School House won the match."

"I am not intewested in cwicket at the pwesent time, Hewwies. I have had my tea, and I will leave you to have yours."

Arthur Augustus, with his noble nose high in the air, walked out of the study.

Evidently he was very much offended.

"Now he's on the giddy high horse with this study!" groaned Blake. "Never mind, we'll soothe him after tea, and bring him round. He'll be glad some time that we saved him from making an ass of himself. If he had gone for Knox it would have meant a flogging."

"Let him rip till after tea, though," said Herries. "I'm jolly hungry."

"Same here," said Dig. "We're hours late."

Blake nodded. In his view, Gussy had had plenty of time to calm down, and to think better of his warlike intentions towards the bully of the Sixth; and now the most important matter to be seen to was tea. After the demands of the inner man had been satisfied, Blake was prepared to devote all necessary attention to his indignant chum. So Study No. 6 sat down to tea, with keen appetites, and they did it full justice, and between tea and discussion of the House match, they once more forgot Gussy.

Meanwhile, Arthur Augustus was not losing time.

He had had, as Blake supposed, plenty of time to calm down, and he was certainly calm enough, so far as that went. But his intentions remained quite unaltered.

His noble ear was no longer crimson, and it no longer sang from Knox's spiteful smite. But the insult remained, and rankled.

That insult had to be wiped out.

Thrashing Knox in the ordinary way was not a feasible idea. Once upon a time Gussy had started in to thrash Cutts of the Fifth; but the thrashing had not been a success. Monty Lowther had remarked that upon that celebrated occasion, Gussy had conjugated the verb "to thrash" in the passive instead of the active voice. So Gussy did not think of making Knox put his hands up. His ideas centred on a horse-whipping. Probably a horse-whipping would have

done the bully of the Sixth good; but whether the scheme was feasible was quite another matter. Had Blake & Co. known what was in Gussy's mind when he walked out of Study No. 6, certainly they would have followed on, tea or no tea.

Arthur Augustus went along to Study No. 2, where he found Wildrake and Trimble and Mellish. Kit Wildrake, the Canadian junior, gave him a cheery nod.

"Trot in, old top!" he said.

Arthur Augustus trotted in.

"I've dwopped in to ask you a favah, Wildwake," he said.

"Any old thing, I guess."

"Will you lend me your widin'-whip?"

"Sure!"

Wildrake, who was much given to riding whenever he could get a chance, kept a riding-whip in the study. He hooked it down and tossed it across to Arthur Augustus.

It did not occur to him what Gussy wanted it for, naturally.

"Thank you vevy much, deah boy!" said Arthur Augustus.

He tucked the whip under his arm, and left the study before any questions could be asked. With the riding-whip under his noble arm, he headed for the stairs. Talbot of the Shell was coming up the stairs, and his eyes fell on the whip.

"It's lock-up, Gussy!" he remarked.

"Yaas, I am awah of that, Talbot."

"Oh! Not going out for a ride?" said Talbot, with a smile.

"Not at all! I am goin' to use this whip for a vevy different purpose," said Arthur Augustus, with a glint behind his eyeglass.

Talbot paused, looking at him very curiously. He could see that something was "up."

"Anything wrong, D'Arcy?" he asked.

"Yaas, watah!"

Arthur Augustus passed on with that, but the Shell fellow turned after him.

"What are you going to do with that whip?" he asked.

"Thwash a wascal!"

"Eh?"

"Thwash a cheeky, bullyin' wotiah, deah boy!"

"But—but—" stutered Talbot.

"It's all wight, deah boy," said Arthur Augustus reassuringly. "This aftahnoon my yah was boxed by a wuffian, and I am goin' to give the wuffian a feahful thwashin'. That's all."

"But—but who is it?" ejaculated Talbot.

"That wuffian Knox."

"Knox of the Sixth!" howled Talbot. "You—you're going—"

"Yaas."

Arthur Augustus hurried down the staircase. Talbot of the Shell hurried after him, his handsome face very anxious and disturbed. Knox of the Sixth might deserve a thrashing—might have asked for it—as it were. But Talbot knew that it would never do. Justice could not be done upon the Sixth Form in this summary way, though Arthur Augustus appeared to believe that it could.

D'Arcy was turning into the Sixth Form passage when Talbot overtook him. The Shell fellow caught him by the shoulder.

"Gussy——" he exclaimed.

"Pway welease me, Talbot!"

"But you can't——"

"Wats!"

Arthur Augustus jerked his shoulder away and strode along the Sixth Form passage. He reached Knox's door, and, without stopping to tap, hurled it wide open and strode in.

"My only hat!" murmured Talbot.

It was not possible to interfere further. Talbot of the Shell stood staring at Knox's door, wondering what on earth was going to happen.

CHAPTER 4.

Thrashing Knox!

GERALD KNOX of the Sixth Form was in his study—expecting anything but that warlike visit from an incensed Fourth-Former. He had already forgotten boxing D'Arcy's ears on the cricket-ground; the matter was not nearly so important in Knox's eyes as in Gussy's. Knox was in a decidedly bad temper, thinking of the wretched show he had made in the House match, and of his exceedingly slim chance of playing for his House again. He looked up with an angry stare as his door burst open, and Arthur Augustus D'Arcy came striding unceremoniously in.

"You cheeky young rascal!" shouted Knox. "How dare you enter my study without knocking!"

"I am not standin' on cewemony with you, Knox!" answered the swell of the Fourth contemptuously.

Knox blinked at him.

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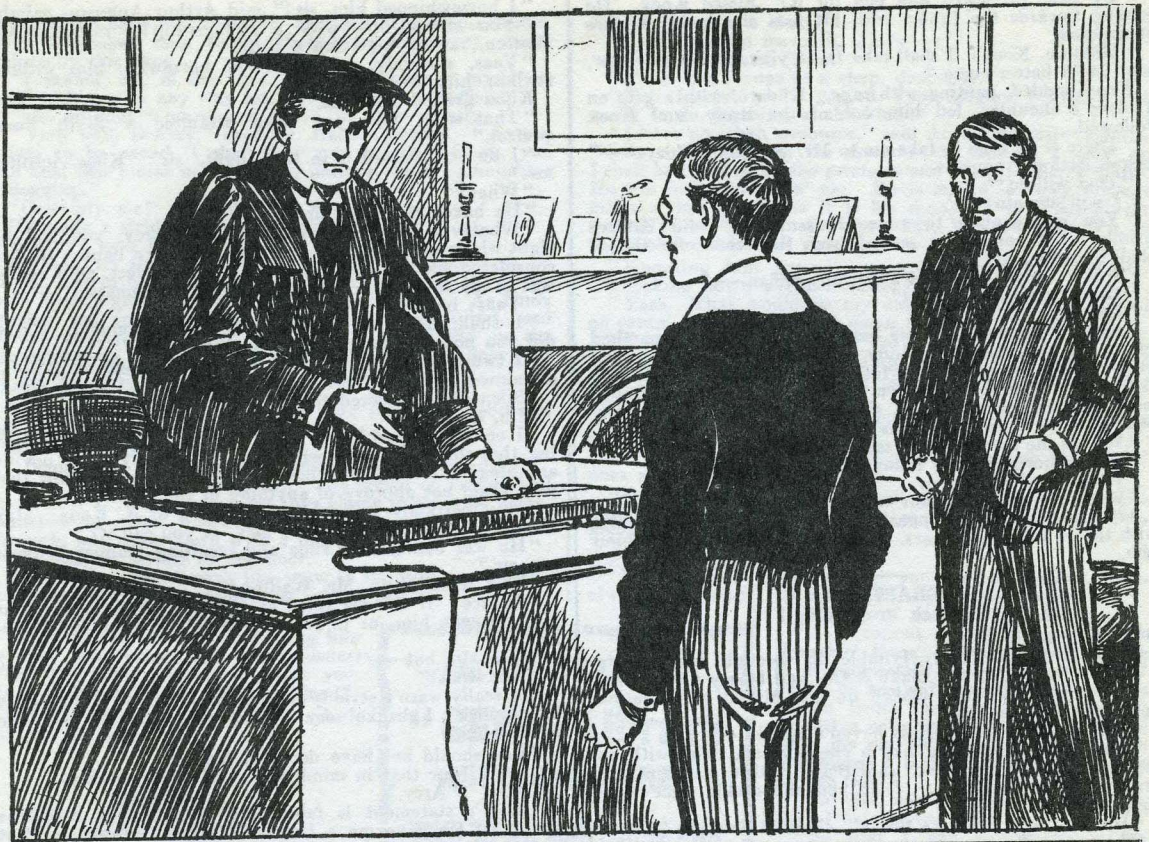
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Mr. Railton turned to Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, who stood before him with his head up, and his aristocratic face calm and composed. "You admit, D'Arcy," he said, "that you went to Knox—a prefect of the Sixth Form—and struck him with a riding-whip?" "Yaas, sir," said D'Arcy calmly. "I horsewhipped him!" (See page 8.)

"What—what?"
 "You insulted me this afternoon—"
 "Eh?"
 "You boxed my yahs, Knox!"
 Knox grinned.
 "I'll box them again!" he said. "You cheeky young fool, have you come here to beg for a licking?"
 "I have come heah to thwash you!"
 "Wha-a-at?"
 "I wegard you as a wuffianly wottah, Knox!"
 Knox gasped. He had never been talked to like that before by a Lower boy. He could scarcely believe his ears.
 "Are you dotty, you young fool?" he stammered.
 "You are a wuffian and a bwute, Knox! You have boxed my yahs, and I am goin' to give you a horsewhippin'!"
 Knox could only blink. He was too astonished to speak or to move. He almost wondered whether he was dreaming this. He quickly had proof that it was stern reality.
 Arthur Augustus let the riding-whip slide down into his hand, and strode straight at the bully of the Sixth.
 Lash!
 The whip came down across Knox's shoulders as he sat.
 Then Knox woke up, as it were. He leaped to his feet as if he had been electrified.
 "You—you—I—I'll—" he spluttered.

He sprang at the junior like a tiger. Not a single inch did Arthur Augustus retreat. His noble blood was up—and, besides, he had come there to thrash Knox, and one "lick" did not constitute a thrashing. Instead of retreating, he lashed out vigorously with the whip, and Knox got the second cut across his face and jumped back from it.

Any other senior at St. Jim's would have collared Arthur Augustus then, whip or no whip; but there was a "yellow streak" in Knox. He was not of the stuff of which heroes are made. With all his bullying, Knox was a funk at heart, as bullies frequently are. He staggered back from the lash, and caught the third lick as he retreated. Arthur Augustus followed him up fiercely, still lashing out, and Knox fairly dodged round the study table.

"Keep off, you young villain!" he roared.

D'Arcy did not answer, he followed on. Knox rushed round the table, and D'Arcy rushed after him, laying on the riding-whip with resounding whacks. Knox's jacket and

trousers were thoroughly dusted by the time he had made a circuit of the study table.

"Ow! Ow! Yow-ow! Woop!" roared Knox. "You young villain, keep off! Help! Oh gad! Help!"

"You wotten coward!" panted Arthur Augustus. "Stand still and take your thwashin', you wottah!"

"Keep off!" shrieked Knox, as the whip landed again.

Lash, lash!

D'Arcy put his beef into it, panting on the track of the Sixth Form bully as he swept round the table again.

Talbot's startled face looked in at the doorway.

"Gussy!" he shouted.

Arthur Augustus did not heed. He was busy with Knox.

Talbot had expected to see the junior crumpling up in the grasp of the infuriated Knox. He stared blankly at what he saw—the bully of the Sixth fleeing round the table, with Gussy and the riding-whip in hot pursuit.

"Gussy, stop!"

"Wats!"

Whack, whack, whack!

Arthur Augustus was going strong.

"Look out, here comes Kildare!" panted Talbot.

D'Arcy did not even seem to hear.

Kildare of the Sixth came striding along the passage, brought to the study by Knox's frantic yells. Knox had stumbled over a chair and fallen forward, and Arthur Augustus had a fair chance at him at last. The dust rose from Knox's trousers as the riding-whip rose and fell.

Kildare almost leaped into the study. He grasped Arthur Augustus and spun him back.

"What does this mean?" he roared.

"I am thwashin' Knox!"

"What?" shrieked the captain of St. Jim's.

Knox scrambled up. His face was crimson with pain and fury.

"That—that—that— You saw!" he gurgled.

Kildare wrenched the riding-whip away from the junior. His brow was like thunder.

"You—you have attacked a Sixth Form prefect with a whip!" stammered Kildare.

"Yaas!"

"You young rascal—"

"Weally, Kildare—"

"By gad, I'll make him pay for it!" hissed Knox. He sprang towards the junior with his fists clenched. Kildare interposed.

"Hold on, Knox! I shall take D'Arcy to the Housemaster, and you'd better come."

Knox nodded, panting with rage. Kildare, with a grip on D'Arcy's shoulder, led him out of the study, and Knox followed.

"There is no need to take me to Mr. Wailton, Kildare—" began Arthur Augustus.

"That will do!"

"I will explain—"

"You can explain to your Housemaster," said Kildare grimly. "If you're not sacked from the school for this, I shall be surprised!"

"I have simply punished a wotten wuffian—"

"Hold your silly tongue!"

"Bai Jove!"

Arthur Augustus held his head high as he was marched off to the Housemaster's study. Talbot of the Shell turned away with many misgivings for the reckless youth. Five or six fellows sighted D'Arcy on his way to the Housemaster, with Kildare's grip on his shoulder, and Knox following behind with a crimson, furious face.

"What's the row, Gussy?" called out Levison of the Fourth.

"I have horsewhipped Knox—"

"What?" yelled Cardew.

"Come on, and hold your tongue!" growled Kildare.

Arthur Augustus disappeared into Mr. Railton's study, with the two Sixth-Formers. He left a buzzing crowd behind him.

CHAPTER 5. Neck or Nothing!

"HE, he, he!"

It was Baggy Trimble that brought the news to Study No. 6. Blake & Co. had barely finished tea when Trimble looked in, and his fat cachinnation announced his arrival.

"He, he, he! You fellows haven't heard—"

"Just heard something like a cheap alarm clock with an attack of the collywobblers," said Blake, with a glance of disfavour at the fat junior. "Go you and cackle somewhere else, Trimble."

"He, he, he! D'Arcy's for it!" chortled Trimble.

Blake started.

"D'Arcy! What—"

"He's been horsewhipping Knox!" yelled Trimble.

"Horsewhipping a prefect! He, he, he! Ho, ho, ho!"

Jack Blake sprang to his feet, in utter dismay. He strode across the study and grasped Trimble.

"You fat rotter! Is that the truth?" he roared.

"Yow-ow! Leggo!"

Blake shook him savagely. If the matter was as Trimble stated, certainly it was no laughing matter, though Baggy appeared to think that it was.

Talbot of the Shell came along the passage, his face very grave. Blake hurried Trimble aside and called to him.

"Talbot, do you know—"

"Gussy's in trouble," said Talbot quietly. "I tried to stop him. He's gone for Knox with Wildrake's riding-whip, and Kildare's taken him to the Housemaster."

"Oh crumbs!"

Blake stood overwhelmed.

The news was utterly dismaying. Herries and Digby looked thunderstruck. Never had Study No. 6 received such a shock.

"It—it may be the sack!" gasped Dig.

"Let's go down," said Blake desperately. "After all, the brute did box his ears. Railton ought to know that."

"If you can say anything for him, cut in—quick!" said Talbot.

Blake nodded, and the three Fourth-Formers tore down the stairs. They scudded away for the Housemaster's study at top speed.

Blake knocked at the door and opened it.

Mr. Railton's deep voice was audible as the three breathless juniors entered. He broke off, and glanced round in angry surprise.

"Blake! What do you mean—"

"We—we— If you please, sir—"

"Leave my study at once!"

"But, sir, we—wa—"

"Go!" thundered the Housemaster.

And the three juniors jumped, and went. The door closed again, and Blake & Co. remained anxiously outside.

Mr. Railton turned to Arthur Augustus D'Arcy again. That noble youth stood before him, with his head up, his aristocratic face calm and composed. The riding-whip lay on the table.

"You admit, D'Arcy, that you went to Knox—a prefect of the Sixth Form—and struck him with a riding-whip?"

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"I horsewhipped him, sir!" said Arthur Augustus calmly. "You struck him with a riding-whip!" repeated Mr. Railton, raising his voice a little.

"Yaas, certainly. I could not horsewhip him without stwikin' him."

Knox gritted his teeth.

"That is to say, you have assaulted a Sixth Form prefect."

"I do not wegard it in that light, sir. Knox insulted me."

"What?"

"He boxed my yahs, sir."

"Whatever Knox may have done, D'Arcy, you had no right whatever to take the law into your own hands. If you considered yourself unjustly treated by a prefect, your course was to lay the matter before me, your Housemaster."

"Yaas; but—"

"I shall, however, inquire into your statement. Knox, did you box this junior's ears, as he asserts?"

"I twust, Mr. Wailton, that you do not doubt my word!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus, before the prefect could speak.

"Silence!" thundered the Housemaster.

"Oh, bai Jove!"

"I certainly gave him a flick, sir," said Knox, remembering that there had been witnesses. "Certainly I did not do anything that could be called boxing the ears. I know that you would not approve of anything of the kind."

"Most certainly I should not approve of it, Knox. May I ask why you gave D'Arcy a flick, as you call it?"

"He was acting in a rude and insulting manner towards me, sir."

"That is not twue, Mr. Wailton."

"Silence! If D'Arcy acted as you say, Knox, it was your duty to cane him, or to report him to me or to his Form-master."

"Yes, sir; but—"

"But what?"

"It really wasn't serious enough for that, sir. I just gave him a flick. I dislike very much caning a junior, if it can be avoided."

"You should not have done so, Knox."

"I will bear that in mind, sir," said Knox meekly.

"Now, D'Arcy."

"Knox's statement is false, sir!" said Arthur Augustus calmly. "He gave me a box on the yah. Howevah, if it had been a mere flick, as he states, I should have acted in the same mannah. I cannot allow anyone to box my yahs."

"D'Arcy!"

"I wepeat, sir, that as Knox boxed my yahs, I felt bound to thwash him. In actin' like a wuffian, he lost all wight to be tweated as a prefect."

Kildare turned away his face to hide a grin.

"Very good, D'Arcy," said Mr. Railton quietly. "I have already told Knox that he should not have acted as he did. But, whatever he may have done, that is no excuse whatever for your outrageous conduct. I am very much disposed to report you to your headmaster for a flogging. I shall, however, cane you myself—with such severity that I trust it will be a lesson and a warning to you!"

Arthur Augustus drew a deep breath.

"You are goin' to cane me, sir?"

"Yes."

"For thwashin' Knox?"

"For attacking a prefect," said the Housemaster, frowning.

"I have already said, sir, that I do not wegard my action as attackin' a prefect. I was thwashin' a wuffian!"

"That will do, D'Arcy. Kildare, kindly hand me my cane."

The St. Jim's captain passed over the cane, and Mr. Railton rose to his feet. Kildare quietly left the study. He did not want to witness the punishment, which was certainly going to be very severe. Knox remained, gloating.

"Hold out your hand, D'Arcy!" said Mr. Railton.

Outside the study, Blake & Co. heard the deep voice, and so did about twenty other juniors who had gathered there.

"Poor old Gussy!" murmured Blake. "He's for it!"

And Herries and Dig nodded dismally.

"You hear me, D'Arcy?" said Mr. Railton, as the swell of St. Jim's made no motion to obey.

D'Arcy breathed hard.

"I am afwaid, Mr. Wailton, that I cannot submit to be caned when I do not wegard myself as havin' committed any offence," he said.

His voice was low but clear, and it was audible outside the study. The crowd of juniors looked at one another, and Blake suppressed a groan. Gussy evidently was still on the high horse.

"What! What do you mean, D'Arcy? How dare you bandy words with me?" thundered the School House master.

"I am sowwy, sir. I do not mean any diswespect to you."

"Hold out your hand at once!"

"Undah the circs, sir—"

"Will you obey me, D'Arcy?" exclaimed the Housemaster, more astonished than angry, though he was very angry indeed by this time.

"I cannot, sir, in this case. I do not regard myself as bein' to blame in any way for horsewhippin' a wuffian!"

"Oh, ye gods!" murmured Blake, in utter dismay.

"Very well, D'Arcy," said Mr. Railton grimly. "As you refuse to be caned, I shall flog you instead. Knox, you will hold this junior in a kneeling posture while I administer a flogging."

"Certainly, sir!" said Knox, his eyes dancing.

He made a stride towards Arthur Augustus.

D'Arcy's eyes blazed.

He had no time to think now. He had refused to be caned, and to be flogged instead, in the grasp of the bully, with Knox's gloating eyes on him, was too much. As Knox reached out to collar him, Arthur Augustus hit out, and Knox, utterly unprepared for such a proceeding in the Housemaster's presence, went with a crash to the floor. In an instant Arthur Augustus was at the door.

"D'Arcy!" roared Mr. Railton.

D'Arcy did not look back. He tore open the door and ran into the corridor.

Knox staggered up.

"Bring him here, Knox!" gasped the Housemaster.

Knox rushed into the corridor. The crowd of juniors had opened for D'Arcy to pass, but they closed in front of Knox. Somehow or other, Knox tripped over a foot as he shoved through, and came down with a bump and a yell.

Mr. Railton strode to the door.

The juniors melted away like snow in the sunshine. Knox scrambled up with his temper at boiling point.

"They—they—" he gasped.

"Find D'Arcy at once, and bring him to me!" interrupted the Housemaster. "Tell the other prefects to assist you. He must be dealt with without delay!"

Mr. Railton, very angry and disturbed, snapped his door shut.

CHAPTER 6.

D'Arcy's Resolve.

"TOM MEWVY!"

Tom Merry started.

Deep dusk lay on the old quadrangle of St. Jim's. Lights were gleaming from the windows of the two Houses into the summer night.

In the School House there was excitement.

The School House fellows, especially the juniors, were discussing the case of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy with bated breath.

D'Arcy's resistance to the authority of his Housemaster was, as Cardew of the Fourth remarked, a "corker."

Mr. Railton was a popular master, and certainly no one respected him more highly than Gussy himself. That made Arthur Augustus' outbreak all the more astonishing.

The juniors agreed that Knox's bullying was the cause of the whole trouble; but there were few or none who could justify Gussy's resistance to constituted authority. But they understood that Gussy felt justified in his own noble eyes.

Tom Merry had gone out into the quadrangle, hoping to come across the swell of the Fourth, who seemed to have vanished since his flight from the Housemaster's study. Tom's intention was to advise him to give himself up at once, before matters became worse, and the Head was called into the affair. Very sage advice, if Gussy would only act upon it.

Tom was passing near the fountain in the quad when a whispering voice reached him from the dusky shadows.

"That you, Gussy?" exclaimed Tom

"Yaas, watah!"

"I was looking for you," said the captain of the Shell.

"Thank you, deah boy. I suppose old Waitton is vewy watty?"

"Naturally," said Tom.

"I am sowwy to have acted towards Mr. Waitton in a mannah that might be constwued as diswespictful," said Arthur Augustus, blinking at Tom Merry in the gloom.

"But you recognise that I had no othah wesource?"

"H'm! Not quite!"

"I assuah you, deah boy, that it was so. I could not possibly submit to bein' punished for havin' horsewhipped a wascally wottah."

"Gussy, old man—"

"Howevah, no good arguin' about it," said Arthur Augustus. "I want you to do me a favah, Tom Mewwy."

"Anything, old chap!"

"I am goin' to leave St. Jim's—"

"What!" shouted Tom.

"Pway don't wear at a chap, deah boy."

"You fearful ass!" gasped Tom Merry. "You're not going to do anything of the kind!"

"I have no othah wesource," said Arthur Augustus calmly.

"I have reflected on the mattah. As soon as I show up I shall be collahed by the pwefects and taken to Mr. Waitton. He will insist on canin' me. He is makin' a vewy sewious mistake, but he thinks it is his duty. I shall absolutely wefuse to be caned. I wespict Mr. Waitton too much to think of knockin' him down—"

"Knocking him down!" repeated Tom Merry dazedly. "Knocking down a Housemaster?"

"Yaas. That would be my only wesource if he insisted on canin' me. That would mean the sack!"

"I rather think it would!" said Tom Merry.

"So I am goin' away fwom the school Tom Mewwy. I have decided to go home and place the mattah befoah my patah!"

"But—but Lord Eeastwood will send you back to school at onte."

"I twust not. Not without stipulatin' that the canin' does not take place."

"Gussy, old man, you mustn't think of worryin' your father like this, just to get out of a lickin'!" urged Tom Merry.

Arthur Augustus flushed.

"I twust, Tom Mewwy, that you do not suppose I am afwaid of a lickin'. It is the pwinciple of the thing!"

"Oh dear!" groaned Tom Merry.

"As I cannot submit to a lickin' for thwashin' Knox, and as I cannot knock a Housemastah down without bein' guilty of howwid bad form, I can only wetiiah fwom the scene," said Arthur Augustus with dignity. "I want you to fetch me my hat, Tom Mewwy, and a few things I must take with me. You will do this?"

"So that you can book it from St. Jim's?" ejaculated Tom.

"So that I can wetiiah fwom the scene."

"You're jolly well not going to run away from school!" exclaimed the captain of the Shell.

"I do not weward it as wunnin' away fwom school."

"Rot! That's what it is!"

"Apparently we cannot agree on that point, Tom Mewwy," said the swell of St. Jim's calmly. "and we are wastin' time talkin'. The soonah I am gone the bettah, as I have to catch a twain to-night. Will you bwing my gloves—the chamois ones, you know—and my cane and—"

"I'll take you back into the School House instead!" suggested Tom.

"Wats!"

"I can't help you clear off from the school, Gussy. The Head would be no end waxy, and he might not let you come back at all!"

"I have thought the mattah out. You are a vewy good chap, Tom Mewwy, but you have not vewy much tact or judgment, and you weally are not capable of givin' me advice, you know."

"You silly ass!" exclaimed Tom.

"Weally, Tom Mewwy—"

"Hold on until you've seen Blake, anyhow," said Tom.

"I'll go and fetch him, and he—"

"Blake would want me to wemain and take the lickin'," said Arthur Augustus. "It is no good arguin' with Blake. You see, I have made up my mind, and I am quite wesoled."

Tom Merry stared at the shadowy face of Gussy in the gloom, much puzzled and perplexed. Arthur Augustus—still on the high horse—was evidently determined, and whatever Tom could say was not likely to make any difference to his determination. But helping a junior to run away from school was not to be thought of. Anything was better than that.

"Gussy, old man, listen to me," said Tom at last. "Knox was a bullying brute, but law and order have to be observed, you know. Fellows can't pitch into prefects, and Railton is quite right to lick you for it."

"Wats!"

"Go through with it, and then forget all about it," urged Tom. "We'll take it out of Knox later."

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"That would not be consistent with my personal dignity, Tom Mewwy."

"Oh, you ass!" said Tom. "Lock here, you're not going to run away from school, Gussy. I won't let you!"

"Wubbish!"

"Come back to the house with me now—"

"Wats! Will you fetch my gloves and cane?"

"No, you fathead!"

"I twust, Tom Mewwy, that you will not force me to make a journey by twain without them?"

"I'm going to take you back to the house," said Tom, laughing, and he caught the swell of St. Jim's by the arm.

"Come on, old chap!"

"Welease me, you cheeky ass!"

"Come on, Gussy!"

Tom Merry felt justified in using a little friendly force on such an extraordinary occasion. He dragged the Fourth-Former in the direction of the School House.

"You uttah ass, welease me at once, or I shall punch you!" gasped Arthur Augustus.

"Come on, old fellow."

"Will you welease me?" panted Arthur Augustus.

"No fear!"

"Then I shall have to knock you down, deah boy!"

"Look here— Yooop!" roared Tom Merry, as he received a sudden and forcible drive on the chest.

He sat down on the ground with a sudden jar.

"Sowwy, deah boy!" said Arthur Augustus, looking down at him. They were in the light of the School House windows by this time. "Vewy sowwy; but you dwove me to it."

"Why, you—you—" gasped Tom. "I—I'll mop up the quad with you! I—I'll—"

There was a shout, and Knox of the Sixth came running down the School House steps.

"Is that D'Arcy! Come here, you young rascal! Hold him, Merry!"

Knox came racing up.

Arthur Augustus melted away into the shadows. Tom Merry scrambled up as D'Arcy vanished, and the prefect went racing by on his track.

"Oh, my hat!" ejaculated Tom.

"Stop!" Knox was shouting.

"Wats!" came from the distance.

"By gad, I'll smash you!" panted Knox.

Tom Merry ran after the pursuing prefect. He came up with Knox close by the school wall, where a slanting oak-tree overtopped the coping. Knox was staring savagely up at the wall. Against the stars, the figure of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy was outlined on top of the wall.

"Come down from that!" roared Knox.

D'Arcy looked down at him breathlessly.

"I wefuse to comq down, Knox. I wegard you with contempt!"

"You young rascal, I'll—"

"Gussy!" called out Tom Merry beseechingly.

"Wats! Knox, you may inform the Housemastah that I am wetirin' f'rom the school, where I have not weceived justice or pwopah considewation. I am goin' home."

"Oh gad!" gasped Knox.

"Owin' to Tom Mewwy wefusin' to do me a favah, I am obliged to twavel without gloves or cane," said Arthur Augustus, more in sorrow than in anger. "I shall feel wathah vidualous. The wesponsibility is yours, Tom Mewwy!"

"Gussy!" shouted Tom.

Arthur Augustus dropped on the outer side of the wall. Tom Merry and Knox heard him land in the road.

"By gad! Running away from school!" gasped Knox.

He made a rush for the side gate, to which, as a prefect, he had a key. In a couple of minutes he was in the road, hunting for Arthur Augustus.

But Gussy had made good use of these two minutes. He had vanished into the summer night, and Knox hunted for him in vain. And the bully of the Sixth was constrained to return to the School House, with the startling information for Mr. Railton that D'Arcy of the Fourth Form had run away from school!

CHAPTER 7.

A Narrow Escape!

"RUN away!"

"Great Scott!"

"Oh, the awful ass!"

Blake & Co. received the news with utter consternation. It was really the last straw.

"As if he wasn't booked for enough trouble already!" said Jack Blake, almost tearfully.

The Terrible Three were as concerned as Study No. 6. So were a crowd of fellows in the School House. Even Baggly Trimble ceased to snigger, now that the situation had developed so seriously.

D'Arcy of the Fourth had run away from school! Knox

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had officially reported the fact to Mr. Railton; the House-master had reported it to the Head.

Blank dismay fell upon Study No. 6, and all the House was buzzing with excitement. Over in the New House, Figgins & Co. heard the news, and buzzed with excitement, too.

It was quite a sensation for St. Jim's.

The fellows wondered what the Head would do—what the Housemaster would do. Certainly, something was bound to be done. Fellows could not run away from school at their own sweet will.

A crowd of juniors in the hall saw Mr. Railton come away from the Head's study. He stopped for his hat, and then strode out of the School House. Scores of eyes watched him go down to the gates.

"Gone after Gussy," said Clive of the Fourth.

Tom Merry nodded.

"Most likely he will bag him at the railway-station," he remarked. "Anybody got a time-table?"

Levison had. A dozen heads were bent over the time-table as Levison of the Fourth spread it out.

"No train from Rylcombe to anywhere before ten," said Monty Lowther. "Barely half-past nine now. Lots of time to catch Gussy."

"If he makes for Rylcombe," said Cardew.

"It's the nearest railway-station."

"All the more reason why he shouldn't make for it."

"Ye-es," said Tom Merry. "But Gussy wouldn't think so far as that. Depend on it, he's making for Rylcombe."

"And Railton will find him walking up and down the platform," said Manners.

"I hope so!" said Blake fervently.

But Kildare came along to shepherd the juniors off to their dormitory, and they were not able to wait to hear the result of Mr. Railton's pursuit. But in the junior dormitories there was a buzz of talking instead of sleep. The name of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy was on every tongue.

Meanwhile, Mr. Railton was striding rapidly along the dusky lane to the village.

He reached Rylcombe, and entered the railway-station to make inquiries.

Nothing had been seen of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy there. Certainly, he had not yet taken a ticket at the booking-office.

Mr. Railton wondered uneasily whether the runaway junior had struck across the woods to Wayland Junction. There were more trains there, and it would have been a more sagacious proceeding, if Arthur Augustus had thought of it. As he had stated his intention of going home, and his home was in Hampshire, it was pretty certain that he would seek to take a train at some point.

After some cogitation, Mr. Railton decided to make for Wayland Junction, and he hired a trap at the Red Lion to drive him over.

The old High Street of Rylcombe was dark and deserted as the trap bowled down it, with Mr. Railton sitting, quiet and stern, beside the driver.

From the silence of the village street there came a sound of knocking at a shop door.

Mr. Railton glanced idly in the direction of the sound. Whoever was knocking was standing under the old-fashioned porch at the door of Mr. Wiggs, the outfitter.

Mr. Wiggs' shop had long been closed; but apparently a belated customer was desirous of seeing Mr. Wiggs, for the knocking was steady and persistent.

Knock, knock, knock!

The sound echoed through the silent street, and died away behind the trap as it bowled out into the lanes.

Not for a moment did Mr. Railton dream of connecting that knocking at the village shop door with the fugitive from St. Jim's.

The knocking continued for some time after the trap had disappeared, and the St. Jim's Housemaster was well on his way to the junction.

Mr. Wiggs had probably gone to bed, and was in no hurry to answer the summons at his door.

But at last a light gleamed in the house, and the side-door beside the shop partly opened, with the rattle of a chain, Mr. Wiggs cautiously keeping the chain on.

"Who's there?" snapped Mr. Wiggs.

"I am awf'ly sowwy to disturb you, Mr. Wiggs—"

"Upon my word! Master D'Arcy!" exclaimed the outfitter, in amazement.

"Yaas."

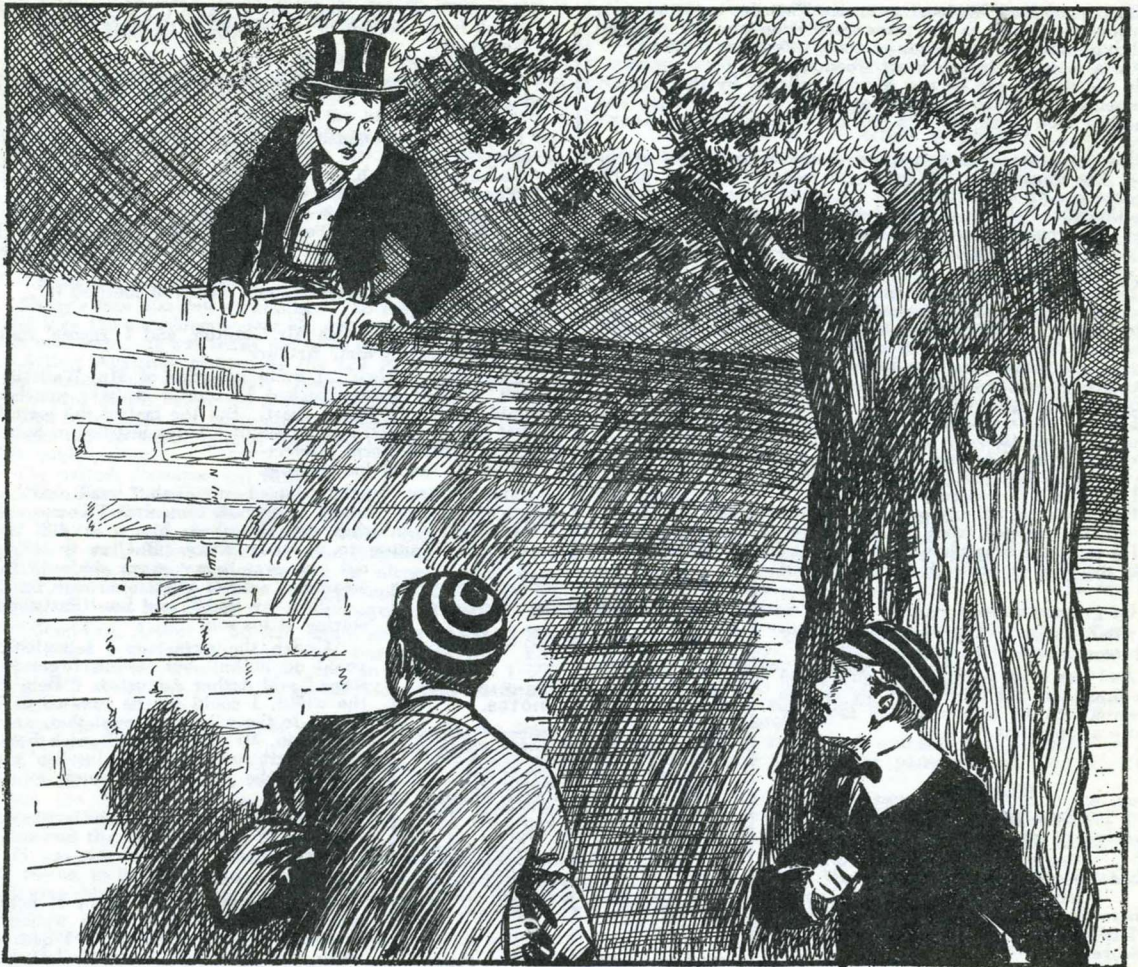
Mr. Wiggs opened his door wide.

Master D'Arcy was one of his very best customers. Mr. Wiggs sold him silk hats, beautiful waistcoats, neckties, and gloves galore. Even at that hour of the night Master D'Arcy was not to be repulsed, even by an outfitter who wanted to sleep the sleep of the just.

"What ever has happened, Master D'Arcy?" exclaimed Mr. Wiggs, peering out into the dusky street.

"It's all wight, Mr. Wiggs. I want some gloves."

"Some what?"



Tom Merry and Knox stood staring at Arthur Augustus D'Arcy on the top of the wall. "Come down from that!" roared Knox. "Wats!" answered D'Arcy. "Knox, you may inform the Housemastah that I am wetirin' fwom the school, where f have not received justice or pwopah considewation. I am goin' home!" "Oh gad!" gasped Knox. (See page 10.)

"Some gloves, my deah sir."

"Bless my soul!" said Mr. Wiggs.

"I am weally feahfully sowwy to disturb you, Mr. Wiggs, and I would not do so if it were not vewy important indeed," said Arthur Augustus in his most courteous manner. "But if you would be so awf'ly good as to give me a pair of gloves, I should be vewy much obliged."

"You—you have lost your gloves, Master D'Arcy?" exclaimed the outfitter, in astonishment.

"Not exactly, but I left in a hurwy without them—"

"Bless my soul!"

"I have to go home suddenly, and to catch the ten twain at the station, Mr. Wiggs. Would you be so vewy kind as to hand me some gloves? I know it is vewy late—"

"Certainly, Master D'Arcy! Come in this way."

"Thank you vewy much!"

Arthur Augustus stepped into the passage, and was led into the shop. By the light of Mr. Wiggs' lamp he tried on several pairs in turn. Arthur Augustus was labouring under the stress of excitement. But the selection of gloves was an important matter. In the uncertain light he blinked at his reflection in a glass, and at the sixth pair he found satisfaction.

"Wight as wain!" he said. "It is wathah weckless to buy gloves in a hurwy, I know—it is a mattah that wequiah reflection and pwopah considewation. But on this occasion I am wushed for time. Shall I pay for them now, Mr. Wiggs?"

"I will put it on the account, sir."

"Vewy good!"

Arthur Augustus straightened himself before the glass. He was feeling much better—though little dreaming that his quest of gloves had saved him from recapture.

"Thank you vewy much, Mr. Wiggs! Good-night!"

"Good-night, sir!"

Mr. Wiggs showed him out, and returned to his bed-room in a state of considerable amazement. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy started cheerily for the station. Selecting the gloves had taken up time—though Gussy had not bestowed upon that important operation so much time as usual. Ten o'clock was striking as he walked to the station. Gussy jumped as he heard it.

"Bai Jove! The twain's at ten!"

He broke into a run.

There was no time to take a ticket, the train was in. Arthur Augustus sped through the station for the platform. Old Trumble, the porter, yelled after him:

"Master D'Arcy! Stop!"

"I will pay at the othah end!" Arthur Augustus shouted back, without turning his head.

"Stop!"

Trumble was not thinking of the ticket but of the fact that Mr. Railton had been at the station, inquiring after Master D'Arcy. He rushed on the platform after the swell of St. Jim's.

Arthur Augustus tore open a carriage door and jumped in. The train was just moving. He landed in an empty carriage.

"All wight!" he called out cheerily.

"Oh, my heye!" said the Rylcombe porter.

The train rolled out of the station.

Arthur Augustus sat back in his seat and smiled. He was feeling pleased with his success.

When the train ran through Wayland Junction, Arthur Augustus glanced from the carriage window and gave a jump. On the platform was the stalwart form of Mr. Railton!

"Bai Jove!" breathed Arthur Augustus.

He popped back his head at once. Then he ventured on a cautious peep, and as the train stopped he saw Mr. Railton walking along the carriages, glancing into every window.

For a moment Gussy's heart stood still.

In his mind's eye he saw himself collared by the stalwart Housemaster, jerked neck and crop out of the carriage, and marched back to St. Jim's to face his punishment and Knox's gloating eyes.

But desperate diseases require desperate remedies, as the poet has remarked. D'Arcy was not at the end of his resources. At any other time he would have shuddered at the thought of squeezing into the dusty recess under a carriage seat. But now it was neck or nothing! Dust or no dust, at any risk to his elegant clobber, there was no other resource—it was the only way!

He carefully removed his shiny silk hat and squirmed under the seat with it, and squeezed himself as small as possible. Fortunately, as he realised, he had the carriage to himself. The slim form of the swell of St. Jim's was swallowed up from view about a minute before the Housemaster reached the carriage window.

Mr. Railton glanced in.

He saw, as he supposed, an empty carriage and passed on. There was no time to make a minute examination of each carriage, even if he had thought of it; the train could not be held back for that.

He passed on—unseen and unseeing.

But it was not till the train was in motion again that Arthur Augustus emerged from his hiding-place.

He came out breathless, crimson, and dusty. But the train was speeding on through the night, and he was safe.

He grinned a dusty grin.

"Bai Jove! That was a feahfully narrow escape!" he murmured.

And the swell of St. Jim's proceeded to brush his hat and brush his clothes—an occupation that kept him busy for quite a long time.

CHAPTER 8.

Sent Back to School!

LORD EASTWOOD was pacing the library at Eastwood House, occasionally pausing to glance out across the terrace into the park, where the morning sunshine glistened.

His lordship was looking disturbed and annoyed.

It was ten o'clock in the morning—twelve hours since his lordship had received a telephone message from St. Jim's, announcing that his second son had run away from the ancient scholastic establishment.

His lordship had been surprised by the news, and he was uneasy as well as surprised as he paced the library on this sunny summer's morning.

As Arthur Augustus had started on his journey at so late an hour, he was not likely to be able to perform the whole of it the same night, and, obviously, he had had to put up somewhere. Lord Eastwood did not share his hopeful son's confidence in his power of looking after himself. He was anxious for Arthur Augustus to arrive—and as soon as Gussy did arrive safe and sound it was probable that the noble earl's anxiety would turn to wrath.

At any minute the runaway might drop in, and Lord Eastwood paced the library and waited for him.

The library door opened at last.

A cheerful and elegant figure appeared there.

Lord Eastwood fixed his eyes grimly upon it.

"Good-mornin', fathah!"

"So you have arrived, Arthur!" said Lord Eastwood, without returning his hopeful son's greeting.

"Yaas. Did you expect me?" asked Arthur Augustus, in surprise.

"Dr. Holmes telephoned to me last night."

"Bai Jove!"

"I was scarcely able to believe my ears, Arthur, when he informed me that you had run away from school!" said the earl sternly.

"Dr. Holmes was undah a slight misapprehension," said Arthur Augustus. "I have not run away from school."

"Then why are you here?"

"I have wetaiahed from St. Jim's for a time."

"Is not that running away from school?" exclaimed Lord Eastwood.

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"It is not quite the same thing, fathah. You see, I had to wetaiah from the school or else submit to injustice."

"Nonsense!"

"Bai Jove!"

"You have acted very thoughtlessly and inconsiderately, Arthur."

"Weally—"

"I have every confidence in Dr. Holmes!" said the earl severely.

"So have I, fathah."

"What? Yet you have run away—"

"It was not a question of Dr. Holmes. I am quite satisfied with Dr. Holmes," explained Arthur Augustus. "I approve of him entirely. But Mr. Wailton, my Housemaster, was goin' to lick me—"

"I have not the slightest doubt that you merited it."

"Not at all, sir."

"I am acquainted with Mr. Railton, and I repose complete confidence in him, Arthur."

"Yaas, sir; I also. I quite approve of Mr. Wailton—indeed, I have always backed him up. I have punched Twimble for callin' him a beast. But the fact of the mattah is that Mr. Wailton failed to see that I was justified in horse-whippin' a Sixth-Form pwefect—"

"What!" roared his lordship.

"The wotten wuffian boxed my yah!" said Arthur Augustus. "I felt bound to twash him, and I bowwowed Wildwake's widin'-whip and twashed him. I did not expect Mr. Wailton to be vevy waxy. But, as it turned out, he was vevy waxy indeed, for weasons I am not acquainted with."

"Bless my soul!" said Lord Eastwood, staring at his son.

"Undah the circs, sir, I felt that I could do nothin' but wetaiah from the scene," said Arthur Augustus. "Bein' in the wight, I could not be tweated as if I were in the w'ong. I twust that, upon wefection, Mr. Wailton will ordah Knox of the Sixth to apologise for insultin' me, and that the Head will wequest me to weturn."

"You—you trust—" stutted the earl.

"Yaas!"

"Bless my soul!"

"I am wpreared to wemain at home until the Housemaster comes wound," continued Arthur Augustus. "I had no ideah that you knew I had left the school, sir, or I should have telephoned. I had to put up at Lexham, as there was no twain, and I came on as early as I could this mornin'. I weally hope you have not been anxious on my account."

"I have been very uneasy!" snapped his lordship.

"I am sowwy! It was wathah thoughtless of the Head to wowwy you."

"And now you are at home—"

"I twust I shall not be in the way, dad. In fact, I think I may be of some assistance to you. I should be vevy glad to do secwetarial work for you, and I would be glad to keep the accounts—I am considahed wathah good at awithmetic. I have fwequently got my sums quite wight."

"You will remain at home for the present—" said Lord Eastwood.

"Vevy good!"

"Until the train leaves Easthorpe for Wayland—"

"Eh?"

"I shall see you into that train personally."

"What?"

"To return to the school."

"But I have already explained, sir, that I cannot weturn to the school until this mattah is settled," said Arthur Augustus in surprise.

"What ever may have happened, Arthur, I have every confidence in Dr. Holmes and Mr. Railton, and I am sure that they will see that justice is done," said Lord Eastwood. "As for upholding you in this act of rebellion, I could not think of anything of the kind."

"Bai Jove!"

"You will return to the school by the next train, and take whatever punishment may be meted out to you for this wild escapade," said his lordship sternly.

There was a brief silence. Arthur Augustus' noble face had fallen considerably.

"This is not the weception I expected at home, fathah!" he said at last.

The Companion Papers' Special FREE Gifts!

—*—

NEXT WEEK'S SPLENDID LIST OF REAL PHOTOS.

MONDAY.—In the "Magnet" Library will be given a **Splendid Photo of SYD PUDDEFOOT** (Falkirk F.C.), in action on the field of play.

MONDAY.—In the "Boys' Friend" you will find a **Grand Free Photo of DICK SMITH**, the popular heavy-weight champion.

TUESDAY.—In the "Popular" there will be given **Free** a further **Magnificent Coloured Engine Plate.**

WEDNESDAY.—In the GEM Library will be presented **Two Real Photos of GEORGE WILSON** (Wednesday F.C.) and **J. FORT** (Millwall F.C.).

—*—

More Grand FREE GIFTS to Follow. Watch the COMPANION PAPERS!

—*—

MOST IMPORTANT!

If you have not already done so, place an order with your newsagent for copies of all the above-mentioned papers to be saved for you, and participate in

THE COMPANION PAPERS' SPECIAL FREE GIFTS.

"You can scarcely have expected me to uphold you in disregarding your headmaster's authority."

"But I have explained—"

"In answer to Dr. Holmes' message I assured him that I should send you back by the next train," said Lord Eastwood. His lordship glanced at his watch. "The train leaves Easthorpe at 11.50. I will order the car for a quarter-past eleven. Until then you will remain in this room, as I cannot have your mother troubled by this foolish incident."

"Bai Jove!"

Lord Eastwood, with a severe glance at his son, left the library. Arthur Augustus sank almost limply into a chair.

Exactly what he had expected, when he reached home, was perhaps not quite clear in Gussy's noble mind. But certainly he had not expected this.

"Wotten!" he ejaculated.

Gussy's face was full of dismay. To return to St. Jim's, and take the punishment after all, was a disastrous ending to his bold steps. It was really not to be thought of.

Arthur Augustus glanced at the tall French windows on the terrace, and was strongly tempted to slip out by one of them and vanish before his father saw him again.

But he resisted the temptation. Indignant as he was, he would not do anything that savoured of disrespect towards his noble parent.

He waited, dismayed but calm.

When Lord Eastwood came back into the library, he found his son still sitting in the chair. D'Arcy rose to his feet.

"The car is now ready, Arthur. Come with me."

"Very well, fathah!" said Arthur Augustus quietly.

The drive to the station passed in silence. Lord Eastwood took his son's ticket, and accompanied him to the train, and saw him safely into a carriage.

"Good-bye, Arthur!" he said, more gently now. "You have acted very foolishly, and I am angry with you. You must go back to school at once and do better, and I will forget all about this foolish escapade. Good-bye, my boy!"

"Good-bye, fathah!"

Lord Eastwood shook hands with his son, and the train rolled out of the station.

A slight smile was on his lordship's face as he left the platform. A few minutes later a telegram was despatched from the Easthorpe post-office, announcing that Arthur Augustus had started for the school. Then Lord Eastwood dismissed the incident from his mind.

It was not so easily dismissed from the mind of Arthur Augustus, as he sat in the carriage, every roll of the wheels bringing him nearer and nearer to St. Jim's and punishment.

Station after station passed, and Arthur Augustus still sat buried in thought.

His journey had been more than half-accomplished when he rose from his seat at last, and glanced out of the window at a station the train was just entering. He did not know

the station; but one station was as good as another to him, so long as it was not Wayland.

The train stopped, and Arthur Augustus stepped out. The express rolled on without him.

CHAPTER 9.

Where is Arthur Augustus?

GERALD KNOX of the Sixth Form at St. Jim's wore a genial smile. That pleasant smile on Knox's hard face was a sufficient indication that somebody was "up against it." The Sixth-Former of St. Jim's was lounging on the platform at Wayland Junction. Darrell of the Sixth stood by the bookstall—he was there with Knox to wait for the arrival of the truant. Lord Eastwood's telegram had been duly received at St. Jim's, and the two prefects had been sent to Wayland to meet the train. They were to bring Arthur Augustus D'Arcy back to St. Jim's.

Darrell did not look happy in his task, but Knox was in a mood of great satisfaction. Arthur Augustus had added to the list of his offences by running away from school. Knox was quite pleased that he had done so. Knox was going to enjoy marching him back from the station to St. Jim's.

The train was signalled, and Darrell detached himself from the bookstall.

"That's the train!" he said abruptly.

Knox glanced at the station clock.

"That's it!" he assented. "The young rascal will be in our hands in a minute or two now. If he gives us any trouble on the way to the school—"

Knox's eyes glistened.

"If he gives us any trouble, you can leave him to me, Knox!" said Darrell coldly. "The silly kid's got enough to go through, without any ragging from you."

"I shall certainly lick him if he is cheeky!"

"You certainly won't touch him," answered Darrell.

"Look here, Darrell—"

Darrell turned away and watched the incoming train. Both the prefects scanned the passengers as they alighted in a crowd.

There were a good many passengers alighting at the junction, and they were of all sorts and conditions, but the elegant figure of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy was not visible among them.

As the crowd cleared off, Darrell wrinkled his brow and Knox gritted his teeth.

"He's not here!" growled Knox.

"Can't have missed him," said Darrell. "He's not arrived after all. It's odd, Lord Eastwood stated the time of the train plainly enough in his telegram."

"The Head read it wrong, I suppose," grunted Knox.

"He showed me the telegram. There was no mistake

(Continued on the next page.)

EDITORIAL CHAT.

The Editor would like to hear from his reader chums. Address all letters to Editor, "The Gem Library," The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

My Dear Chums,—

This week the GEM and its Companion Papers, the "Magnet," "Boys' Friend," and "Popular," are continuing their grand series of photos and engine plates. All these splendid features have received unlimited appreciation. The portrait galleries are the best ever produced, while the "Popular" coloured plates of locomotives are magnificent; there is no lesser word for them.

Next week's GEM will contain photos of George Wilson (Wednesday F.C.), and J. Fort (Millwall F.C.), prominent players of whom we all know something. The "Magnet" next week gives a splendid action photo of Syd Puddefoot (Falkirk F.C.), while the "Boys' Friend" is presenting another coming boxing star in the portrait of Dick Smith. I should like to have a chance of saying a bit more about these photographs, but it will have to keep. The same remark applies to the "Popular" plates. They are first-class! Everybody is talking

about them, for them have just filled a want. The interest taken in railways is immense, and is increasing. There is also a pretty keen sense that the iron roads reveal the best there is in the engineering world.

But I must leave this subject, tempting though it is. The special attractions in the GEM for next week have prior rights. So here's for it! The title of the story of St. Jim's next Wednesday is, "Gussy at Greyfriars!" It is a bit of a problem, that! What is the noble scion of the House of Eastwood doing there? You will learn the facts—rather poignant facts—when you read the tale. It is a good bit of work. Mr. Martin Clifford knows how to ring the changes. He has shown his skill in this department in the fresh yarn.

D'Arcy, as we all know, is a fine character. He takes a long time to explain his motives, and he disregards frantic appeals to "get on with the washing," but you can say this for him—his actions are always dictated by sound reasons. There is a particularly sound reason for his action in visiting classic Greyfriars. I am not going into that. Let next week decide. Greyfriars has a great regard for the representative of the "haute noblesse"; Greyfriars knows the sterling qualities of D'Arcy. I should like to hear what you think of the new yarn. To my mind it is one of the brightest and raciest which has ever come

from the fluent pen of the celebrated author.

We have had many ripping tales these recent weeks. The amazing teashop stunt, and the devastating descent of the voracious Steggles, caused roars of laughter. On that occasion, Gussy's bright notion was almost too dazzling. Anyway, it did not pay, and the new teashop, so to speak, speedily went out of liquidation—i.e., there was no more tea. Then we can look back with genuine pleasure on the sensational kidnapping series, and the quaintly amusing story called "Trimble's Treasure," which showed Baggie once again as a mean little toad, and Cardew as a hero.

Our serial is going ahead. Duncan Storm is handling a group of characters of special interest. He knows how to bring some of the knotty problems of life out into the open, showing how such difficulties can be tackled and overcome.

Don't forget that albums for the photos of boxers and footballers can be obtained, price sixpence each, from the GEM Album Office, 7-9, Pilgrim Street, Ludgate Hill, London, E.C. 4. These special albums are good little volumes, and when filled with the portraits of the men who are playing the game, in a double sense, will make first-rate companions for an "off" hour.

YOUR EDITOR.
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about the train. What on earth has happened to that young ass?"

"Never started at all, perhaps!"

"But Lord Eastwood stated that he put him into the train, or words to that effect."

Knox gave an angry growl.

"Then he's got out of it before reaching Wayland!" he said. "The young rotter is keeping us waiting on purpose—a fag trick—confound him! I'll make him pay for that, along with the rest!"

"He couldn't even have known that we were to meet him here, so he can't be playing a trick on us," said Darrell.

"Well, he's not come!" snarled Knox. "Are we waiting for the next train? No good that I can see. In fact, I'm going back to St. Jim's! I'm not sticking here another hour for that young cad!"

And Knox tramped away for his bicycle. Darrell, after a moment or two of thought, followed him. The runaway had not arrived, and there was no telling when he might arrive, or, indeed, whether he would arrive at all. The two Sixth-Formers rode back to St. Jim's in silence.

There was a crowd at the gates of the old school when they reached St. Jim's. It was known far and wide that Lord Eastwood had sent his son back, and all the fellows were keen to see him when he came. A fellow who had had the nerve to run away from school was an object of great interest. Tom Merry & Co. were anxious and concerned, and so were many more, while others seemed to look on the affair as more or less of a "lark." That view was taken by D'Arcy minor—Wally of the Third. Wally was there with Frayne and Levison minor and Reggie Manners and some more choice spirits of the Third, and all the fags were grinning. There was a general exclamation when the two prefects came in.

"Where's D'Arcy?"

"Where's my major?" shouted Wally.

Knox strode on scowling without an answer. Some of the juniors gave him a hiss or a groan as he passed, which caused Knox's scowl to grow blacker. But Darrell answered:

"He did not come by the train!"

"But where is he, then?" exclaimed Blake.

"I don't know!"

"Oh, great Scott!"

Darrell went on to the School House, to report to the Head. Tom Merry & Co. looked at one another.

"What on earth is the old ass up to now?" almost groaned Blake. "I wish I had him near enough to punch his silly nose!"

"He's not at home, and he's not come back," said Tom.

"Where on earth can he have disappeared to?"

"Can't have gone off on his own, surely?" said Lowther.

"Good old Gussy!" chortled Wally of the Third. "Always playing the giddy goat. The Head will be in a terrific bait about this. I say, Reggie, your major wouldn't have the nerve to run away from school!"

"My major's got more sense!" said Reggie Manners.

"He hasn't got much sense, but more sense than that!"

"Rats!" said Wally. "He wouldn't have the nerve. My major's an ass, but he's got lots of nerve. But my only Aunt Jane, won't he catch it when he does turn up! The Head will give him jolly old beans, what?"

And Wally strutted away, feeling quite distinguished as the minor of a fellow who had had the nerve to bolt from school.

Tom Merry & Co. were taking the matter more seriously

than the hero of the Third. They were deeply concerned about the reckless youth who was now, apparently, facing the wide world on his "lonely own." Baggy Trimble, who had been scouting near the Head's door—he called it scouting, though other fellows found another name for it—informed the juniors that he had heard the Head at the telephone, and that he had been in communication with Lord Eastwood. Likewise he had heard the Head tell Mr. Railton that his lordship was very much surprised to hear that D'Arcy had not returned to the school.

Arthur Augustus' chums were very uneasy that evening.

The runaway, evidently, was not at home, and he was not coming back to St. Jim's. Where was he? Study No. 6 seemed a dismal place to Blake & Co. that evening; they did their prep dispiritedly. They were too worried about their noble chum to think even of taking measures of vengeance upon Knox of the Sixth.

At bed-time there was no news of Arthur Augustus, though Trimble was aware that the Head had been on the telephone several times. It was clear by that time that the swell of the Fourth did not mean to return to the school.

Tom Merry & Co. could only hope that something would be heard of him in the morning.

A good many of the juniors were down unusually early the following day, eager for information. Tom Merry found Mr. Railton taking an early stroll in the quad, and ventured to ask him whether Arthur Augustus had been heard of.

The Housemaster shook his head and frowned.

"D'Arcy of the Fourth has not returned, neither has he communicated with the Head," he answered. "It is also certain that he is not at home. Where the foolish boy has gone is at present unknown."

And the Housemaster walked on.

"No news?" asked Blake, as Tom rejoined his chums.

"No!"

"Oh, the awful ass!" groaned Blake. "Won't I jolly well punch him when he turns up, for worrying his old pals like this!"

After breakfast D'Arcy's chums were unusually keen on the morning post. They hoped for some communication from the absent junior. Mr. Railton called Blake into his study and handed him a postcard.

"You may take this, Blake," he said. "It is from D'Arcy, and the Head has already seen it. You may read it."

"Oh!" said Blake.

He looked at the postcard. It was of the "picture" variety, and there was a seaside bathing scene depicted on it. On the space left blank for communications there was a short message in the well-known hand of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

"Dear Blake,—Don't worry! I am all right, and going to see some friends. It is impossible for me to return to St. Jim's until my respected Housemaster decides to take a more reasonable view.

"Your old pal,

"A. A. D'ARCY."

Blake looked at the postmark. It was Folkestone, and the date was of the previous day. Blake whistled softly. The runaway of St. Jim's had gone far afield. Mr. Railton's eyes were fixed on the junior.

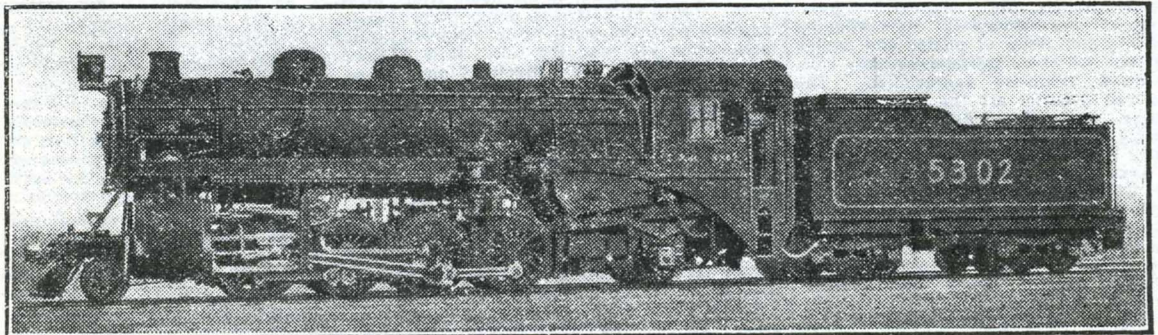
"You probably understand, Blake, that it is necessary for D'Arcy to be brought back to the school without delay?"

"Oh, yes! Certainly, sir!"

"He states that he is going to see some friends, and he

(Continued on page 19.)

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The ST JIM'S NEWS

Edited by TOM MERRY.

OUR SHORT STORY.

A Regular Mess Up!

By Clifton Dane.

"WUN like anythin', deah boys!" gasped Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "Put the speed on, chaps!" shrieked Monty Lowther desperately. "Don't let those Fourth Form asses get there first!"

An exciting race was in progress across the quadrangle at St. Jim's. The participants in that race were Jack Blake, Herries, Digby, and D'Arcy, the heroes of the Fourth, and the Terrible Three of the Shell.

Tom Merry, Manners, and Lowther were tearing desperately after Blake and Co., who had the lead. They were making a bee-line for the tuck shop.

Mrs. Taggles was closing her tuck shop early that Wednesday afternoon, as she was going to visit a maiden aunt in some distant township. And, as all the other shops in Rylcombe and Wayland also closed for the half-day on Wednesday, it behoved every fellow at St. Jim's who wanted any tuck to buy it at the school shop before Mrs. Taggles closed the doors.

Tom Merry & Co. and Blake & Co. had left things to the last minute, and even now Mrs. Taggles was putting up the shutters to her little tuck shop in the quad. It meant that whoever got there first might get served, if Mrs. Taggles wished.

The Shell fellows were gaining, but they gave gasps of dismay when they saw a crowd of Fourth Formers—Levison, Cardew, Kerruish, and half a dozen more—come bearing down on them.

"Stop 'em, boys!" gasped Blake, as he pounded up. "We've got to take charge of the tuck shop!"

Tom Merry & Co. found themselves instantly surrounded by the Fourth-Formers. Cardew & Co. hung on to them whilst Jack Blake & Co. dashed into the tuck shop.

"You—you rotters!" roared Tom Merry, who had Kerruish and Alan Lorne hanging on to him. "Leggo! Rescue, Shell!"

But there was no succour near. The Terrible Three were fairly mobbed. They were hurled to the cold, hard, unsympathetic ground and sat on.

Meanwhile, Blake & Co. had persuaded Mrs. Taggles, who was just about to lock up her shop, to let them have some tuck.

Five minutes later they came strolling out of the tuck shop, carrying a huge parcel of tuck. Mrs. Taggles locked up the shop directly afterwards.

"Good egg!" chuckled Blake, as he saw the Terrible Three still lying prostrate on the ground. "They won't be able to get any tuck now! Sorry to have to inconvenience you, old sports, but under the circumstances it was a case of everyone for himself."

"Yaas, watahah!" "Bump them if they start any violence!" chuckled Digby.

Tom Merry, Manners, and Lowther glared homicidally at their rivals, but deemed it better not to resort to violence.

"Never mind!" said Tom Merry, as they went into the School House and made their way along to the Fourth Form passage. "We'll get our own back. Let's see if we can rag their room, anyway!"

The Terrible Three looked in at Study No. 6, Blake & Co.'s headquarters. They found a couple of plasterers in charge. The furniture was covered with white sheets, and there was plaster and whitewash everywhere.

"My hat! I had forgotten that Blake's ceiling started cracking yesterday," said Tom Merry, blinking in at Study No. 6. "Have you patched it up, Blobson?" "Well, Master Merry, we've ad to pull the 'ole blinkin' ceiling down and put a new one up," replied Blobson, the village builder and decorator. "The plaster's fresh, an' it's all wet now. You boys 'ad better go careful for a few days."

"Thank goodness it isn't our study!" grinned Monty Lowther. "Great pip! Blake & Co. have got a nice little mess to clear up before tea!"

"Hark! They're coming," said Manners uneasily. "I—I reckon we'd better clear." So, not wishing for any further raggings, the Terrible Three cleared.

They went over to the New House, and sneaked in there by the conservatory door. Figgins & Co. were down at the nets, so it was a comparatively easy matter to "lift" a bag of tuck that Figgins, Kerr, and Wynn had stowed into their study cupboard.

Feeling more cheerful, Tom Merry & Co. bore their plunder into their own room in the School House.

"There's more than enough for us chaps!" grinned Monty Lowther.

"Yes, but it's still up to us to get our own back on old Blake!" said Tom Merry, and then he chuckled. "My hat! I've got it! The stunningest wheeze of the term! Listen, kids!"

Manners and Lowther listened eagerly. And they chuckled mightily.

Plastered!

Teatime arrived, and Blake and Co., having got their room cleared up, set about making tea.

The ceiling was a dull grey colour, for the plaster had not yet dried. There was also a musty smell of fresh plaster in the room, but it was quickly drowned by the comforting odour of frying sausages and chips. Digby did the cooking, Herries cut the bread, Arthur Augustus D'Arcy made the tea, whilst Blake arranged the festive board.

"Jolly good spread!" chuckled Blake, as

they sat down to the feast. "My word! I wonder how those Shell bouncers have got on for tea? We'd invite them, but—ahem!—under the circumstances it wouldn't be profitable."

"Good word that, Blake!" said Robert Arthur Digby enthusiastically.

"Yaas, and this is a wippin' spweed!" said Gussy. "Wi ah in, deah boys—the smell of that beastly plastah has made me hungry!"

The chums of Study No. 6 wired in. They did not hear a stealthy clicking at their study door. That click was made by the key being turned in the lock from outside. Monty Lowther crept away next minute. He had locked Blake & Co. in their room.

But Blake & Co. did not know. They went on with their feed.

Soon there came sounds of heavy bumping above.

Blake & Co. jumped to their feet in alarm.

"Who's making that row up there?" howled Blake. "Hark at the row! Hi! Stoppit. What are you up to?"

If the noisy ones above heard, they heeded not. They jumped and they stamped and they clattered about furiously. And then, all of a sudden, there was a cracking noise up above, and a lump of plaster dropped out of the ceiling. It landed on Gussy's head.

"Yawooooooooooh!" shrieked the aristocratic swell of St. Jim's.

His head was smothered with plaster. It filled his hair and got down his back.

Then the whole ceiling collapsed.

Crash! Plaster fell in a deluge. It clattered all over the tea-table, ruining everything, and it crashed on top of Blake & Co.

A chorus of doleful howls arose. "Oooooooh!"

"Yah! Wow!" "Ow-wow-wow-wow!"

There was a ghastly scene of ruin in Study No. 6. The newly plastered ceiling had fallen—shaken down by the stamping above. Blake & Co.'s tea-table was wrecked. Their furniture and carpet were smothered with plaster. They were hurt, and their moans were truly doleful to listen to.

Digby dragged at the door, but it refused to open. The stamping noises above had ceased. Above Blake & Co.'s yells, the voice of Tom Merry came to them from outside.

"Hallo, you in there! Are you enjoying your tea?"

"You—you awful cads!" shrieked Blake. "You—you knocked our ceiling down—"

"Go hon! We were doing some dancing practice in the box-room, and—"

"You've mucked up our study!" howled Herries sulphurously.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the Terrible Three. They unlocked the door, and Blake & Co. were revealed. Shrieks of merriment arose when the onlookers saw the state of Study No. 6. Blake & Co.'s tea-party had been a regular mess-up!

Mr. Raitton came along just as the infuriated Fourth-Formers were about to fling themselves on Tom Merry & Co. The House-master gazed at the scene in horror. Nobody sneaked on the Terrible Three, of course and Mr. Raitton attributed the fall of the ceiling to bad plaster.

Next day Study No. 6 was tinned out again and another ceiling put up.

But Tom Merry & Co. laughed loud and long over the manner in which they had got their own back on their rivals of the Fourth.



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THIS WONDERFUL SERIAL IS PLEASING EVERYBODY!



ALL ON HIS OWN!

A Story of a Lad's Uphill
Fight For Fame and
Fortune.

By **DUNCAN STORM.**

THE OPENING CHAPTERS.

JIM READY, a sturdy lad of fourteen, having seen his last friend laid to rest, is left all alone in the great world of chance. He is leaving the cemetery gates, when he butts up against

A **KINDLY STRANGER** (John Lincoln), the principal governor of the great school of St. Beowulf's, who had been watching him at the funeral.

The two walk along the road together, and Jim tells his new-found friend that he intends starting work at the brickfields in Dennington. The stranger smiles, and tells Jim it is education he needs first. He then withdraws a piece of parchment from his pocket, and, after signing it, hands it to Jim. It is a free pass into the great school. Jim is to take his chance as a Lincoln scholar at St. Beowulf's.

Jim gets a warm reception from the bullies of the school, but the decent fellows welcome him.

He finds a friend in Wobbygong, a plucky lad from Australia, and the master of a pet kangaroo, Nobby. Wobby is giving a lantern show, when Nobby makes a bolt out of the window. The boys follow by the same exit, and mounting some hunters on which the scholars of St. Beowulf's are put through the riding-school, they chase and capture Nobby.

On their return to St. Beowulf's, they find that burglars have broken into the school. Jim captures their bag of booty, but is confronted by one of the ruffians, who demands its return.

"Take it!" cries Jim; and, with all his force, he hurls it at the ruffian's head.

(Now read on.)

The Capture.

THE bag caught the ruffian fairly in face. There was a sharp crack as the pistol exploded, the burglar's fingers tightening suddenly on the trigger at the unexpected blow. Over he went, measuring his length on the ground as his two confederates dashed forward.

One dealt a heavy blow at Lung with a weapon which turned out to be a length of leaden gas-piping, an ugly weapon that might well have fractured the boy's skull. But Lung's head was not there when the blow arrived, and the pipe hissed through the air.

Lung had a lot of nasty, dirty little Chinese tricks in his fighting. He dived between the burglar's legs just as a rabbit pops into its burrow, upsetting him neatly.

"Run!" cried the third burglar, which was pretty useful, considering that both his pals were rolling on their backs like capsized beetles. He ran, making across the gardens towards the hedge beyond where a motor-car was waiting.

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It was rather unfortunate for him, for the resourceful Wobby was waiting for this. He allowed his man to run just far enough, then, with a queer twist of his arm, he sent that deadly boomerang of hard wood flitting through the night. The light was uncertain, but Wobby's aim was certain enough.

There was a dull thud as the heavy, curved missile caught the runaway. The light Homburg hat was no protection against such a blow. Down he went with a crash, his bag of booty falling from his hand. He lay still, face downwards on the ground.

"That's stouped him, all kilt!" said Wobby, with great satisfaction.

Wobby spoke too quick, for Frisky was on his feet again, and, with a vicious rush, he made for Wobby.

"Take that!" he snarled.

"That" was a blow with a heavy knuckle-duster; but it never landed home, for Wobby ducked as, over his head, came flying a shape, which to the astonished burglar resembled as much as anything a flying donkey with a Christmas-pudding on each foot.

Frisky had not much time to take in the appearance of the thing that attacked him, for a rain of heavy blows battered his face, his chest, and his stomach. He put up his hands to protect his face, as Nobby, thoroughly annoyed, and frightened by the report of the pistol, put it all over him.

"Come off, Nobby!" called Wobby later to his pet. "No more step-dancing on the gentleman. You'll kill him!"

The second burglar had got to his feet, and had backed against the wall of the Abbot's Room, aglasi at all these things which were happening round him. He was the least of this professional trio, a new hand, and for the moment he had lost his nerve.

"Leave me alone!" he snarled, his face white and haggard in the darkness. "Lemme go, or I'll be the death of one of you young imps!"

Wobby eyed his man. Here was a man who was more dangerous than either of his companions. He was frightened and cornered like a rat between those two buttresses.

Wobby had hurled his boomerang, and there was no time to recover it now. In his hand he held the long rawhide stock-whip, with its lash of twenty-five feet of plaited rawhide. He saw the man's hand go up, holding some weapon.

Lal Singh was for it this time; but, quicker than finger could press trigger, that great lash of rawhide shot through the air, smacking on the ruffian's wrist, coiling round it, and paralysing it, so that the pistol fell to the ground from the helpless fingers.

"Pick it up, Lal!" snapped Wobby.

Lal, darting forward, picked up the dropped weapon.

With a queer little twist of the long whip, Wobby released his prisoner.

"Put your hands up, you tug!" he said calmly. "The game's up!"

The whip cracked like a pistol, and shot over the ruffian's head, whipping off his hat.

"That's to show you how I can take your hat off for you!" said Wobby coolly. "I can take off your ear just as easy, old clobber! Why, there are lights moving!"

Indeed, lights were showing in the upper windows. The doctor's end of the school-buildings had been roused by the report of the pistol.

Frisky, recovering his senses, which had been nearly trampled out of him by the boxing kangaroo, tried to make a sudden leap to his feet, but Nobby checked him.

Then came the rushing of feet—naked feet—pattering on the cold stones, followed by a heavy fall and the sound of a weighty body sliding along. It was Monsieur Faux de Blanquiers. He had arrived on the scene, as it were, "on his ear!"

Monsieur was dressed in a gaily-striped suit of pyjamas. On his head he wore a Turkish fez. In his hand he carried a long duelling sword of a most ugly appearance.

"Ah!" he cried, as he jumped to his feet and looked round him wildly. "Where are ze robbers? Where are ze assassins? I will meet zem wiz my good sword!"

He flourished his weapon so that the steel hissed through the air about two inches from Wobby's stomach.

"Steady on with that toasting-fork, Moosoo!" said Wobby mildly. "It's all over but the shouting. We caught these pebs burgling the doctor's spankum spankorum. We backed the barrer into them, and jumped the joint. That chap with the kangaroo a-sitting on his spine is the king-pin of the outfit. He's the glassy alley of this bunch of pebs. He's done his dash. We've crooled his pitch for him, and he's skied the towel!"

"Ah, Monsieur Wobby, it is you!" exclaimed Monsieur de Blanquiers, rolling his eyes and dropping the point of his sword. "What mean you, my good boy—er-cruel ze pitch—back ze barrow?"

"Why, it's all over, Moosoo! If you'll get a bit of clothes-line and tie up that dawg there that I've fauned to sleep with my boomerang, we'll be getting on nicely!" replied Wobby.

Monsieur looked with bewildered eyes at the recumbent figure in the flower-beds.

"Ah, he is stun!" he exclaimed.

"Stunned! I should smile!" said the imperturbable Wobby. "He'll have a head on him like a concertina to-morrow morning. I bified him head over feet at short range, and that 'rang of mine is a heavy-weight cut from a bit of Queensland blackwood."

"And zis fierce animal who sit on ze

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recumbent gentleman?" demanded Moosoo, pointing with his sword to Nobby. "What is he?"

"Well, Moosoo," replied Wobby, with a modest and engaging smile. "I don't want to skite about old Nobby, my boxing kangaroo, but he'd give your Champeen Carpenter all that he could hold down with his hands and feet. Nobby is a champeen!"

Monsieur de Blanquiere passed his hand across his forehead in a bewildered manner. "I dream!" he exclaimed. "I ear shot. I snatch my good sword. I rush out into ze night, an' I find you boys in company wiz kangaroo what carry 'is young in 'is tobacco-pouch on 'is stummick!"

"It's all right, Moosoo," replied Wobby. "It isn't a nightmare. Here comes old Jorrocks and Mr. Teach!"

Jorrocks, with his nightcap on his head and his gold-laced coat flying over his night-attire, came hurrying along, armed with a lantern and a poker. Behind him came Blackbeard Teach in his mortar-board and gown, carrying out the school superstition that Blackbeard, the pirate, always slept in cap and gown.

"Hallo, boys!" demanded Blackbeard. "What is all this?"

"Burglars, sir," replied Jim. "Oh, that's you, Master Ready, is it?" asked Blackbeard. "You are starting early. Well done, boys! They have been after the doctor's coins. Always told him they ought to be kept at the bank. Well, I am apparently 'post bellum auxilium'—after the battle I offer help. Tie up that chap on the ground, Jorrocks!"

Jorrocks caught the length of cord which was thrown to him.

"Ere," said Jorrocks fussily, as he leaned over the recumbent burglar and lifted him, "none of your shamming!"

"What was it hit me?" asked the robber, sitting up and looking round him in a dazed fashion.

"Why, it was that curved stick that the Orstralian young gent threw at you," replied Jorrocks. "Good job for you he didn't fracture your skull. Put your hands behind you while I tie them together, or I'll finish what the Orstralian young gent started on!"

The burglar groaned.

"Broke my neck, 'e 'as!" he complained. "Well, I dare say that they'll be able to put it all right for you in prison," replied Jorrocks, as he made his man fast. "There's a very good doctor at the county gaol—a very nice gentleman he is, too! He attends these young gents at the school as well as the convicts!"

"Wish he'd cut some o' their throats for 'em!" snarled the burglar. "Nice sort o' school this, I don't think, where they lets the boys run about all night—with niggers and kangaroos. 'Eadmaster ought to be ashamed of 'imself!"

"You can tell him so, if you like!" said Jorrocks affably. "Here he comes."

It was, indeed, Dr. Brackenbury who made his appearance, lifting his hand to still the hubbub of explanations.

The whole school was roused by now. Fags, armed with hockey-sticks and cricket-bats, were rushing on the scene, lightly clad in pyjamas and jackets. Fifth Form boys, who were in the Cadet Corps, had rushed to the armoury for rifles and bayonets.

"Back to your dormitories—all who are not concerned in this!" ordered Dr. Brackenbury.

The crowd began to melt unwillingly away. All were tickled to death with curiosity. There were three apparent robbers, bound hand and foot, and a strange kangaroo with his feet in boxing-gloves. Such a sight had never been seen before in St. Beowulf's.

"Now, Master Wobby," said the doctor, looking first at Wobby and then at Nobby, "there is not the slightest doubt that you have done the school a great service in preventing its museum from being plundered of its choicest collection. Perhaps you will be so good as to explain away the presence of this strange animal within the school precincts. As you know, the school rules allow the keeping of rabbits and white mice and even silkworms, but kangaroos are not in the schedule."

The doctor was smiling as he spoke. Wobby was overwhelmed. He realised that a kangaroo would require a good deal of explaining away. He might just as well try to explain away an elephant.

So he made a clean breast of Nobby. In simple but eloquent words he told the

doctor how Nobby had been brought up by him from a kangaroo pup, and how he would have pined away if he had been left behind in Australia. He confessed how he had smuggled him into the school, and how Nobby had made his escape, to be hunted and brought back just in time to save the collection of gold coins and jewels from the burglars.

"I hope you won't expel him, sir!" said Wobby earnestly, as he ended his recital. The doctor's eye twinkled.

"I don't think we can expel him after doing such a gallant service to the school, my boy," he said, "but we must arrange some other quarters for him than Dormitory No. 4. There is—ahem!—nothing in the school rules directed specifically against the keeping of kangaroos in dormitories, but it is simply not done. Here come the police!"

P.-c. Roberts and a sergeant came hurrying across the lawns, brought to the scene of action by a lucky telephone call. They had had a busy night, for they had just brought the poachers from Tantivy Woods.

The sergeant looked at the three captured burglars almost as if he were jealous of their capture by a gang of schoolboys.

"It's Frisky Smith!" he said briefly, regarding the discomfited leader of the band. "I thought as much—knew it was a London hand in all these burglaries which 'ave been taking place round 'ere lately!"

"I don't know anything about any burglaries," said Frisky sullenly.

"Of course you don't know anything about them!" replied the sergeant. "But you'll soon find out that you London smarties have still got something to learn about us country policemen. We may 'ave the thistle-down in our hair, but we ain't quite so simple as we look. I'll just run through your pockets now, my man, to see what documents you have on you."

Frisky started as the sergeant felt in the breast-pocket of his jacket.

"See that, Jim!" whispered Wobby. "The stiff thinks that the sergeant's found his pocket-book. But he hasn't—I've got it!"

Jim started with astonishment as he looked up at his Australian friend.

"Why don't you give it to the sergeant, then?" he asked, in a low voice.

"What!" exclaimed the lawless son of the Golden South. "Me give the stuff away to a copper! Not me! We don't go halves with the police in Australia, my white-headed boy. You wait! I believe I'm going to show you some fun that will make to-night's doings as tame as a tea-party!"

The three burglars were searched, and were duly warned by the sergeant, who liked to do all the talking himself, that anything they might say would be held in evidence against them.

"Now, off to bed with you, boys!" said the doctor. "Mr. Teach and monsieur are coming with me to take these men straight to the police-station. You can dispose of your kangaroo as you like to-night. But to-morrow I will make some proper arrangements for his lodging."

"Are you sure you won't want any assistance to take those men to the station, sir?" asked Wobby modestly.

"No, thanks, my boy!" replied Dr. Brackenbury dryly. "You have already done quite enough to-night."

The doctor moved off, leaving Wobby to wonder how much there was in his speech.

Reekess Driving!

THE school was quieting down as the boys went off. They were half-way round the school buildings to Dormitory No. 4 when Wobby was smitten by a sudden thought.

"Half a tick, boys!" he exclaimed. "I'm smit by a brain-wave! How would it be if we got a motor-car for Dormitory No. 4?"

"A motor-car!" exclaimed his chums. "Of course!" replied Wobby calmly. "I keep my eyes open, if you don't! I've seen the track of the car those chaps came in, and I think I know where they've hidden her. We'll do another hide. If we find her we will stow her in the Haunted Barn. No one ever goes near the Haunted Barn!"

"But the police will want her," said Jim. "Goodness, Jim!" said Wobby, with good-natured patience. "You are like all the English chaps—always thinking about the police! We Australian chaps never think about the police until we have to. That fat-headed sergeant hasn't got wise to the fact that a gang of burglars who have been working round the country, would be using a car of sorts. I'll bet they've got a Ford. Fords are not easy to identify, and the Ford is a car that will go anywhere and do anything. It is just the sort of car that will suit a gang of pebs like those, and it's just the sort of car out of which we could get a good deal of fun before we hand it over to the police! Come along!"

Wobby dodged across the school grounds, dragging Nobby by his collar.

Nobby was thoroughly tired now. The Australian kangaroo is an active animal, but



"Ha!" cried Monsieur, arriving on the scene and looking round him wildly. "Where are ze robbers? Where are ze assassins? I will meet zem with my good sword!" He flourished his weapon so that the steel hissed through the air about two inches from Wobby's stomach.



The car rose as a ship rises to a heavy sea. Its wheels skidded on the clay slope, and it knocked down a small pine-tree. But steadily, if slowly, it climbed the ridge, carrying the pine-tree with it. The tree buried the boys and Nobby on the back seat.

it cannot live at the same speed as British schoolboys. Nobby wanted to lie down, but his master pulled him to his feet.

"Cheer up, old clobber!" he said. "One last effort, my brave heart. As soon as we snaffle this car you can go to bed, and you shall have your breakfast in bed to-morrow morning."

The rest of the little party gathered round the weary kangaroo and pushed him up on his tail. Then they broke through a hedge of laurels, and dropped into a deep, quarry-like hollow that lay at the foot of the doctor's kitchen gardens.

There was a small road down here which was known as Muck Lane, and, following this down, Wobby came upon the very object he was looking for—a Ford car, half screened in a dense thicket of yews.

"Here she is, boys!" he said. "Now, I don't propose to hand over this car for a little while to the police. If they haven't got enough brains in their blocks to take a tumble to it, the car is ours on loan. I'm going to do some police work with it. Climb into the car, you chaps; I'll drive her through the wood to the Haunted Barn."

"You break our neck!" said Lung.

Lung knew the lie of the country between Muck Lane and the Haunted Barn. It was scrub woods full of deep hollows and gullies.

"Drive car no can!" said Lung.

"Don't be an ass, Lung!" said Wobby, settling himself in the driver's seat. "A Ford car will go anywhere and do anything. You ought to see the places where we will make a Ford go in Australia. Why, we go steepchasing in Ford cars till they drop to pieces. Then we get another and go on."

"You not in Australia low!" said Lung.

"And you aren't in China, old yellow mug!" retorted Wobby. "Just leave yourselves to me. I'll bring you through all right! This is a nice little car, and nearly new. Hold tight, and stick to the kangaroo."

Lung and Jim, on the back seat, clung tightly to Nobby, the kangaroo, as the car started off, lampless but lively, through the thick, dark woods.

"Up she goes!" said Wobby cheerfully, as the car shot up a bank as steep as the roof of a house.

Lung groaned as he shot into the air like a tennis-ball from a bat under the thrust of

a tremendous jolt. But the car caught him again.

"Jolly good springs to these Ford cars," said Wobby appreciatively, as the car plunged head-foremost down into a hollow and tore through a brawling stream. "That's the stuff to give her. Now we take this hill. This is the best of having a good, powerful engine in a light, reliable car."

A slope rose before them that looked like the side of a mountain in the darkness.

The car rose to it as a ship rises to a heavy sea. Its wheels skidded on the clay slope, and it knocked down a small pine-tree. But steadily, if slowly, it climbed the ridge, carrying the pine-tree with it.

The tree buried the boys and Nobby, who were sitting in the back seat.

"Chuck that Christmas-tree overboard!" said Wobby. "We are not far off the Haunted Barn now. I'll get her to the top of this ridge. Then we'll let her go with a rush. That'll clear us across the swamp, and she'll cross the river on the two planks—and there we are!"

Lurching and rolling, the car reached the top of the ridge.

"Hold on for the bump, boys!" said Wobby. "Don't make a shine about it. I've ridden down lots of worse places than this in Australia. You fellows always think that you want a road for a car. But we don't have roads in Australia. If we waited for roads we shouldn't drive our cars anywhere—Ow!"

Wobby was almost pitched through the screen as the car leaped at a single bound down a small precipice.

With a grunt, the kangaroo was thrown forward, embracing his master's neck with his forepaws.

"Don't breathe in my ear, Nobby!" said Wobby. "You'll put my steering out."

Bump! Crash! Bang!

The car seemed to be falling into a bottomless abyss down a dark quarry from which rock had been excavated.

The boys were thrown about like peas in a pot. Nobby made a whimpering sort of sound, which showed that though he also came from Australia, he was not accustomed to this rough travelling.

The Ford reached the bottom of the slope in safety. It shot forward down a short slope, slogged through a bog, tore its wheels from he clinging moss and mud, and charged

two planks that were laid as a bridge across Juicy Brook. Then it lurched, tipped, and rolled across a space of broken common land, where in the war time the cadet corps of the school had excavated many trenches, and finally brought up at the door of the desolate building which was known as the Haunted Barn.

The barn was a big building of stone, mostly used for the storing of thatching reed, and the bundles of dry reed were piled high in it.

"This is the place to hide her up!" said Wobby, with great satisfaction, as he threw open the great doors. "Not been visited for a month of Sundays. And there is a road out, too, through the woods. Pull some of this stacked reed aside, boys. We will hide her."

The boys did as they were instructed. The great sheaves of dry reed were easy enough to shift. The car was then run into the barn and hidden up.

Wobby seated himself on a pile of reed and produced his electric-torch and a notebook from his pocket.

"I say, Wobby!" said Jim, remonstrating. "Oughtn't we to be getting back quick? The doctor and Blackbeard and the rest will be coming back from the police-station, and they will catch us out of the dormitory."

"Plenty of time yet," said Wobby. "They will have business to do down at the police-station, and they will be sure to go straight back to the Abbot's Room to see if those lads have smashed things up. We only took a few ticks to come through the wood, though it may have seemed a long time to you."

"It did seem a long time," agreed Jim.

"That was because you thought I was going to break your necks for you!" replied Wobby calmly. "Time always passes slow if you think that sort of thing. You can have half your lifetime pass before your eyes when you are taking a Ford down a really stiff place. But, listen, boys!"

He had unfastened the clasp of the pocket-book which he had taken from the pocket of Frisky Smith. It was filled with small, neat entries in clear writing. Between the leaves there were several letters neatly folded, and half a dozen newspaper cuttings of accounts of robberies and police descriptions of articles stolen.

Wobby read hastily through these by the ray of his electric-torch, then he perused a letter which was written in German. His jaw dropped and his eyes shone as he read.

"What is it?" asked Jim impatiently.

"What is it?" echoed Wobby. "Wait a minute, my boy. Let me get my head round it. I've clicked the private ledger!"

"What of?"

"Thought as much," said Wobby solemnly. "Boys, we are on the biggest thing that ever happened in this school of ours. We've got the line that the police are going to miss. It is we who are going to pick up the clue of this Ned Kelly. See all these little sketches?"

He flicked over a few pages of the notebook which were decorated with neat little maps.

"Maps!" said Lal Singh.

"Of course they are maps, you heathen!" replied Wobby. "But they are not ordinary maps. They show where Lord Tantivy's silver plate is buried. They show where Lady Castlewood's jewels are buried. They also show us where to lay hands on the sack of stuff that was taken from Lord Bradbury's place. These chaps have been hiding the plunder of a dozen burglaries round the countryside. They were going to dig it up."

"When?" asked Jim breathlessly.

"In the next week," answered Wobby. "But that's not all the game. They are working in with a big gang of international thieves, and they are going to smuggle the stuff out of the country by a fishing-smack which is coming into the Swale a week from to-night."

"Then the fishing-smack won't get her cargo!" said Jim.

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THE ST. JIM'S RUNAWAY.

(Continued from page 14.)

seems, from the postmark, to be in Folkestone, in Kent. Do you know any friends he has in that town who can be communicated with?"

"No, sir! Never knew he knew anybody there!"

"Very well! You may go!"

Blake left the study. A couple of minutes later a crowd of juniors had gathered round Jack Blake and the postcard. "Guess where he's gone?" asked Blake.

"He's in Kent!" said Tom. "Folkestone isn't so very far from Greyfriars. Can he have gone to Greyfriars?" Monty Lowther chuckled.

"Depend on' it that's it," he said. "That's where the cheerful ass has butted in. What on earth will they do with him if he has?"

"Any port in a storm, I suppose," said Blake with a grin. "Oh, won't I punch his head when he comes home!"

The juniors went into morning classes. There was a vacant place in the Fourth Form room that day—Arthur Augustus D'Arcy was conspicuous by his absence. There was no news of the absent junior that day, and in all the school, from the Sixth to the smallest fag, there was interest keen and unabated in the St. Jim's runaway!

THE END.

(Look out for next week's grand long school story of the chums of St. Jim's, entitled "GUSSY AT GREYFRIARS!" by Martin Clifford. You will do well to order your GEM well in advance, as there is a growing demand for our wonderful collection of REAL FREE PHOTOGRAPHS.)

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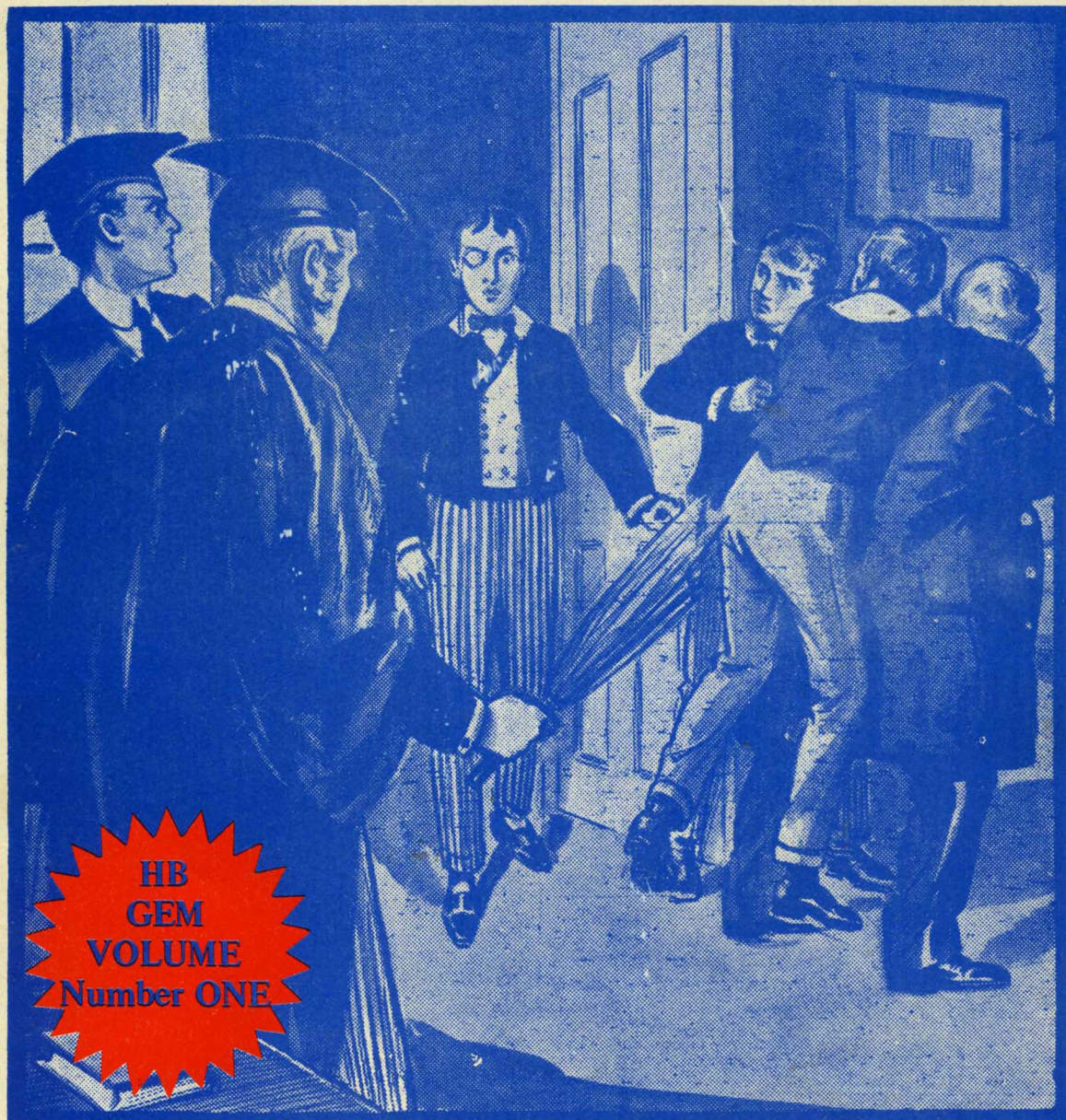


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