

# GUSSY'S LATEST STUNT!



By

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*Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, the genial swell of St. Jim's, is ever and anon getting cranky notions. His newest wheeze—that of reforming the school—is no exception, as you will agree when you have read this humorous, extra-long yarn of the chums of St. Jim's*

## THE FIRST CHAPTER

Missing!

ARTHUR AUGUSTUS D'ARCY adjusted his eyeglass carefully in his noble eye, and gazed round Study No. 6 at St. Jim's.

He gazed silently and severely.

Blake and Herries and Digby did not need telling that something was up. The expression on D'Arcy's face was sufficiently eloquent without words.

His expression, like that of Hamlet's father on the occasion when that old gentleman revisited the glimpses of the moon, was one more of sorrow than of anger.

When Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, the ornament of the Fourth Form, adopted this expression matters were serious.

It was not, perhaps, time for the skies to fall, but certainly it was time for Study 6 to sit up and take notice.

Blake & Co., at least, should have looked serious, if not solemn.

Instead of which they smiled.

They smiled just as if they found something entertaining in the lofty and accusing look on the aristocratic countenance that was gazing at them.

Blake even inquired:

"What's biting you now, Gussy?"

"Weally, Blake——"

"Got a pain anywhere?" asked Herries.

"I have no pain anywhah, Hewwies," answered Arthur Augustus stiffly.

"Only a pane in your eye," remarked Blake, a humorous allusion to the monocle with which Gussy was fixing his study mates.

"Weally, you ass——"

"Well, let's get out for a run before tea," said Blake. "If you've finished your living-picture turn, Gussy——"



"Wats!"

"Anything up, old bean?" yawned Digby.

"Yaas, wathah!"

Arthur Augustus' expression had been more of sorrow than of anger. Now it was more of anger than of sorrow. The frivolity of his study mates was stirring his noble ire.

"I can take a joke, you fellows," he said. "I am accustomed to jokes—genewally in bad taste—in this studay. I am accustomed to the absurd monkey-twicks which you are pleased to call pwactical jokes. But there is a limit."

"Bravo!" exclaimed Blake.

"Bai Jove! What are you sayin' bwavo for, you ass?"

"Only cheering your recitation," said Blake innocently. "You did it quite well. Elocution good, and gestures appropriate and restrained. Bravo!"

"You uttah ass!" roared Arthur Augustus. "You know vewy well that I was not giving a wecitation. I was makin' a remark."

"I stand corrected," said Blake gravely. "I forgot that your remarks were the same length as other fellows' recitations. My mistake."

Arthur Augustus breathed hard.

"I wepeat that I can take a joke," he said. "But there is a limit, and the limit is now weached."

"The limit of your remarks?" asked Blake.

"No!" howled Arthur Augustus.

"My mistake again. I forgot that your remarks have no limit. Look here, you've got some more to say, haven't you, old chap?"

"Yaas, wathah."

"What about saying it while we go out and punt a fcoter till tea-time? You can get finished by the time we come in to tea."

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Herries and Dig, quite entertained by the expression with which Gussy received this suggestion.

Apparently Arthur Augustus did not want to make his remarks to the desert air.

"You sillay chump!" hooted D'Arcy. "Will you listen to a chap? I wepeat that I can take a joke, and I wepeat that the limit is now weached. When it comes to jokin' and waggin' with a fellow's clobbah, it is time to cwy halt."

"It's time to cry halt now?" asked Blake.

"Yaas, wathah."

"HALT!" cried Blake.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You—you—you fwabjous fathead, will you be sewious? I should be sowwy to give you a feahful thwashin', Blake——"

"You would!" agreed Blake cordially. "Frightfully sorry—for yourself, old bean. You'd be quite cut up."

"But who's been joking with your clobber?" asked Digby. "Somebody been putting the cat in your hat-box again? It was Lowther, of the Shell, last time."

"My spwing ovahcoat has been abstwacted," said Arthur Augustus. "My new spwing ovahcoat. You fellows were pleased to make a lot of fwivolous wemarks on the subject, and I have not the slightest doubt that you have hidden my new coat away for a wotten pwactical joke. I demand its westitution on the spot. Othahwise——"

Arthur Augustus paused, leaving to the imaginations of his chums what would happen otherwise.

Blake & Co. grinned.

Gussy's new spring overcoat was well known in the School House at St. Jim's.

New spring overcoats were not, of course, rare. But Gussy's new spring overcoat was a thing by itself—a thing of beauty and a joy for ever—such a thing as might have haunted a tailor in his happiest dreams.

There was no doubt that Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, in that coat, looked a perfect peach.

Well-dressed fellows, like Cardew, of the Fourth, and St. Leger, of the Shell, never succeeded quite so well with their coats.

Gussy had an eye for such things.

Gussy could get a better coat from the tailor at Wayland than any other fellow could get from Bond Street. If the tailor did not know, Gussy knew; in fact, his comrades in No. 6 had told him that he was



wasted at St. Jim's, and that he ought to have been a tailor himself. Certainly Arthur Augustus knew how to dress. Other fellows at St. Jim's were simply clothed; Gussy was dressed.

Time and money were no objects when Gussy was dealing with a matter of such importance. He would spend hours on a half-holiday with his tailor if it was needed to make the garment a success.

Success generally attended his efforts. This particular spring overcoat had been a particular success.

It was the apple of Gussy's eye. Study No. 6 had admired it; they couldn't help that. Still, they jested on the subject. They affected to believe that Gussy had ordered that coat specially to catch the eye of the young lady at the bun-shop. They had pinned a ticket to its back on one occasion, bearing the inscription: "IN THIS STYLE, 1/6." Now that precious coat had been abstracted, and it was not surprising that Arthur Augustus D'Arcy showed signs of excitement—especially when his study mates refused to be serious at such a time.

"My new spring overcoat," went on D'Arcy sternly, "has been abstracted. It has been taken away. I have no doubt whatever that it has been hidden, for the purpose of a silly practical joke. I require the return of that overcoat at once!"

"Gone?" asked Blake.

"Yaas, wathah!"

"It was a spring overcoat?"

"Yaas."

"Well, do you think it has sprung?"

"Wha-at?"

"If it was a spring overcoat, it may have sprung somewhere," argued Blake. "That's the only way I can account for it."

"I do not want any wotten jokes!" roared Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "I want my overcoat."

"You haven't popped it and lost the ticket?" asked Herries.

"Weally, Hewwies——"

"Mrs. Mimms may have given it to the

rag-man in mistake for some old clo'!" suggested Digby brightly.

"You uttah ass!" Arthur Augustus' eyeglass almost bored into his smiling study mates. "If you have taken it for a joke, Blake——"

"Well, I couldn't help that!" urged Blake.

"Then you have done so?"

"Guilty, my lord."

"I will excuse your wewehensible action, Blake, if you will tell me at once where to



"I wepeat——" roared Arthur Augustus. But Blake and Herries and Digby did not wait for the repetition. They scudded out of the study and into the passage. (See Chapter 1.)

find the coat."

Blake stared at him.

"How should I know?" he asked.

"You have admitted that you took it for a joke?"

"Yes; but that was when you had it on," explained Blake. "I took it for a joke—and you were part of the joke."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You see, most fellows take you and your clobber for a joke," said Blake.



"Ha, ha, ha!"

Arthur Augustus breathed hard and deep.

"Did you take my coat from the dormitory?" he demanded.

"Not guilty! Ask Lowther, of the Shell. He may have bagged it. He's the funniest ass at St. Jim's—present company excepted."

"If you give me your word——"

"I've given you more than one word—whole sentences," protested Blake. "Anybody coming out for a run before tea?"

"Yes, rather!"

"I wepeat——" roared Arthur Augustus.

But Blake and Herries and Digby did not wait for the repetition. They scudded along the passage to the stairs and disappeared. Arthur Augustus was left, breathing wrath, and still without a clue to the coat that had vanished.

"Bai Jove!" ejaculated Arthur Augustus.

To join in punting about a footer was, of course, impossible while the fate of that new spring overcoat was still wrapped in mystery. Arthur Augustus did not follow his comrades. He turned his footsteps in the direction of the Shell passage, there to pursue his wrathful inquiries for the missing article. It was quite possible that the misdirected sense of humour of Monty Lowther, of the Shell, was responsible for that missing garment; and, with wrath gleaming behind his eyeglass, the swell of St. Jim's made his way to Tom Merry's study in the Shell.

## THE SECOND CHAPTER

### Skimmy the Extremist!

SKIMPOLE, of the Shell, raised his eyes from the volume he was perusing, and blinked through his large spectacles as his study door opened.

Talbot and Gore came in.

Talbot, of the Shell, looked his usual good-natured and cheery self; George Gore looked unusually good-tempered. Talbot smiled and Gore frowned as they glanced at the study table, which was littered with papers and books.

"Time for tea, Skimmy," said Talbot.

"Shift that rubbish," said Gore.

Skimpole blinked at them.

"Perhaps you fellows would not mind teaing in some other study this time," he suggested. "I am rather busy at the present moment."

"Lines?" asked Talbot.

Skimpole smiled pityingly.

"I should not regard lines as a matter of great importance, my dear Talbot. I am engaged upon the seventieth chapter of my book. It is taking shape at last, and I have fairly commenced."

"Fathead!" said Gore.

"My dear Gore——"

"Cheese it! Shift that rubbish off the table!" growled Gore.

"We'd tea out, Skimmy," said Talbot pacifically, "only I've asked some fellows to tea; and Tom Merry and Manners and Lowther will be here in a few minutes."

"And we're not going to keep them waiting," said Gore. "And I'm not going to wait myself. Shift that silly scribble."

Gore took hold of the table with both hands, as if he intended to shift Skimpole's lucubrations by the simplest method—tilting the table and shooting them off into the fender. Talbot restrained him.

"Hold on, Gore! We really must have the table, Skimmy. Awfully sorry, and all that, but there you are! I'll help you pack up your papers."

Gore snorted, but he gave in to Talbot, as he generally did.

Skimpole was a rather trying study mate. Talbot was always gentle with him, Skimmy being generally regarded as a fellow with a bee in his bonnet. Gore was the reverse of gentle when Talbot was not by. He had no use for a fellow with bats in the belfry. Not that there was any harm in Skimpole. He was quite a nice fellow, and it was not his fault that he was the greatest bore at St. Jim's. Being born a bore, he naturally could not help it. Neither was it his fault that he was the greatest ass in the school or out of it. Asses, like poets, are born, not made.

Skimpole was deeply interested in all kinds of cranky subjects. Had he kept to bug-hunting, he would have found a fellow-feeling among some of the other juniors.



Had he kept to geology, at least Mr. Lathom would have appreciated him. Had he kept to philately, Mr. Linton, his Form-master, would have been one to understand and tolerate. But Skimmy, of the Shell, wasn't content with one thing—or even two or three things. His powerful intellect skidded, as it were, into all sorts of subjects, among them Socialism, Determinism, and other fearsome isms, none of which were understood by anybody else at St. Jim's—if they were understood by Skimpole himself, which was doubtful.

Had Skimpole been as rich as Racke, of the Shell, perhaps Gore would not have objected to the occasional practice of Socialism in the study.

A rich Socialist, who whacked out riches with other fellows, might be popular anywhere.

But Skimpole never had any money—which was, perhaps, one of the reasons why he believed fervently in what he called a redistribution of wealth.

Skimpole had read solid, stodgy volumes, which made other fellows' heads ache simply to look at them.

He had absorbed wonderful theories, and really believed, being young and inexperienced, that there was something in them besides a mere escape of gas. His latest was what he called Extremism; and it was bound to cause trouble for Skimpole at St. Jim's.

Gore was not a good-tempered fellow; but the best-tempered fellow might have been annoyed when his property was treated as common property, on the ground that under Extremism all property would belong to everybody.

If Gore had a pie in the study cupboard, Gore regarded that pie as his pie, and utterly refused to look upon it as a pie belonging to the whole human race; and it was quite useless for Skimmy to explain to



George Gore made one bound to the study cupboard, and hurled open the door. As he and Talbot looked into the interior, they saw that hardly a crumb remained of the handsome spread they had designed. (*See Chapter 2.*)

him that under Extremism all pies would be nationalised.

If Skimmy gave Gore's pie to a tramp, on the grounds of universal brotherhood; or if he ate it, on the ground that it was as much his as Gore's, Gore would be cross.

Skimpole's logical arguments failed to convince him. But, indeed, Skimmy's logic did not satisfy even himself when Gore used one of his mighty volumes to light the study fire. On such occasions as that, Skimpole displayed a quite illogical temper, and his remarks had nothing to do with Extremism.

"You have requested the presence of other parties to a spread in this study, my dear Talbot?" inquired Skimpole.

"Yes, old chap, the fellows from the next study."

"And that is the reason why you desire me to remove my documents from the study table?"



"Just that."

"Then I am happy to assure you that it is quite unnecessary, my dear Talbot," said Skimpole, beaming. "There will not be a spread in this study."

"And why not?" demanded Gore.

"I am probably correct in assuming that the comestibles in the cupboard were designed for the spread to which you refer?" asked Skimpole.

It was one of Skimmy's happy and pleasing ways to talk as if his last meal had been made on a dictionary.

"Yes, ass!" grunted Gore.

"In the circumstances, Gore, the proposed festivity cannot take place. The comestibles are no longer there."

"What?" roared Gore.

George Gore made one bound to the study cupboard, and hurled open the door of it.

He glared into the cupboard.

Like the celebrated Mrs. Hubbard, he found that the cupboard was bare.

Of the handsome spread designed for the entertainment of the Terrible Three, of the Shell, as well as the occupants of the study, hardly a crumb remained.

Gore glared into the study cupboard, crimson with wrath. Even Talbot's good-natured face was clouded.

"What have you done with the tuck, Skimmy?" he asked.

"Scoffed it?" roared Gore.

Skimpole shook his head.

"I have certainly not consumed those comestibles, Gore," he answered. "I should, of course, have had every right to do so, as under Extremism, all tarts, cakes, and bottles of ginger-wine will be nationalised. Nevertheless, I have not scoffed, as you vulgarly put it, the edible articles that were in the cupboard. I have given them away."

"Given away our spread!" gasped Gore.

"Yes, my dear fellow. A man came to the back gate," explained Skimpole. "I regret to say that he was about to be turned empty away, but fortunately I beheld him. Remembering what I had seen in the study cupboard, I lost no time in making it into a bundle——"

"A—a bundle?"

"And, catching up a coat and a scarf—for the man looked cold—I rushed after him. He had gone some little distance, but I caught him up, and gave him the bundle of food, the coat, and the scarf. I was afraid that I should not catch him, but I did so. Was not that very fortunate, my dear fellows?"

Gore did not look as if he thought it fortunate.

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Talbot. "Whose coat did you give away, Skimmy?"

"I really do not know, Talbot. I took the first I found in the first place I looked into."

"And whose scarf?"

"I cannot say. Yours, I think."

"You've given away our spread!" articulated Gore. "You've handed over ten bobs' worth of tuck to a tramp."

"My dear Gore, I trust that you're not about to exhibit ill-mannered excitement and reprehensible ill-temper——"

Skimpole's trust was ill-founded. Gore exhibited both.

He made a jump at Skimpole.

"Hold on!" exclaimed Talbot.

"Rats!" yelled Gore. "Shut up! I'll smash him!"

Crash!

Skimpole went to the floor with a terrific concussion. Gore sprawled over him, punching frantically.

Wild yells rose from Skimpole.

"Yaroooh! Help! Whoop! Leggo! Gerroff! Yooop!" roared Skimpole. "My dear Gore—— Yaroooh! Oooooop!"

Thump! Thump! Thump!

"Yow-ow-ow-ow-ow!"

"Don't kill him, Gore," gasped Talbot.

Thump! Thump! Bump!

"Yaroooh! Grooogh! Whoop!"

Talbot seized Gore by the collar and fairly dragged him off. It really was time. Skimpole, of the Shell, was in a state of utter wreckage.

"Leggo!" roared Gore. "I'm going to smash him, I tell you."

"You have smashed him, I think," gasped Talbot. "Chuck it! Skimpole, you blithering idiot——"

"Yarooogh!"



"Lemme gerrat him!" shrieked Gore.

But Talbot held the infuriated Gore back. There was a tap at the study door, and it opened, and three cheery faces looked in. Tom Merry and Manners and Lowther, of the Shell, smiled.

"Not too early, old beans?" asked Tom.

"Don't let us interrupt the dog-fight," said Monty Lowther.

"We'll look on!" offered Manners.

Gore wrenched himself away from Talbot. But the handsome Shell fellow stood guard over the wreck that was gasping on the carpet, and the enraged Gore could not get at him.

"I'm afraid there's going to be no spread, you chaps," said Talbot apologetically. "Skimpole has given it to a tramp."

"Oh, my hat!"

"I'll smash him!" roared Gore.

"Groogh! My dear Gore— Ooop! Ooo-och!" Skimpole sat up, groping wildly for his spectacles. "Ow! I am somewhat breathless! Grooogh! My dear fellows—mooo-och!"

Tom Merry laughed.

"You fellows tea in my study instead," he suggested. "Lowther's had a remittance, and No. 10 is a land flowing with milk and honey."

Skimpole scrambled up.

"I shall be very pleased to share in the repast also, my dear Merry," he said. "Over tea I will explain to you some of the principles of Extremism——"

"Will you?" grinned Manners.

"Certainly, my dear Manners—I—yar-oooh!" roared Skimpole as Gore suddenly dodged round Talbot and restarted, after the interval as it were.

Talbot and the Terrible Three dragged Gore from the study. The door was slammed on Skimpole. In No. 10, fortunately, there was an excellent spread—and Skimpole, on second thoughts, decided not to join in it. He had had enough of Gore at close quarters. Besides, he had a variety of damages to attend to. Gore had thumped not wisely, but too well. It was quite a long time before Skimmy was able to turn his attention from bumps and bruises, and fix

it once more upon his learned and long-winded lucubrations.

### THE THIRD CHAPTER

#### The Way of the Reformer!

TEA in Tom Merry's study was a very cheery function.

Tom Merry and Manners and Lowther were cheerful and hospitable. Talbot was always agreeable, either as host or guest; and even Gore was restored to good-humour by an excellent spread and the general atmosphere of good-temper.

Tommy Merry talked about games; Manners about his latest photographs; Lowther about the last screaming jest he had compiled for the comic section of "Tom Merry's Weekly." Talbot listened more than he talked, but all that he said was worth hearing, while Gore gave his chief attention to the good things on the table.

Tea was going strong in No. 10, when there came a tap at the door of the study

Cheery conversation ceased.

"Skimmy, I suppose!" murmured Tom Merry.

The captain of the Shell was hospitality itself, but the prospect of having Skimpole to tea was enough to dismay any fellow.

In the conversational line, Skimmy was accustomed to hold the field against all comers. Other fellows could make remarks if they liked, but it never occurred to Skimmy to heed them. Nature had not been kind to Skimmy in the way of athletic gifts, but he was endowed with a chin of unusual activity, and it was seldom idle. The Terrible Three were quite hospitable, and they rather liked old Skimmy, but they did not like being drowned in a flood of oratory.

They gazed at the door with apprehension in their gaze, what time George Gore seized a loaf and took aim, ready to deliver it as soon as the door opened. Gore, as a guest in the study, really had no right to take drastic measures; but he was not bothering about the rights of the matter. He was going to make Skimmy sorry he looked in as soon as the door opened.

It opened.



Whiz!

Crash!

"Yawoooooh!"

"Gussy!" ejaculated Tom Merry.

"Oh!" exclaimed Gore.

It was not Skimpole. It was Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, the ornament of the Fourth Form. Gore's error was excusable, but it was rather unfortunate for Arthur Augustus.

The loaf landed on his handsome waistcoat. It landed there with considerable force. D'Arcy sat down in the doorway with a roar.

"Gussy!" exclaimed Talbot. "You ass, Gore!"

"I thought it was Skimmy."

"Bai Jove! Ow! Wow!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus breathlessly. "You feahful wottahs! What the thump do you mean by buzzin' things at a chap? Ow!"

Tom Merry jumped up.

"Sorry, old man—quite a mistake," he said as he gave the swell of St. Jim's a helping hand to rise.

"I have weceived a feahful shock!" gasped Arthur Augustus. "I have been thwown into quite a fluttah! Ow!"

"Sorry!" grinned Gore. "I thought it was another silly ass."

"Weally, Goah——"

"Trot in, old man," said Manners. "Take a pew, and join in the giddy feast. Jolly glad to see you!"

"Welcome as the flowers in May, old bean," said Monty Lowther.

Arthur Augustus gasped for breath.

"I did not come to tea, you fellows," he said. "I am sowwy to intewwupt, as I see you have visitahs. Ow! I am aftah my coat."

"Your coat?" repeated Tom Merry.

"Yaas, wathah!"

No. 10 Study gazed inquiringly at the swell of St. Jim's.

"My new spwing ovahcoat," explained Gussy. "You fellows have pewwaps noticed it——"

"No perhaps about it," said Monty Lowther. "Who could help noticing it, Gussy?"

"Weally, Lowthah——"

"Anything happened to the coat?" asked Tom Merry, with an expression of the deepest anxiety, though his eyes were twinkling. "Has Herries' dog Towser been at it?"

"No, deah boy. It has been abstwacted. I left it hangin' on a hangah in the dormitow, and it has been taken away—I pwe-sume by some wotten pwactical jokah." Arthur Augustus turned his eyeglass accusingly upon Monty Lowther. "Was it you, Lowthah?"

Monty shook his head.

"Never thought of it," he said regretfully. "I've let the chance go by. Try some other study."

"Of course, I am bound to accept your word, Lowthah; but if it was not you who abstwacted my coat, I weally am at a loss to guess who it may have been."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Gore suddenly.

Arthur Augustus turned his eyeglass coldly upon Gore.

"Do you see anythin' comic in the fact that my new spwing ovahcoat has been taken away by some wotten pwactical jokah, Goah?" he inquired freezingly.

Gore roared again.

"Skimmy! Ha, ha, ha!"

"Wubbish! Skimpole is ewewy othah kind of an ass, but he is not a beastly pwactical jokah."

Gore chuckled spasmodically.

"Skimmy has been at it again," he gurgled. "He gave our spread to a tramp this afternoon, and he mentioned that he had given the chap a coat. I wondered whose coat it was."

"Oh, my hat!" ejaculated Talbot.

Arthur Augustus stood transfixed.

"Gweat Scott! You suggest that Skimpole has given my new spwing ovahcoat to a twamp?"

"I'm jolly sure of it," chortled Gore. "He's given the man a coat—and you can bet that it wasn't his own coat."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the Terrible Three.

"Imposs. ! Skimmy would not be such a bwute—such a—a—a villain! Such a feahful bwigand!" gasped Arthur Augustus.



"Better ask him," said Tom Merry. "It may not be too late to get the coat back, Gussy."

"Oh, cwumbs!"

Arthur Augustus hurried out of the study, leaving Tom Merry & Co. grinning. Arthur Augustus was not grinning. He was crimson with rage as he tore along to Skimpole's study. The repose which stamps the caste of Vere de Vere had quite deserted the swell of St. Jim's.

claimed. "Please go away, D'Arcy, and shut the door quietly."

"You fwabjous ass——"

"You appear somewhat perturbed," remarked Skimpole. "I trust that I have not inadvertently caused this ebullition of



"Yaroooh! Stoppit! Whooop!" yelled Skimpole. Talbot seized Gore by the collar and fairly dragged him off. "Leggo!" roared Gore. "I'm going to smash him, I tell you!" (See Chapter 2.)

He hurled open Skimpole's door without even knocking. Skimpole was seated at the study table, pen in hand, wrinkle in brow, deep in Extremism.

He blinked up irritably at the excited Gussy.

"Dear me! These incessant interruptions are extremely disconcerting when one is engaged in intellectual efforts," he ex-

asperation."

"Where is my coat?"

"Coat?"

"Yaas, wathah!"

"What coat?"

"My coat is missin' fwom the dormitow, where I left it hangin' up. Goah says you have given a coat to a twamp. Have you



given my coat to a twamp, you fwightful ass?"

"I really do not know, D'Arcy. I gave the tramp the first coat that came to hand. Probably it was your coat."

"Bai Jove!"

"But I am sorry to say that I cannot go into the matter now," said Skimpole. "I am, as you observe, busy."

"Did you get it from the Fourth-Form dormitowy, you villain?"

"I hardly remember. Yes, now that I think of it, I remember that it was the Fourth-Form dormitory."

"It was my coat!" shrieked Arthur Augustus.

"No doubt," agreed Skimpole. "But I am somewhat engrossed, at the present moment, in intellectual work——"

"Where is that twamp now?"

"I have not the slightest idea, D'Arcy. He was, I think, proceeding in the direction of Wayland when I overtook him. If you desire to imitate my conduct, D'Arcy, and extend assistance to the down-trodden, undoubtedly you will be able to find some other deserving individual," said Skimpole encouragingly. "It is immaterial whether you find the same tramp or another, I presume."

"I want my coat!" yelled Arthur Augustus.

"I fear that it is too late for that, D'Arcy—it is hours since I saw the tramp. If it is any consolation to you, you may reflect that it was not, as a matter of fact, your coat," explained Skimpole. "Under Extremism, all coats will be nationalised. The present state of affairs is merely temporary."

"You burblin' chump——"

"My dear D'Arcy, if you are still dissatisfied, I will explain the first principles of Extremism to you with pleasure," said Skimpole, laying down his pen. "Now, to begin at the beginning, suppose there were two men on an island——"

Arthur Augustus did not seem in a mood to listen to the expounding of the first principles of Extremism. He refused for a moment to suppose that there were two men

on an island. He declined to take into consideration the fact that under Extremism all coats—even a fellow's new spring coat—would be nationalised. He jumped at Skimpole.

Thump!

Arthur Augustus' knuckles smote Skimpole on the nose.

There was a wild yell from the St. Jim's Extremist, and he went backwards over his chair with a crash.

Arthur Augustus was upon him like a terrier upon a rat.

Thump! Thump! Thump!

Skimpole's unfortunate nose had already had some punishment. Now it had some more. There was no doubt that the path of a social reformer at St. Jim's was beset with thorns, and that a schoolboy Extremist was likely to collect more kicks than halfpence. Thump! Thump! Thump! In a state of wild excitement and wrath, Arthur Augustus dealt with Skimpole's nose as if he mistook it for a punch-ball. Wild and fearful yells came from the hapless Skimmy. Thump! Thump! Thump!

On his own principles, Skimmy ought not to have objected, for he was bound to admit that his nose was as much D'Arcy's as his own, and D'Arcy had a right to punch his own property; moreover, under Extremism, it was probable that all noses would be nationalised.

But Skimpole did object. Logic failed him in the circumstances. Skimpole objected at the top of his voice, and hit out frantically with his bony hands. But his resistance availed him nothing. Arthur Augustus punched and pommelled and pounded till he was quite tired and out of breath. By that time, Skimpole was more than tired.

"There, you cheekay wottah!" gasped Arthur Augustus.

"Yow-ow-ow-ow!"

"If I do not get that coat back, I will give you anothah feahful thwashin'!"

"Yow-ow-ow!"

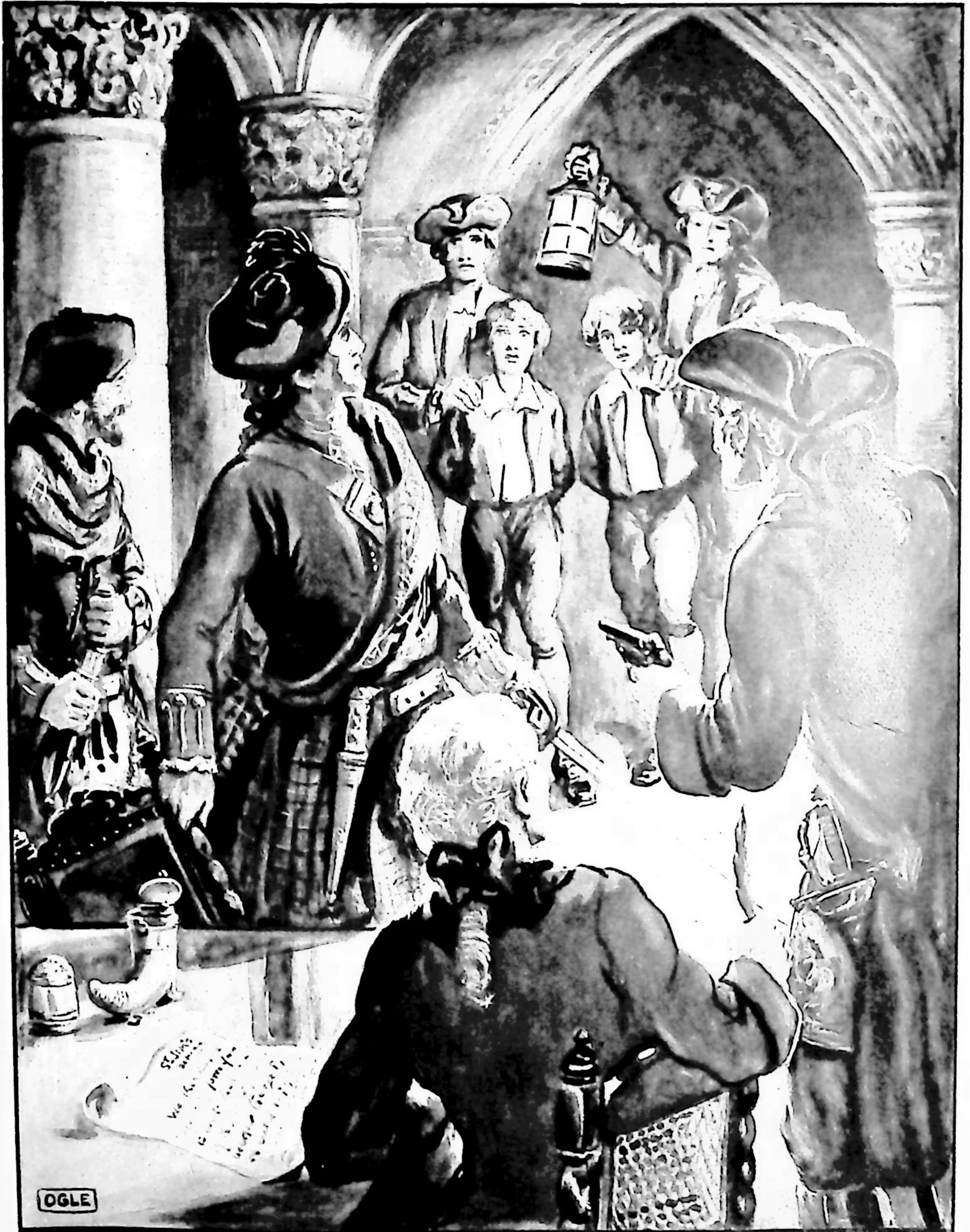
"You uttah wapscallion!"

"Wow! Wow!"

"You feahful wottah!"



# Jacobite Conspirators at St. Jim's!



To face page 49

Two Schoolboys Surprise a Jacobite Meeting in the Vaults of St. Jim's.



## For "Bonnie Prince Charlie"

**E**VEN at St. Jim's, in the peaceful heart of Sussex, untouched by the political intrigues that were common in the reign of George II, the news leaked out that "Bonnie Prince Charlie," or the Young Pretender, had landed at Moidart, on July 25th, 1745, and had raised his standard.

All over the country "Bonnie Prince Charlie's" faithful agents were holding meetings in secret, and at St. Jim's, rumours were rife that the neighbourhood sheltered a number of these Jacobite conspirators. These tales were discredited by those in authority, yet, even so, two adventurous juniors of the Fourth Form were not satisfied. Acting more on imagination than information, these two juniors, Ronald McSkeil and Jamie Macgregor, set out from their dormitory one night in September to explore the old vaults underneath the school. But it was not before the last torch had gutted out and the two chums found themselves in inky darkness that they heard a murmur of voices from somewhere near at hand. With beating hearts, they located the vault from which the voices came, and Macgregor, more venturesome than his companion, peered in. What he saw brought a low cry of excitement from his lips; for seated round a polished oak table were half a dozen kilted men, well known in the district. That it was a meeting of Jacobite conspirators young Macgregor was assured when he had listened to the conversation for a few moments, and, in his eagerness, he showed more of himself than was wise. One of the Jacobites, hearing a slight scuffle, wheeled sharply, just in time to see the head of a boy disappear. In a moment he and a companion had darted forward, and before either Macgregor or McSkeil could flee they were seized and, with their arms pinioned behind them, marched back into the vault. But fortunately, upon the boys proving by their names—and their accents—that they were Scottish to the backbone, and, moreover, loyal to the cause of Bonnie Prince Charlie, they were allowed to go free, after swearing solemnly that they would not betray the secret.

"Groogh!"

Skimpole sprawled and yelled and gasped. Even Gussy's righteous wrath was a little appeased as he beheld the state of wreckage to which he had reduced the social reformer of St. Jim's. He quitted the study and slammed the door after him, leaving Skimpole sitting on the floor, holding his nose with both hands, with his brain—such as it was—in a whirl.

### THE FOURTH CHAPTER

#### Gussy Sees the Light!

**T**OM MERRY & Co. chuckled.

Blake & Co. chortled.

Figgins & Co., of the New House, seemed equally tickled.

To everyone but Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, the affair of that new spring overcoat seemed no end of a jest.

For two or three days, Gussy made wild efforts to trace the tramp to whom Skimpole had so generously presented that new spring overcoat.

His efforts were fruitless.

The tramp had vanished—likewise the coat. It was doubtful whether the tramp had gone away wearing that coat—extremely unlikely that he had been able to get into it. It was more likely that he had sold it or pawned it. But even Gussy did not undertake a search of all the second-hand clothes shops and pawnbroker's shops in Sussex. The tramp was gone, and the coat was gone—gone from his gaze like a beautiful dream. Arthur Augustus, like Rachel of ancient times, mourned for that which was lost, and could not be comforted.

But Skimpole, in point of fact, was more in need of comfort than Gussy. Gussy, the best-tempered fellow in the House, had always been kind and tolerant to Skimmy, often standing between that weird youth and raggings. Now he was neither kind nor tolerant. Gussy was a forgiving fellow; he could have forgiven almost anything, but the loss of his new spring overcoat was beyond forgiveness. He had promised Skimpole another thrashing if the coat was not recovered. He kept his word—more than kept it. He never saw Skimpole in these days without either kicking him or shaking him, or at least slanging him.



The coat was not only valuable, it was irreplaceable. Lord Eastwood, Gussy's noble pater, had groused considerably over a bill for twelve guineas for that coat. That his lordship would pay another bill of the same amount for a new coat that term was not to be thought of. The best-dressed fellow at St. Jim's had to wear an old coat, while his beautiful new coat reposed on the shelf of some unknown pawn-shop. No wonder he kicked Skimpole, and that his kicks were frequent and painful and free. The wonder was that he did not slaughter Skimpole outright.

All the Lower School chuckled over the matter, School House and New House alike. They seemed to see something comic in the episode—which was entirely lost on Arthur Augustus.

Baggy Trimble, whose habit of listening at keyholes was heartily deplored by the juniors, reported breathlessly that he had just overheard "Old Lathom" telling "Old Linton" about it in Masters' Common-room, and that they seemed to be regarding it as a huge joke. Baggy told that item of news quite breathlessly to Tom Merry & Co., but he departed still more breathlessly when Tom and his chums began to dribble him along the passage. Trimble's news may or may not have been correct, but Tom Merry & Co. did not approve of the fat junior's method of acquiring it.

But if the masters did hear of Gussy's spring overcoat, they certainly took no official steps in the matter—not even when Mr. Lathom encountered Arthur Augustus chasing after Skimpole with wrath and fury in his eyes did he interfere.

Skimpole's career in these days was one of hectic excitement. He watched warily for D'Arcy and dodged him. But he could not always dodge. Skimpole's big spectacles gave him a look of learned owliness, but did not seem to assist his vision very much. Often he did not see D'Arcy till the application of an elegant boot warned him that the swell of St. Jim's was in the offing.

It was unfortunate that Skimpole was not a fighting man. His powerful intellect—so powerful that it looked like bulging out of

his forehead in great bumps—was chockful of knowledge on all sorts of abstruse subjects. But his limbs were thin and bony, his muscles flabby. Fags in the Third could have licked Skimpole had he been considered worth the trouble of licking. A powerful intellect, choked up with knowledge, was of absolutely no use against boot leather. Intellectually, Skimpole would have undertaken to knock Gussy out hopelessly. Physically, he had not the ghost of a chance. So the career of kicker and kickee went on, and many suns went down on the wrath of Arthur Augustus, and rose on it still unabated.

Probably it was this painful state of affairs that put into Skimpole's powerful brain the great idea of making an earnest effort to convert Arthur Augustus to Extremism. Skimmy was growing very tired of being kicked, while D'Arcy, on the other hand, seemed to derive new vigour from the exercise. Leaflets and pamphlets began to make a regular appearance in Study No. 6, slipped under the door, or left on the study table when the owners of the study were absent.

Blake & Co. did not mind. They found this literature useful for lighting the study fire.

Certainly they did not think of reading it. If there was anything in it, which they doubted, they were willing to leave it there.

Most of this literature was the work of a young man in Wayland whose name was Giggs, who was a fervent and fervid young man, and wore a red necktie, and rode a bicycle which was painted red, as an advertisement of his opinions.

Young Mr. Giggs held open-air meetings in the market-place at Wayland, and poured forth floods of oratory, and lived in hopes of becoming a great Extremist leader. Other fellows had done well in that line, and Mr. Giggs did not see why he should not do equally well. To Skimpole, of the Shell, the voice of Giggs was even as the voice of a prophet.

Mr. Giggs' pamphlets upon Extremism, printed by subscription, circulated all over Wayland and Rylcombe, and Skimpole had



introduced this lurid literature into St. Jim's. And so it came to pass one afternoon that Blake, looking into Study No. 6 to call D'Arcy out to games practice, found that elegant youth seated in the study armchair, with a pamphlet in his hands, which he was perusing with deep interest.

"Come on, slacker!" called out Blake.

D'Arcy glanced up.

"I am weadin', deah boy."

"Games practice, fathead."

"Nevah mind games pwactice now, Blake. I have been thinkin'," said the swell of St. Jim's seriously.

"Draw it mild!" said Blake incredulously.

"Pway do not make wotten jokes, deah boy. I have made a vewy wemarkable discovewy," said Arthur Augustus. "There is somethin' in Extwemism, Blake."

"Lots in it if a fellow knows how to get at it," agreed Blake. "Look at that chap Giggs, in Wayland. He never works at his trade now, but lives entirely on his chin."

"I do not mean that, you ass. We have laughed at Skimpole," said Arthur Augustus, "but it appeahs to me, now that I have looked into the mattah, that old Skimmay was wight all the time."

"Oh, my hat!" ejaculated Blake.

He stared at his noble chum.

"You've been thinking?" he asked.

"Yaas, wathah!"

"That's what's done it," said Blake. "With a brain like yours, Gussy, you shouldn't do it. Something was bound to happen."

"Wats! I have thought the mattah out vewy earnestly," said Arthur Augustus. "The Extwemists are wight, Blake."

"Great Scott!"

"Look at it!" said Arthur Augustus. "People are all born equal——"

"Are they?" ejaculated Blake.

"Yaas, wathah! It stands to weason."

"If it stands to reason in that style, old bean, it had better sit down to reason," said Blake, shaking his head. "Mean to say that one fellow is born as good a footballer as another?"

"I shall have to think that out, deah boy."

"Not now," chuckled Blake. "Games practice now."

"I have no time for games pwactice this aftahnoon, Blake."

"You'll find some, old chap. This way!"

"Yawwooh!"

Blake and Gussy waltzed out of the study together. Arthur Augustus protested all the way to the changing-room. But though, on his new theories, all individuals were equal, Gussy did not seem quite equal to Blake in weight and muscle, and he arrived at the changing-room in a breathless state.

## THE FIFTH CHAPTER

### Gussy the Crank I

SKIMPOLE had done it.

It was all Skimpole's fault. Blake & Co. agreed upon that.

They kicked Skimpole.

They would have kicked Arthur Augustus D'Arcy also if it would have done him any good.

They argued with him, but they argued in vain. Arthur Augustus had imbibed a new belief, and argument was wasted on him.

Arthur Augustus was an Extremist; at all events, he fancied that he was.

Other fellows, when they heard of it, agreed that it was hard on Study No. 6. Hitherto, Skimpole, of the Shell, had been the only crank at St. Jim's. Now there was another, and he was a member of that celebrated study, No. 6 in the Fourth.

It was true that Gussy was not taken with much seriousness. But he took himself very seriously indeed.

Extremism, like many another "ism," appealed to the generous heart and the unreflecting head, and Gussy was gifted with both.

To the young and inexperienced, it seems so easy to make a bad old world better by talking and passing laws. They did not realise that the defects in our institutions are due to the defects of human nature, and can be mended only by human nature bettering itself—every man striving his hardest to do what is right. And the way does not lie through law-making, but by the study and practice of Christian charity



and human kindness of heart. Every man who helps a lame dog over a stile is doing more to improve the world than all the orators that ever orated.

These considerations did not occur to Gussy. His noble intellect had room for only one idea at a time.

The jargon of the pamphlets on Extremism jumbled in his aristocratic intellect like peas in soup.

Gussy wanted to know why should the Head or a Form-master tell a fellow to bend over when a fellow wasn't allowed to order the Head or any other master to bend over?

Why should he, the noble Gussy himself, ride a twenty-guinea bicycle when Mr. Giggs, for example, rode an old machine that was known at a distance, not only by its red paint but by the clinking of its ancient parts?

For Gussy was unique in his Extremism, as in everything else. He applied it to himself and his own property.

Skimpole certainly was prepared to give things away, but Skimmy had nothing to give. Gussy was prepared to give things away, and he had lots of things to give.

It was obvious that, unless his friends kept an eye on him, Gussy's Extremism would become something more than a joke—if it lasted.

Whatever Gussy did, he was bound to be the one and only. Now that he was an Extremist, he looked like making history in that "ism." For Gussy was a sincere and earnest youth; the same earnestness that he had hitherto devoted to the colour of his tie, or the cut of his overcoat, was now devoted to his new beliefs. He had no doubt that Mr. Giggs would have shared his dinner with the first comer, and handed his bicycle to the second comer, and his coat and boots to the third comer. The poet tells us that simple faith is better than Norman blood. Gussy had both, and Gussy was unique.

If the Lower School of St. Jim's had been tickled by the episode of Gussy's new overcoat, they were tickled to death by his new stunt.

Wally, of the Third, Gussy's younger brother, heard of it and gasped. He came along to Study No. 6 to inquire, and found that it was so. He brought Levison minor and Manners minor with him, and the three fags listened unto Gussy expounding the new truths he had discovered. They listened attentively, and then, at a sign from Wally, the trio held out their hands.

"Whack it out!" said Wally, of the Third.

"Weally, Wally——"

"You've had your allowance?"

"Yaas, but——"

"Whack it out. Why should you bloated profiteers in the Fourth have larger allowances than us down-trodden masses in the Third?" demanded Wally. "Shell out, old bean!"

"Shell out!" said Manners minor.

"Shell out!" grinned Levison minor.

Whether Gussy would have shelled out or not remained an unsettled question, for Blake & Co. fortunately arrived at the study just then and kicked out the three fags, utterly regardless of the brotherhood of man and the rights of the down-trodden fags.

Trimble, of the Fourth, heard of Gussy's conversion to Extremism with many fat chuckles, but with considerable hopes. Trimble often borrowed shillings and half-crowns of Gussy, who was too delicate to remind him of the debts. Not that reminding Trimble would have served any useful purpose. Baggy was never known to liquidate a debt, reminded or unreminded. Now it seemed to Baggy Trimble that where he had only gleaned before he was going to gather in a harvest. Instead of asking Gussy to oblige him with a half-crown till the end of the week, Baggy asked him to share out what he had in his pockets. He asked him in the presence of a dozen grinning fellows, who watched Gussy with great interest.

Arthur Augustus seemed lost in thought for some moments, and then he dived his hand into his pocket. Whereupon his friends intervened, and before the sharing-out could proceed they seized Baggy Trimble, bumped him on the floor, and



kicked him in unison, and Trimble departed yelling, and as impecunious as ever.

It was evident that Gussy's friends would have plenty to do so long as Gussy remained an Extremist.

Fortunately, there were few fellows like Trimble at St. Jim's; nevertheless, had Gussy been allowed to carry out his new wheeze unhindered, he would soon have been on his noble uppers.

Last, but not least, Gussy developed a red necktie.

This cost him more than parting with filthy lucre would have done. A red necktie did not suit his complexion.

It was as a sign of faith, however, that Gussy sported it.

Oddly enough, he did not consort much with Skimpole, of the Shell, who had succeeded in opening his noble eyes to the light. He left off kicking Skimmy now that he was convinced that Skimmy had acted rightly in giving away his new spring overcoat. But Skimpole was as great a bore as ever, and, though a firm believer in equality, he was never known to give any other fellow an equal share in the conversation. Gussy approved now of the remarkable ideas of the long-winded Skimmy, but he still found him long-winded, and long-windedness bored him as much as of old.

The Fourth-Form extremist was the victim of many jests.

Cardew, of the Fourth, took away his trousers one morning, on the ground that he had as much right to them as Gussy, and that under Extremism all trousers would be nationalised.



Thump! Arthur Augustus' knuckles smote Skimpole on the nose. There was a wild yell from the St. Jim's Extremist, and he went backwards over his chair with a crash. (See Chapter 3.)

Blake & Co. rescued the trousers, and saved Gussy from appearing at breakfast in the state of a South Sea Islander.

But when Trimble bagged his best waistcoat it was gone for good. When the waistcoat was rescued, it was found burst up the back and all the buttons gone.

But even the fate of the most beautiful waistcoat at St. Jim's did not deter Gussy. And his friends could only watch over him faithfully, consoled for the trouble he was giving them by the fact that Gussy the Extremist added considerably to the gaiety of existence at St. Jim's.

## THE SIXTH CHAPTER

Why?

"GENTLEMEN, chaps, and fellows——"

"Hear, hear!"

"Go it, Gussy!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"



It was a meeting in Tom Merry's study. The study was crowded. The Terrible Three were there, and Blake & Co. were there, and Figgins & Co., from the New House; and Talbot, of the Shell, and Cardew and Levison and Clive, and several other fellows. Gussy was to address the meeting and open a discussion on the topic, "Is Extremism Sound?" Tom Merry & Co. had agreed to give Gussy a hearing, and the meeting was the result, though it is much to be feared that Gussy's hearers met in a spirit of hilarity, with the intention of pulling Gussy's noble leg.

Fellows were crowded round the walls of the study, and on a chair in the centre of the room stood Gussy, somewhat in the style of Mr. Giggs in the market-place at Wayland. Gussy's noble face was deeply serious, and looked all the more so because it was the only serious face in the study. Deep in great thoughts, Gussy had not even noticed that a cord was attached to the leg of the chair which formed his rostrum, and that the other end of the cord was in the hand of that incorrigible practical joker, Monty Lowther, of the Shell. Gussy mounted on the chair to address the meeting, and Lowther for the present held his hand—and the cord. All the other fellows were aware of the peril in which the orator stood, and they smiled cheerily.

"Gentlemen, I am about to address you in a few well-chosen words," announced Arthur Augustus.

"Never mind about the well-chosen," suggested Cardew. "Stick to the few."

"Weally, Cardew——"

"Order!"

"I twust to open your minds on this gweat subject," said Arthur Augustus. "The question before the meetin' is: 'Is Extwemism Sound?'"

"It is—it are!" said Monty Lowther. "Sound—merely that, and nothing more."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I do not mean sound in that sense, Lowthah. Look awound you, and what do you see?"

"The walls of the study," said Herries.

"I do not mean that, Hewwies. I mean, look awound you in a largah sense. On the one hand, the down-twodden masses; on the othah hand, the bloated millionaire, woll-in' in gold on the tesselated floor of his marble palace."

"Oh, my hat!"

"Why should such things be?" demanded Arthur Augustus warmly.

"Echo answers, 'Why?'" chuckled Tom Merry.

"Why should St. Jim's fellows—us, f'win-stance—study Latin while Toby cleans the knives below stairs?"

"Because Toby has all the luck," said Cardew gravely. "Some fellows are born lucky, and Toby is one of them."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Weally, you ass——"

"Go it, Gussy!" said Blake encouragingly. "We're only giving you a few minutes. Make the most of them."

"Weally, Blake——"

"May I ask a question?" said Monty Lowther meekly.

"Yaas, wathah, deah boy!"

"Why," said Lowther gravely—"why should Gussy be a bigger ass than any other gentleman present? Every fellow has a right to be equally asinine; yet here is Gussy prancing off with the whole bag of tricks."

"You sillay ass!" roared Arthur Augustus.

"Why," continued Lowther, "should Gussy have more water on the brain than any other fellow at St. Jim's? Water is the common property of mankind——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I pause for a reply," said Lowther.

"I wegard you as an uttah ass, Lowthah. I will pwoceed with my wemarks. Where was I, you fellows?"

"On the chair, with your mouth open," said Blake.

"You ass, I mean where was I in my speech?"

"Nearly at the end."

"Wats! I was only just beginnin'——"

"Your mistake. You were ending. Gentlemen," said Blake, "equality being



the order of the day, why should Gussy be standing on that chair, instead of that chair standing on Gussy?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I suggest setting that matter right——"

"Hear, hear!"

"You sillay ass!" shrieked Arthur Augustus. "I wepeat—I tell you—I say—— Yawoooooooooooooop!"

The orator did not really intend to say "Yaroop." He said it involuntarily as Monty Lowther pulled the cord attached to the leg of the chair.

The chair departed suddenly from underneath Gussy, and there was a bump in Tom Merry's study.

"Oh, cwumbs!"

Gussy sat dizzily on the floor.

"Oh, deah! Ow! Wow! You fwightful asses! Gwoooogh! Wow!"

Blake lifted the chair and stood it on Gussy, amid yells of laughter from the other juniors. The chair was a circular cane-seated one, with a rail round the legs of it, and it fitted nicely over Gussy's noble head.

Leaving the St. Jim's orator thus crowned, the audience departed from the study, chortling.

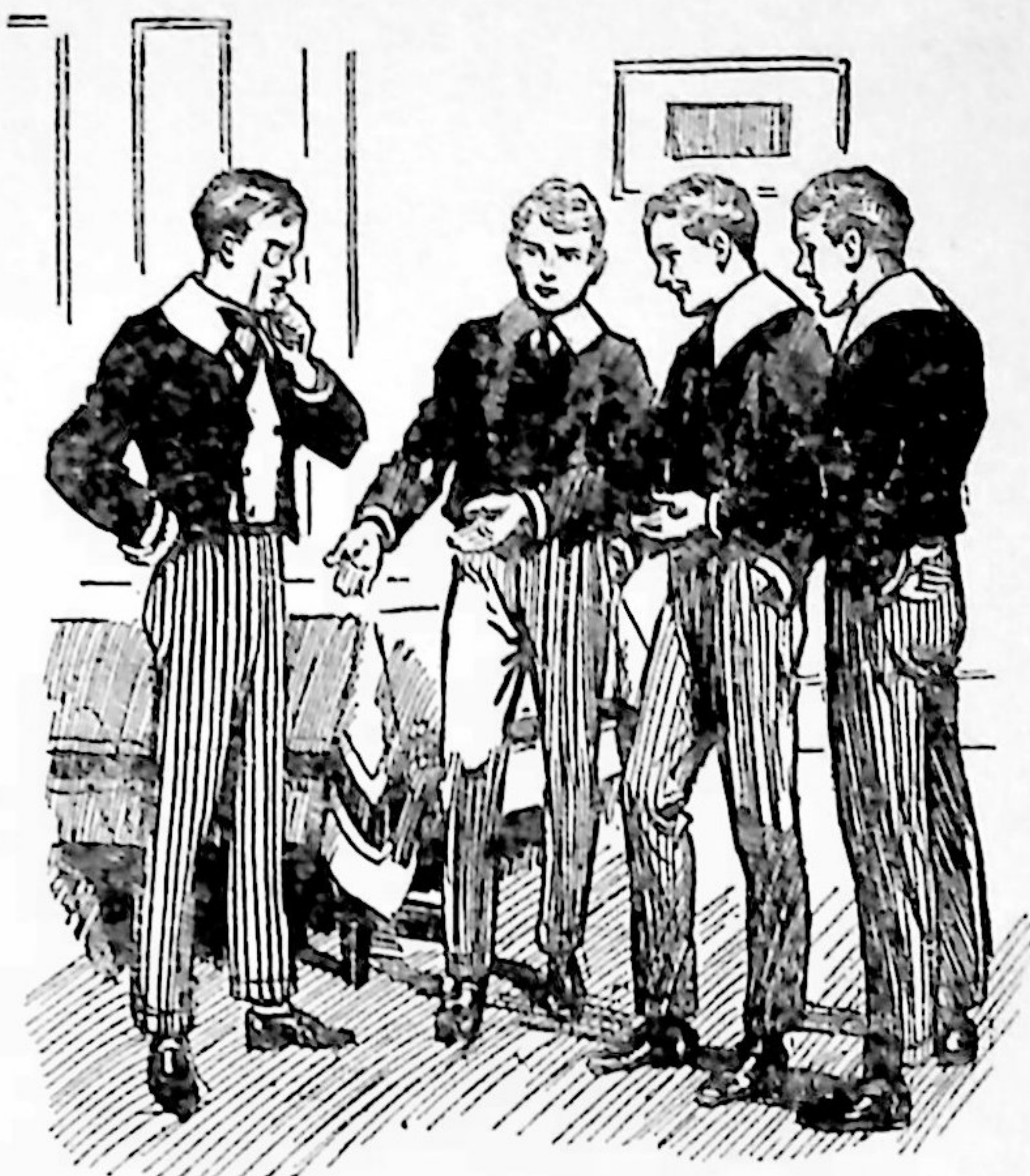
Gussy had been eloquent while he was standing on the chair, but he was still more eloquent while the chair was standing on him. His voice followed Tom Merry & Co. down the passage in tones of ferocious wrath.

When Gussy had extracted himself from the chair, he was not thinking of human brotherhood or the rights of man. He was thinking of vengeance. But by the time he had extracted himself, fortunately, some minutes had elapsed, and by that time the audience in Tom Merry's study had elapsed also.

## THE SEVENTH CHAPTER

### Gussy's Progress I

THERE was a perceptible coldness between Arthur Augustus and his chums after the meeting in Tom Merry's study. It had



Wally D'Arcy, Levison minor and Manners minor listened attentively to Gussy expounding the new truths he had discovered. Then, at a sign from Wally, the trio held out their hands. "Whack it out! Shell out!" cried the Third Formers. (See Chapter 5.)

dawned upon Gussy's noble brain that the meeting had not gathered to hear words of wisdom falling like pearls from his lips, but to pull his aristocratic leg. They had pulled his leg—not to mention the leg of the chair on which he had mounted to address the meeting. Gussy was a forgiving fellow—he had even forgiven, in the light of his new opinions, the incident of his new spring overcoat. But how could an earnest fellow, seeking to spread the light in dark places, forgive such frivolous tricks as these on the part of the unenlightened? Gussy was offended.

In Study No. 6 there was, for a time, a rest from Extremism. In Tom Merry's study there was a rest. Arthur Augustus gave his old friends the go-by for a time, and spent many of his leisure hours in other studies, and over in the New House. Spreading the light in the New House, however, was not much of a success. Figgins & Co. chuckled over Gussy and his new



wheeze. They willingly admitted some points—such as that juniors had as much right really as seniors to walk on the Sixth-Form green. But that Third-Form fags had any rights in the Fourth-Form passage they refused to admit for a moment. That the Fourth was every whit as good as the Sixth they freely admitted; that the Third was as good as the Fourth they regarded as a ludicrous suggestion.

This sort of difficulty cropped up everywhere in the path of the St. Jim's reformer.

He talked to the Head's gardener, and found that gentleman quite prepared to believe that a combination of injustice with sheer chance made his position in life lower than the headmaster's. But the still lower position of the man whom the gardener employed to clean the lawn-mower was not, the gardener thought, due to injustice or chance; it was fixed in the laws of nature. When Gussy found the two of them together, and addressed them both as if they stood upon an equal footing, the gardener was extremely offended, and told Master D'Arcy that juniors were not allowed in the Head's garden.

Taggles, the porter, listened to the voice of the charmer with amazement at first, then with amusement, and then with some attention and interest. That he was a superior sort of man, only prevented by ill-luck from rising to great heights, Taggles had long been convinced. For a "nob" like Arthur Augustus to recognise that he was, in actual worth, the equal of any man at St. Jim's was grateful and comforting to Taggles. But when he learned that the stable-boy was equal to himself on the same theory, Taggles snorted with contempt, and requested Master D'Arcy not to talk dratted nonsense in his lodge.

Undoubtedly it was discouraging to a zealous reformer.

Arthur Augustus was surprised to find that there was a general willingness to level down to one's own level, but a general objection to levelling down an inch further.

Arthur Augustus strolled into the village grocer's one day and talked to Mr. Sands. Mr. Sands was rather entertained, but not

at all displeased, to learn that he was entitled to be treated with the same respect as a duke or an archbishop. But when he learned that he was bound to treat his boy Grimes with the same respect, Mr. Sands laughed very heartily.

Grimes could see it. He saw it very clearly, and agreed whole-heartedly with Gussy. But Grimes rather looked down on the fishmonger's boy. Nothing could convince him that a fishmonger's boy was equal to a grocer's boy.

Gussy did not tackle the fishmonger's boy; but had he done so, he would probably have found that the fishmonger's boy looked down on somebody else.

It was disheartening.

But Gussy was a stickler. Having seen the light, he felt that it was his duty to spread it.

Hitherto, Skimpole, of the Shell, had been the only crank in the school, and the voice of Skimpole was as a voice crying in the wilderness. Now Gussy's voice was added.

He tried Racke, of the Shell. Racke was a very unpleasant fellow, and Gussy did not like him. He disliked him, not because he was the son of a profiteer, but because he was very unpleasant, and had unpleasant and shady ways. But clearly it was not Aubrey Racke's fault that he was unpleasant. Obviously he had been born unpleasant.

That must have been the case, for Racke simply could not have cultivated so much unpleasantness by his own efforts. So Gussy decided to take up Racke. Racke showed some willingness to be taken up by Lord Eastwood's son till Gussy explained how he regarded it as his duty to overlook the fact that Aubrey was a snob and a black-guard, and a rotter generally. To Gussy's surprise, Racke hit him on the nose, and the friendship ceased almost before it had begun.

Only in Skimpole, of the Shell, could Gussy find a kindred spirit, and unfortunately he could not stand Skimpole, of the Shell.

There was no doubt now, Gussy considered, that Skimmy's weird opinions were



well founded. But there was still less doubt that Skimmy was a long-winded bore.

During these days it was noticeable that Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, formerly the best-dressed fellow at St. Jim's, was growing shabby.

His friends could not always be watching over him.

Baggy Trimble openly wore Gussy's best boots; Mellish, of the Fourth, had annexed his best trousers. Chowle came over from the New House to take away Gussy's Sunday tepper.

At St. Jim's, as at most public schools, there was a good deal of Communism in personal property. A fellow who could not find his own football boots put on the first boots that came to hand if they fitted him. A fellow whose hat was upstairs put on any hat that was downstairs. A fellow whose hat was on another fellow's head naturally annexed a hat belonging to some other fellow. Fellows sometimes kicked up a shindy about it, but generally matters sorted themselves out in a more or less satisfactory manner.

Arthur Augustus had often strenuously objected to the whole thing. His clothes were not as other fellows' clothes. It did not matter much if Blake wore Dig's jacket, or Dig wore Herries' boots. But Gussy's jacket fitted him like a glove, and it lost that beautiful fit if it was stretched over a broader fellow's shoulders. He objected to ink-spots on his neckties, and grease-spots on his waistcoats, and mud on his bags.

Now all this was changed.

All property being the common property of all, according to Gussy's new opinions, he could scarcely object to the borrowing of his things, or to their permanent annexation.

When the fellow who possessed the best and most extensive wardrobe in the Form ceased to object to borrowing and annexation, obviously his things were not likely to be left long intact.

It was really fortunate for Gussy that he had some old clothes which nobody wanted to borrow, or he might have been reduced to the state of our original parents.

One article, however, was left alone. That was his red necktie. Nobody wanted to borrow that.

But destiny descended even on the red necktie. Gussy had worn it for about a week when his Form-master, Mr. Lathom, awoke to the fact that he was wearing it. One morning in class Mr. Lathom blinked at it over his spectacles.

"D'Arcy!"

"Yaas, sir!" said Arthur Augustus.

Gussy still addressed his Form-master as "sir," in spite of equality and the rights of man. His manners were better than his noble intellect.

"You are wearing a brightly-coloured necktie, D'Arcy."

"A wed one, sir," said Gussy.

Mr. Lathom blinked at him, while the Fourth Form grinned. The master of the Fourth did not know that the red necktie was an indication of advanced opinions. He regarded it simply as bad taste.

"You are well aware, D'Arcy, that St. Jim's boys are expected to dress quietly," said Mr. Lathom. "You should not wear such a gaudy tie, D'Arcy."

"Weally, sir——"

"Go and change it immediately."

"As a mattah of fact, sir——"

"You are wasting time, D'Arcy. Go and change your tie at once, and do not let me see you again in such a thing!"

Mr. Lathom turned away.

Slowly Arthur Augustus left the Form-room. Now was the time, really, to explain to Mr. Lathom that he had no right to give such an order—that, according to the rights of man and so forth, Gussy was as much entitled to give orders in the Form-room as any Form-master. But Gussy did not explain that to Mr. Lathom. He felt that Mr. Lathom would not understand. He came back to the Form-room minus the red necktie.

That afternoon, Gussy was going down to Rylcombe, and it was raining. Gussy was putting up his umbrella when Gore, of the Shell, came along. Gore also was going out.



"Give me my umbrella, please," said Gore.

Arthur Augustus looked at him.

"You are makin' a mistake, Goah, deah boy. This is my umbwellah," he said mildly.

Gore chuckled.

"Won't all umbrellas be nationalised under Extremism?" he demanded.

"Yaas, wathah!"

"And isn't the present state of affairs founded on injustice, and merely temporary?"

"Yaas."

"Then how do you make out that that is your umbrella. I'd like to know?"

"Bai Jove!"

"Hand it over," said Gore. "It's common property, old bean, and I claim it."

"Yaas, but——" D'Arcy was struck by a bright idea. "It is twue that all umbrellas are common pwopahty, Goah, but I claim it, too. See?"

"Then we've got equal rights to it?" asked Gore.

"Yaas; and my wight bein' as good as yours, I'm keepin' it," said Arthur Augustus victoriously.

Gore grinned.

"When two fellows with equal rights claim the same property, there's only one way of settling it," he remarked.

And, with a sudden frontal attack, Gore up-ended the swell of St. Jim's, grasped the umbrella, and walked off with it.

"Bai Jove!" gasped Arthur Augustus as he sat and gazed after Gore's retreating figure.

Undoubtedly the path of a reformer was set with thorns.

## THE EIGHTH CHAPTER

### Below Stairs!

'U M!' said Toby dubiously.

In the first place, Toby didn't like fellows to butt into the boot-room.

The boot-room was Toby's own province, where he was monarch of all he surveyed.

There Toby gave orders to Charley, the boot-boy, and Toby liked giving orders to Charley. Toby received so many orders

from all sorts of people that it was a pleasant relief to him to pass some of them on. Toby lived in hopes of becoming, some day, a butler, and giving orders to a whole swarm of menials.

If Mrs. Mimms or the Head's butler or the cook slanged Toby, Toby slanged Charley, and Charley, having no one to slang, took it out of the cat.

This was all very wrong, but there was a lot of human nature in it, and it was doubtful whether Gussy's new opinions, introduced into the boot-room, would make much difference to the human nature there. But Gussy could only do his best.

Gussy, sitting on a chair that Toby had dusted for him, was expounding Extremism. Toby listened dubiously.

Nothing, however, is so convincing as earnestness. A fellow who really believes what he says will always make converts. Besides, such a tale from the swell of St. Jim's was pleasant to the ears of Toby. Fortunately, Charley was not in the boot-room just then, or Gussy would certainly have put his noble foot in it again.

"You see, deah boy, we are all equal," Arthur Augustus explained patiently. "Some of us have accidental advantages, and some of us haven't. That is the only difference."

"'Course it is, sir," said Toby, convinced at once.

"We cannot change all this in a day, but we must do our best," said Arthur Augustus. "I am goin' to set mattahs wight heah as fah as I can. Why should I be learnin' Latin while you clean knives? Uttah wot! Your intellect is equal to mine, Toby."

"Is it?" ejaculated Toby.

"Yaas, wathah!"

Toby did not utter his thoughts. His own secret persuasion was that Gussy had the advantage of him in many ways, but that when it came to brains Gussy was not even an also ran.

Toby would have liked Gussy's nice clothes and nice manners and nice prospects, but he would have objected strongly to being endowed with Gussy's intellect.

Quite unsuspecting of Toby's secret



thoughts, the swell of St. Jim's rattled cheerily on.

"You see, deah boy, we can set this mattah wight. I am goin' to teach you Latin."

"Oh!" gasped Toby.

Sometimes Toby had envied St. Jim's fellows. But if there was one special thing he did not envy them, it was grinding at a dead language under a Form-master's eye.

There was, so far as Toby could see, no sense in it. Nobody talked in Latin, and the fellows who would want to read classical authors in their own tongue after leaving school were undoubtedly few in number.

Indeed, Toby was aware that most Old Boys who revisited St. Jim's, so far from remembering what they had learned in the Form-rooms there, would have had great difficulty in saving themselves from the cane if placed in junior Forms—let alone senior Forms.

Toby's opinion was that the only fellows who benefited from the study of Latin were those who were going to become schoolmasters, and who needed to learn the stuff in order to pass on their useless knowledge to a new generation of victims.

Possibly Toby was right.

Certainly the prospect of learning Latin filled him with dismay, and only his awe of Arthur Augustus prevented him from saying so.

"I—I—I shan't be able to find the time, sir," he gasped. "You see, I'm a 'ard-working bloke."

"I shall help you to find the time, deah boy," said Arthur Augustus encouragingly. "I shall do some of your work."

"Oh, my eye!"

"You cawwy coals to the mastahs' studies," said D'Arcy. "I will cawwy them instead."

"You wouldn't be let, sir," stuttered Toby. "They'd jolly soon stop you."

"Bai Jove! I nevah thought of that. I will find somethin' else. I will learn how to use the knife-machine."

Sniff from Toby.

"I never tetch the knife-machine, sir! That's Charley's work," he snapped. "I give him a 'and sometimes."

"Who polishes the silver?"

"I does," said Toby. "Mrs. Mimms wouldn't trust that Charley with the silver!"

"That's all wight, then," said D'Arcy cheerfully. "I'll polish the silvah while



Monty Lowther pulled the cord attached to the leg of the chair, and it departed suddenly from underneath Gussy. "Yawwooh! Oh, cwumbs!" (See Chapter 6.)

you are gwindin' at Latin. I can find the time on half-holidays, see?"

Toby gazed at him.

He knew, of course, that D'Arcy was an ass. But he had not supposed that even D'Arcy was ass enough to believe that he could polish silver in the way Mrs. Mimms required silver to be polished.

"Now, it's a half-holiday to-day," said Arthur Augustus. "I was goin' out on my bike, but young Twimble bowwood it the othah day and had a smash up, and it wathah wants wepairin' befoah it can be used. The othah fellows will be at games



practice, and we shall have No. 6 to ourselves. Pway come up to my study this afternoon, Toby, and we will begin."

"Begin Latin?" faltered Toby.

"Yaas, wathah!"

"You—you see, sir——"

"Of course, I am not a past-mastah in tutorin'," said Arthur Augustus modestly, "but I can put you wight at the start. All I know is quite at your service, Tobay."

"I wonder 'ow much that is?" murmured Toby.

"What did you say, deah boy?"

"Nothin', sir," said Toby hastily. "I'm rather afeared that I can't get off, sir."

"Mrs. Mimms will let you off if you ask her, Toby. She is a vewy good sort."

The hapless Toby realised that there was no help for it. Not for worlds would he have offended Master D'Arcy. The poor chap could not help being a silly chump, Toby considered, but he was very nice in other ways.

"I'll come, sir," he mumbled.

"That's all wight, then. What are you doin' now, Tobay?"

"Polishin' these 'ere glasses, sir."

"Pway take a west on this chair while I do the work for a bit."

Toby trembled.

Broken glasses meant trouble, and he dreaded to trust them into Gussy's inexperienced hands.

But the St. Jim's Extremist was not to be denied. When Gussy was good, he was very, very good.

He took a cut-glass tumbler and the polishing cloth from Toby and began.

Crash!

Smash!

"Bai Jove!"

"Oh, dear!" groaned Toby. "I knew what would 'appen!"

"Weally, Toby, I do not see how you could have known that it would happen," said Arthur Augustus, in surprise. "I certainly did not know. I do not see now how I came to dwop the glass. I will be vewy careful not to dwop any more."

"Leave 'em alone, sir, please!" implored Toby. "I shall 'ave to pay for that tum-

bler, and goodness only knows 'ow much!"

"I should certainly offah you the we-  
quiahed amount, Toby——"

"Oh!" said Toby more brightly.

"Only I have no money."

"Oh!" said Toby, less brightly.

"You see, I have lent it all to Twimble. Othahwise, I should hand ovah the we-  
quiahed sum."

"Oh!" said Toby, for the third time, in discouraged tones.

"But I will polish the west of the glasses for you."

Toby shuddered.

In his mind's eye he saw a whole year's wages going as the price of Gussy's generous assistance.

He hastily interposed.

"Let 'em alone, sir! I—I 'ear Mrs. Mimms comin.' Mrs. Mimms she don't like the young gentlemen to come into the boot-room, sir."

"A gentleman has a wight to call on anothah gentleman anywhah, Toby."

"Oh! Ah! Yes! But Mrs. Mimms don't see it, sir."

"I will explain the mattah to Mrs. Mimms."

"You'll get me into a row, sir," said Toby, in despair. "You don't want to get me the push, sir!"

"Bai Jove! Certainly I should not like to get you into any twouble, Toby; that is not my object at all. If you think it best I will wetire."

Toby not only thought it best, but said so emphatically, and Arthur Augustus retired.

He felt that he had done good in the boot-room. Toby, gazing at the fragments of glass, and thinking of the coming instruction in Latin, did not look as if Gussy's Extremism had brightened existence for him. He looked quite the reverse.

## THE NINTH CHAPTER

### Sauce for the Gander!

"TOM MEWWY, deah boy! Lookin' for you!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus, as he came on the captain of the Shell in the Shell passage.

Tom Merry smiled.



Fellows generally did smile when they encountered Arthur Augustus D'Arcy these days.

As an Extremist, Arthur Augustus was not taken with the seriousness that was the due of a great reformer. His activities added to the gaiety of existence at St. Jim's. The sight of his earnest face was enough to bring a smile to any other face.

"Well, here I am, old bean," said Tom cheerily. "What's up? Holding another meeting in my study?"

Arthur Augustus frowned a little.

"I am not holdin' nothah meetin' in your study," he answered stiffly.

"You're more than welcome, old chap," remarked Monty Lowther. "We quite enjoyed the last."

"Quite!" concurred Manners.

"Oh, wats! Pway don't wot, deah boys. I am wequiahin' some impot. papah and

exahcise-books and things, as I am goin' to give some instwuction in Latin to a fwieend of mine."

"Who's the miserable victim?"

"Weally, Lowthah——"

"Giving up Extremism for tutoring?" asked Manners.

"Not at all, Mannahs. The one thing is part of the othah. I am tutorin' a chap who has not had a chance of learnin' Latin," Arthur Augustus explained. "My fwieend Tobay."

"Your friend Toby?" repeated Tom Merry.

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Oh, my only summer bonnet!"



Figgins and Co. chuckled whilst they listened to Gussy's new wheeze, and they readily agreed that the Fourth was every whit as good as the Sixth; but that the Third was as good as the Fourth was regarded as a ludicrous suggestion. (See Chapter 7.)



ejaculated Lowther. "You're going to instruct Toby in Latin?"

"Pwecisely."

"What has the poor chap done?"

"You uttah ass!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus. "I am goin' to instwuct him in Latin as a benefit to him. Why should not Tobay learn Latin just like any othah fellow at St. Jim's?"

"Because he's a lucky dog."

"Oh, wats! We've wun out of impot. papah in our studay," said Arthur Augustus. "I shall have to set Tobay some simple exahcises to begin with, and I may want a lot of foolscap. Of course, I have a wight to step into your study and help myself, as undah Extwemism all foolscap will be nationalised, and the pwesent state of affaihs, with foolscap bein' held as pwivate pwopahty by individuals, is purely tempowawy. But I would weally wathah have your permission."

"Well, it's just as well to get a fellow's permission before you bag his things," assented Lowther. "Otherwise he might jump on the back of your neck while you were going it, what?"

"Weally, Lowthah——"

"But I suppose under Extremism all necks will be nationalised?" asked Lowther thoughtfully.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Will gas be nationalised under Extremism?" asked Lowther suddenly.

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Then the conversation of an Extremist will no longer be his private property?"

"You sillay ass!" roared Arthur Augustus. "I have a gweat mind to punch your sillay nose, Lowthah!"

"Better wait till noses are nationalised," said Lowther, shaking his head. "At present my nose is my own property, and I shall strew any fellow who punches it in small pieces along the passage."

Tom Merry chuckled.

"We've run out of impot. paper in our study, Gussy. That ass Lowther had a lot of lines for Linton. Try Skimmy. He's always got tons of foolscap in his study and as a crank——"

"What?"

"I mean, as a brainy Extremist he will be bound to hand over as much as you want."

"Bai Jove! That's a good idea!"

The Terrible Three walked on, grinning, and Arthur Augustus D'Arcy tapped at Skimpole's door and entered.

The study was vacant.

Talbot and Gore were gone down to Little Side to games practice, and Skimpole had left immediately after dinner that day, to spend a happy afternoon at the Assembly Rooms, in Wayland. At the Assembly Rooms Mr. Giggs was addressing a meeting, and Skimmy did not want to miss the pearls of wisdom and eloquence that fell from the lips of Mr. Giggs. As there was no one in the study, Arthur Augustus D'Arcy would have been rather at a loss had he not been an Extremist calling on a fellow-Extremist. But as it was that it did not matter.

Skimpole, of the Shell, was not the happy possessor of a large allowance, but of his slender supply of cash a large proportion went on foolscap. Skimmy was not only a reader of ponderous volumes, but he had the ambition to be a writer of ponderous volumes. Much as Skimmy admired the great works of Professor Balmycrumpet and Herr Knumskull, Skimmy was persuaded that he could do a little better than these great men, and his volume had already reached the seventy-seventh chapter.

Skimmy's great work might—or might not—produce a revolution when it was published—if ever it was. In the meantime, it was good for the business of the stationer in Rylcombe. Skimmy was one of his best customers.

In Skimmy's study there was always a good supply of foolscap, much of it rendered useless by Skimmy's lucubrations being scribbled on it, but a good deal of it still blank and useful.

Gussy had only to help himself.

Gussy's manners being superior to his opinions, he never would have touched a fellow's property, though he had no



doubt, since he had seen the light, that all property ought to be held in common.

But Skimmy's property, of course, he was entitled to touch without the preliminary of asking permission, Skimmy being a fellow-Extremist, and a labourer in the same vineyard, so to speak.

That Skimmy would have any objection never even occurred to Gussy's powerful brain.

Had not Skimmy set the example by presenting Gussy's new spring overcoat to a tramp?

What was sauce for the goose was surely sauce for the gander in such matters as this.

So the swell of St. Jim's cheerfully sorted over the manuscript, and selected a stout wedge of it, which was unspoiled by the brainy lucubrations of Herbert Skimpole.

This he carried off to Study No. 6, in the Fourth.

Blake and Herries and Digby met him there. They stared at Gussy's burden as he landed it on the study table.

"Lines?" said Blake.

"Not at all, deah boy."

"What's that hefty stack of paper for, then?"

"I am givin' Tobay some instwuction in Latin this aftahnoon," explained Arthur Augustus.

"Toby!" yelled Blake.

"Latin!" exclaimed Dig.

"Oh, crumbs!" ejaculated Herries.

"I considah that Tobay is as much entitled to study Latin as we are," answered Arthur Augustus calmly. "I have aw-wanged with him to come up to the studay this aftahnoon for instwuction. I twust that you fellows are goin' down to games pwactice. I do not want you to intewwupt my tutorin' with wibald remarks."

"Toby keen on it?" grinned Blake.

"I have no doubt that Tobay is vewy keen on it," said Arthur Augustus. "He will be gettin' his wights, you know. I suppose any fellow is bound to be wathah keen on gettin' his wights."

"That depends," chuckled Blake. "There are rights and rights! I'd give up my right

to study Latin if Mr. Lathom would let me."

"That is not the pwopah way of look-in' at it, Blake. You are quite in the dark. I will explain the matter fwom the beginnin'——"

There was a sudden rush of footsteps. Blake and Herries and Digby vanished along the passage, and Arthur Augustus found himself alone in Study No. 6.

"Bai Jovel" ejaculated Arthur Augustus.

His chums were gone down to games practice—in rather a hurry. The St. Jim's reformer was left to waste his sweetness on the desert air.

"Bai Jovel" repeated Arthur Augustus. "It is said that wisdom cwies out in the stweets and no man weguards it, and I weally think it is twue."

There was no doubt that wisdom cried out in Study No. 6 at St. Jim's, and no man regarded it—such wisdom as Arthur Augustus was able to provide, at least.

## THE TENTH CHAPTER

### Toby Up Against It!

"TWICKLE in, deah boy."

Toby trickled in.

Toby had approached Study No. 6 with slow and reluctant feet. The nearer he drew to the headquarters of Fourth Form Extremism, the slower grew Toby's footsteps. The thought of fagging at the study of a dead language, like the poor fellows in Mr. Lathom's Form, who could not help themselves, was dismally dismaying to Toby.

St. Jim's fellows had to do it. There was no sense in it so far as Toby could see, but it was a custom at public schools, and fellows who went to public schools had to toe the line. Often and often had Toby felt sorry for them. And now he was in the same unhappy state himself, owing to the generous kindness of Gussy.

True, Toby could have helped himself; he was in a better position, in that respect, than any St. Jim's fellow. He could have refused point-blank to learn Latin without fear of being told to "bend over," like any St. Jim's fellow. But he was reluctant to offend Master D'Arcy. That D'Arcy was



a crass ass was not the poor fellow's fault, Toby charitably reflected. He could not help it. Obviously he meant well. Toby, with a heroism that was much to his credit, resolved to stand it—or, at least, to stand as much as he could of it. His chief hope was that Master D'Arcy would get tired of this extraordinary stunt, and let a bloke off.

He trickled into Study No. 6, as requested, with a woebegone expression on his chubby face. Arthur Augustus, though not an observant youth, could not help noticing that Toby looked woebegone, though he did not attribute that circumstance to its real cause.

"Anythin' w'ong, Tobay?" he inquired.

"Oh! Nunno, sir," gasped Toby.

"You're not lookin' vewy chirpy, deah boy."

"I—I'm feeling quite chirpy, sir," mumbled Toby.

A pile of Latin books and another pile of nice blank foolscap did not tend to cheer him. He blinked at both piles, and wished himself safe back in the boot-room.

"Now we're weady, old fellow," said Arthur Augustus cheerily, "I suppose we'd better begin at the beginnin'."

"It wouldn't be much use beginning at the hend, would it, sir?" murmured Toby.

"Not at all, Tobay. How much Latin do you know already?"

"None at all, sir," answered Toby, only wishing from the bottom of his heart that Fate would permit him to remain in that happy state.

"We'll soon change all that, deah boy. In a vewy short time you'll be fairly burstin' with iwwegular verbs," said Arthur Augustus encouragingly. "Bai Jove! Have you got a pain anywah, Tobay?"

"Nunno, sir."

"I thought I heard you gwoan."

"Di-di-did you, sir?" said Toby guiltily.

"Yaas, wathah! Howevah, to wesome—I mean, to begin. Latin is a dead language, to begin with, Tobay."

"Yessir," said Toby, not expressing his fervent wish that Latin was buried as well as dead.

"It was spoken by the Womans, Tobay—a vewy gweat people of ancient times, who lived in Wome. The Latins did not use an article, Tobay."

"Not any article, sir?"

"None at all, deah boy."

"Blessed if I see 'ow they got on without any articles," said the astonished Toby. "Didn't they have nothing in their 'ouses at all?"

"Eh? I do not quite compwehend, Tobay. Of course, they had furniture in their houses, the same as we do."

"Well, furniture is articles, ain't it?" asked Toby. "This 'ere table is an article."

"Not at all. Table is a noun, Tobay."

Toby blinked.

"You misappwehend, deah boy," said Arthur Augustus. "A table is certainly an article of furniture. But I was alludin' to gwammatical articles."

"Such as this 'ere Latin grammar, sir?"

"N-no. A gwammah is certainly an article, but not in a gwammatical sense. Gwammatically any article is a noun."

"Oh, my eye!"

There are two articles in English, Toby, as you are doubtless awah. 'The,' the definite article; and 'a' or 'an,' the indefinite article. The Latins never used eithah. F'winstance, if a Woman spoke of a table, he would say table, and it might mean eithah a table or the table."

"I thought table was an English word, sir. Was it a Latin word, too?"

"Oh, no! Mensa was the Latin word for table."

"But 'ow could a Latin say table if it wasn't a Latin word, sir?"

"He would not say table, Tobay; he would say mensa."

"Didn't you say he would say table, sir?"

"I was only givin' you an example, Tobay. Now, take the pen, and I will give you a few simple nouns to begin with. Mensa, a table."

"Mensa, a table," repeated Toby, writing it down in a big round hand on a sheet of Skimpole's foolscap. "I don't quite catch on, sir. Didn't you say those blokes didn't say 'a table'? Jest table."



"Yaas, wathah!"

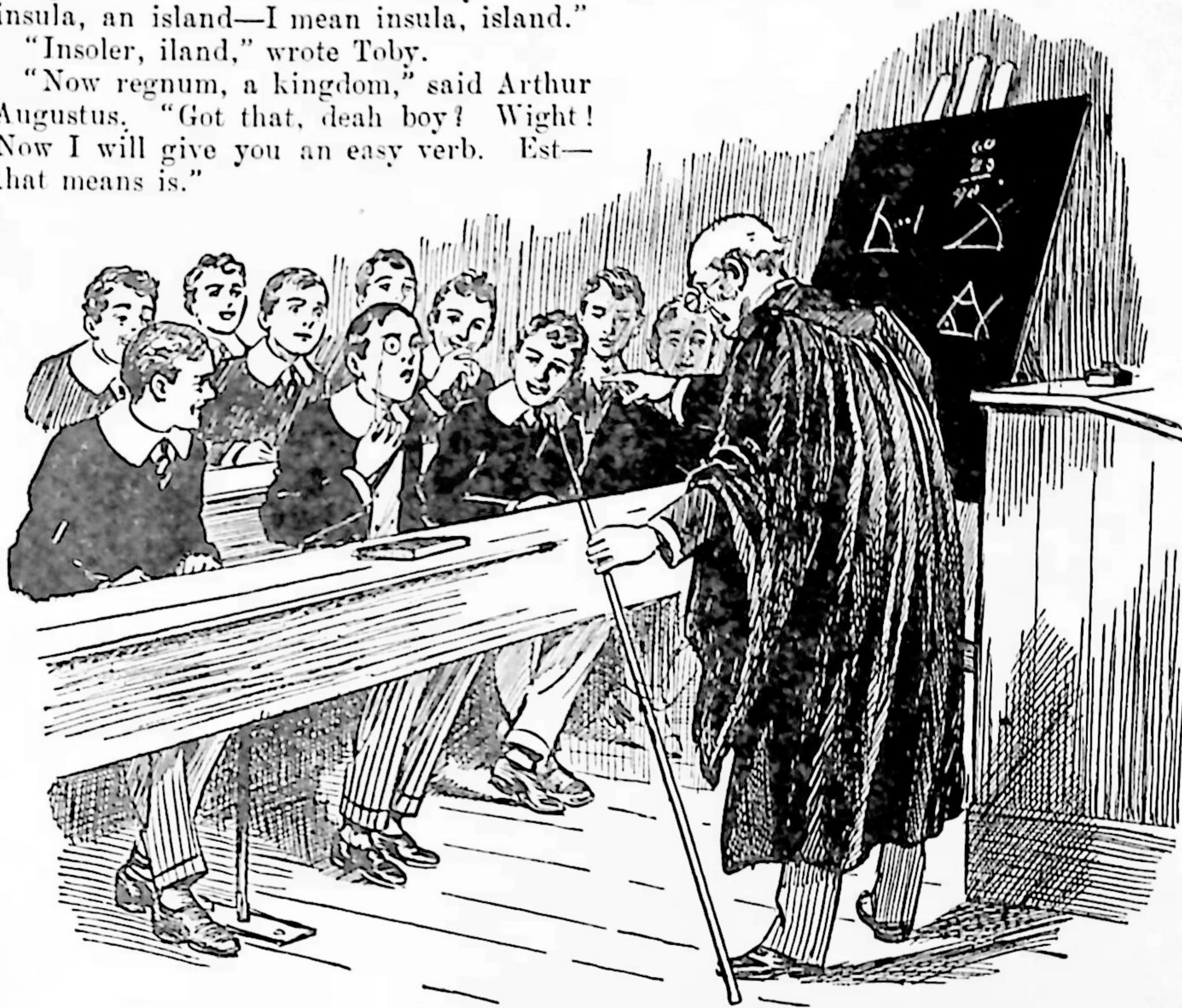
"Then 'ow can mensa mean 'a table,' sir?" asked Toby.

"Pewwaps you had bettah w'ite mensa, table," said Arthur Augustus. "You will compwehend bettah latah, Tobay. Now insula, an island—I mean insula, island."

"Insoler, iland," wrote Toby.

"Now regnum, a kingdom," said Arthur Augustus. "Got that, deah boy? Wight! Now I will give you an easy verb. Est—that means is."

you see that the Latins used no article," said Arthur Augustus patiently. "The exact twanslation would be 'Bwitannia is island,' not 'Bwitannia is an island,' as in English. Now w'ite down the word medicus, which means a doctah."



"You are wearing a brightly-coloured tie, D'Arcy," said Mr. Lathom. "A wed one, sir," said Gussy. The Fourth-form master blinked at him, while the other juniors grinned. (See Chapter 7.)

"Yessir," said Toby.

"Now w'ite down 'Bwitannia est insula.' Now you have got a whole sentence, Tobay, which is vewy good for a beginnin'. You have w'itten down in Latin that Bwitaen is an island."

"I knowed it was before, sir," said Toby. "I ain't ignorant, sir."

"Yaas, quite so, deah boy—quite so. Now you have w'itten it in Latin. Now

"Meddikus," wrote Toby.

"Now w'ite down meus, which is one form of the word my. We will come to the othah forms latah."

"Meeyus," wrote Toby.

"Now w'ite down hoc, which means this."

"Hock," wrote Toby.

"Now w'ite down narrat, which means welates or nawwates."

"Narat," wrote down Toby.



"Now you have anothah whole sentence, deah boy. 'Medicus meus hoc narrat'—'my doctor welates this.' See?" said Gussy encouragingly. "The ordah of the words is diffewent in Latin: 'doctor my this welates.' That is how the Latins put it."

"My eye! And did they understand one another, sir, when they mixed it up like that?" inquired Toby, in astonishment.

"Oh, bai Jove! Yaas, deah boy."

"Blessed if I know 'ow they did it, sir. They must have been clever blokes to know what it meant when they got it mixed that way."

"Hem! Let me look at your exahcise, Tobay."

Arthur Augustus looked at the exercise, and a puzzled wrinkle came into his noble brow as he read "Meddikus meeyus hock narat."

"Bai Jove! The spellin' won't quite do, Tobay. We shall have to give a little attention to orthogwaphy. I will w'ite out the words, and then you can copy them in the pwopah spellin.'"

"Yessir."

Arthur Augustus proceeded to write out the copy for Toby. Toby leaned back in his chair and took a rest. A little Latin went a long way with Toby, and he was tired. While Gussy's pen was still busy, Toby's chin dropped on his chest, and a sonorous and unmusical snore proceeded from Toby. Arthur Augustus glanced at him.

"Bai Jove! Tobay!"

Snore.

"Gweat Scott! The chap's gone to sleep," murmured Arthur Augustus. "I wondah what has made him dwop off to sleep. This is weally wathah wemarkable. I say, Tobay! Tobay!"

Toby awoke with a start.

"Yes, mum! I'm a-coming!" he called out, jumping up as he spoke. No doubt he woke under the impression that he was being called by Mrs. Mimms. "I'm coming, mum! I ain't been asleep."

"Bai Jove!"

Toby rubbed his sleepy eyes.

"Oh, I—I forgot I was 'ere, sir," stam-

mered Toby, blushing. "Is that all for to-day, sir?"

"Bai Jove! We're only just beginnin', Tobay," said Arthur Augustus.

"Only just beginning, sir," faltered Toby, his heart sinking into his boots.

"Yaas, wathah! We're goin' to do twen-tay times more than that befoah we chuck it, old chap."

Even the worm will turn.

Toby had not absorbed very much Latin so far. But what he had absorbed had given him a headache. He did not want to offend Master D'Arcy. But he would have offended all the nobility and gentry in the Kingdom at one fell swoop rather than have had any more Latin that afternoon. There was a limit to human endurance, and Toby had reached it. If this sort of thing was going on, he might as well have been a St. Jim's fellow, and have had done with it!

He jumped up.

"Didn't you 'ear the bell, sir?" he exclaimed.

"Bai Jove! No!"

"'Skuse me, sir! I got to see to the bell."

"I think you are mistaken, Tobay; I certainly did not heah any bell," said Arthur Augustus. "It is all wight, Tobay. You have been noddin', you know, and your yahs have deceived you. Tobay—my deah chap, I assure you the bell did not wing. Tobay——"

But Toby was gone.

"Bai Jove!" said Arthur Augustus, addressing space. "It is vewy wight and pwopah for Toby to be so keen on cawwyin' out his duties, but I am absolutely assuahed that he was mistaken in thinkin' that he heard a bell wing. I will get some exahcises weady for him when he comes back."

Arthur Augustus industriously proceeded to prepare some Latin exercises for Toby. He used up quite a large quantity of Skimpole's foolscap in preparing those exercises, all ready for Toby when he came back.

But Toby did not come back.

Arthur Augustus wondered why. He concluded that some duty must have turned up to detain Toby. He felt that that was



rather hard on a fellow who was just beginning the study of Latin, and whose opportunities in that line were limited. But whatever was the reason, the fact was certain—Toby did not come back.

## THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER

### Trouble Among Reformers I

"My dear Talbot

Talbot, of the Shell, halted good-naturedly. Talbot was always kind and patient with Skimpole. He was almost the only fellow at St. Jim's who was. Skimpole, of the Shell, would have tried the patience of Job to breaking-point.

"Yes, old chap," said Talbot.

He was coming up to the Shell passage after games practice when Skimpole's bony features and glimmering spectacles dawned upon him.

"A robbery has taken place in the study," said Skimpole.

"Oh, my hat!"

"My manuscript——"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Talbot involuntarily.

The idea of anyone but a dustman, paid for the job, taking away Skimpole's precious manuscript was too much for him.

"My dear Talbot, I perceive no occasion for an outbreak of risibility," said Skimpole, perplexed. "The present conjuncture of circumstances is of an exceedingly serious nature. Returning from the meeting at Wayland, I was about to resume the indit-



Crash! Smash! "Bai Jove!" cried Arthur Augustus in astonishment. "Oh, dear!" groaned Toby. "I knew what would happen!" (See Chapter 8.)

ing of my lucubrations on social subjects when I discovered, to my astonishment, that all my foolscap had been abstracted. I am not alluding, my dear Talbot, to the written pages of my extensive work on Socialism. Such a loss would have been irreparable, but it is not so serious as that."

"Oh!" said Talbot. "It's not so bad as that?"

"No, my dear fellow. My manuscripts are still reposing in complete security in the receptacle where I deposited them before proceeding to Wayland. But all my foolscap is gone, and I cannot find it anywhere in our apartment. You have not removed it, Talbot, for a thoughtless and unseemly pleasantry?"

"Not at all, old bean."



"I have asked Gore, and he replied very rudely that, as he had not had occasion to ignite the study fire, he had not used up my papers," said Skimpole. "It was a rude reply, but doubtless veracious. There has been a robbery, Talbot! Somebody has surreptitiously purloined two whole quires of foolscap from my study!"

Skimpole blinked seriously and solemnly at Talbot. It was a serious matter. Skimmy had returned from the meeting at Wayland, with his brain buzzing with the red-hot eloquence of Mr. Giggs. Great thoughts had been set going in his intellect. These thoughts it was necessary to transfer to paper before they grew dim. And there was no foolscap left, and Skimmy's great thoughts still boiled in his brain, untransferred to paper, in danger of being lost to humanity altogether. Skimmy was feeling like a lioness robbed of her cubs.

"Can you suggest who may have been the unscrupulous and surreptitious delinquent, my dear Talbot?" asked Skimpole anxiously. "It may not yet be too late to recover my abstracted property."

Talbot shook his head.

"Some fellow may have wanted impot. paper for lines," he suggested. "Let's have tea, Skimmy, and leave it over."

Skimpole blinked at him more in sorrow than in anger. The suggestion of leaving over the seventy-eighth chapter of his great work was too puerile for a rejoinder, and so Skimmy did not reply. Having blinked at Talbot with the blink of a misunderstood genius, Skimpole ambled on his way in search of the perpetrator of the outrage in his study. Skimpole was not a fighting-man, as a rule; but he was now in a state of great wrath, and it was likely that trouble would accrue if he did not recover his precious foolscap in time to set down the great thoughts that were burning in his powerful intellect.

It was in this mood that Skimmy arrived at Study No. 6, in the Fourth.

He did not arrive there because that study sheltered another Extremist, who might have been supposed, on Skimmy's own principles, to have bagged the foolscap if

he wanted it. Skimmy did not think of that. He never did reflect that his remarkable opinions were a sort of two-edged sword, that might be turned against his brainy self. He arrived at Study No. 6 in the course of his peregrinations, as he made extensive inquiries after the missing goods. But when he blinked into that study he could not help noting that the table was littered with foolscap, and he could not help his suspicions rising.

"My dear D'Arcy——"

Arthur Augustus was busy in Study No. 6. Blake & Co. had not yet come in, and Gussy was anxious to get those Latin exercises ready before they arrived. Toby was still missing, but the exercises could be handed over to him later, to be worked out in his room at his leisure. That was Gussy's present intention, in view of the mysterious disappearance of Toby.

"Pway don't intewwupt, deah boy," said Arthur Augustus. "I am wathah busay now, Skimmay."

"A quantity of foolscap has been surreptitiously abstracted from my study, D'Arcy," said Skimpole sternly.

"Yaas, that's all wight," asserted Arthur Augustus. "I've got it."

"What?" gasped Skimpole.

"I've got it heah, deah boy. I wequiahed it," explained Arthur Augustus. "Pway don't intewwupt me now. I am usin' it."

"You are using my foolscap!" ejaculated Skimpole.

"Yaas. I have used about half of it so far, and I am goin' to twy to get thwough the west befoah tea-time. You see, I am settin' copies for a chap—w'itin' the top line, and leavin' space for the chap to copy. Like a copy-book, you know. Wathah a good ideah, what?"

Skimpole blinked at him.

"You idiot!" he exclaimed.

"Bai Jove! What?"

"You frabjous chump!"

"Weally, Skimpole——"

"Hand over that foolscap at once!" roared the incensed Skimpole. "How dare you take my foolscap, you burbling fat-head?"



Arthur Augustus laid down his pen, adjusted his eyeglass, and stared at Skimpole in absolute astonishment. He doubted whether his noble ears had heard aright.

"Pway keep calm, Skimpole," he said icily. "Pway allow me to point out that this foolscap was not yours."

"Not mine!" yelled Skimpole. "Not mine, when I bought it and paid for it at the stationer's, in Rylcombe?"

"Certainly not! Undah Extwemism all foolscap will be nationalised, as you know vewy well. The pwesent state of affaihs, with pwivate individuals pwetendin' that there is pwivate pwopahty in foolscap, is merely tempowawy. The foolscap is as much mine as yours, of course, and as much anybody else's as mine."

"You chump!" roared Skimpole. "I need that foolscap to write the seventy-eighth chapter of my book on Socialism."

"Wats!" retorted Arthur Augustus.

Skimpole breathed hard and deep. Like a humorist who can never understand a joke against himself, so the St. Jim's Extremist could not appreciate Extremism when it came home to roost, as it were. Skimpole clenched his bony hands.

"You can keep the sheets you have scribbled on, you silly ass," he said, "but I will take away the remainder."

"You jollay well won't," said Arthur Augustus hotly. "I have told you that I wequiah it."

"You require my foolscap?" hooted Skimpole.

"Yaas, wathah!"

"You burbling idiot!"

"I wefuse to listen to these oppwobwious epithets, Skimpole. Pway leave my studay at once."

"Give me that foolscap!" roared Skimpole.

"Wats!"

"I'll jolly well take it, then!" shouted Skimpole, forgetting, in his excitement, to put it polysyllabically.

And the enraged Skimpole strode at the study table and clutched at the quire of foolscap that still remained intact.

Arthur Augustus jumped up, equally wrathful.

"Let that papah alone!" he shouted. "How dare you come to my studay to commit a wobbewy?"

"You silly owl!"

"You fwabjous chump!"

Skimpole clutched up the foolscap. Arthur Augustus whipped round the table and clutched Skimpole.

"You uttah chump!" he gasped. "I am sowwy to have to handle you, Skimmay, but you are not takin' away my foolscap, as I wequiah it!"

"It's mine!" shrieked Skimpole.

"Pway don't talk wubbish!"

"Leggo!" roared Skimpole.

"Wats!"

Foolscap was scattered over the floor of Study No. 6, like leaves in Vallombrosa, as the rival Extremists struggled.

Arthur Augustus gasped as he received a jab in the ribs from a bony fist. Skimpole yelled under the infliction of an uppercut that caught his bony chin.

They struggled furiously, trampling over the scattered sheets of foolscap, reducing them to a state in which they were useful neither for the Latin exercises nor for the seventy-eighth chapter of Skimpole's learned work.

Crash!

Skimpole went down at last, with the swell of St. Jim's sprawling over him.

"Owl! Yow! Wow!" yelled Skimpole.

"Get out of my studay, you wottah!" panted Arthur Augustus.

"My foolscap——"

"You are not goin' to wob me of my foolscap, Skimmay!"

"It's my foolscap!" raved Skimmy.

"Pway wing off that wot. Get out!" gasped D'Arcy. "Yawoooooh!" he added as a bony fist crashed into his eye.

It was a terrific scrap. The study table rocked as the combatants crashed into it. Ink and papers flew in all directions; ink and inkpot, Latin exercises and Latin books were mixed up with D'Arcy and Skimpole, and Study No. 6 began to look as if a cyclone had struck it. Extremism at St. Jim's was in that happy state when Blake



& Co., accompanied by the Terrible Three, arrived for tea in Study No. 6.

## THE TWELFTH CHAPTER

Discouraging!

"WHAT the thump——"

"Great Scott!"

"Sounds like a dog-fight!"

Blake tore open the door of Study No. 6 and stared in. Herries and Dig stared in. Tom Merry and Manners and Lowther stared in. For some moments they could hardly make out what was going on. The study was filled with flying sheets of paper and dust, overturned furniture, scattered books, and struggling forms.

"It's Gussy!" gasped Blake.

"And Skimmy!" exclaimed Tom Merry.

"What the merry dickens——"

"You rotter!" Skimpole was gasping. "Take that! Yaroooooh! Take that! Oh, crumbs! Yooop!"

"You uttah beast! I'll jolly well give you a feahful thwashin'! Oh, cwumbs!"

"Stop them!" exclaimed Tom.

Six juniors rushed into the study and grasped the two infuriated combatants and dragged them apart.

"Lemme get at him!" roared Skimpole.

"Bai Jove! Let me get at that wottah!" gasped D'Arcy.

"Hold them!" grinned Blake. "Now, what's the row about? Chuck it! You've done enough damage for one afternoon. Look at the study!"

"I demand my foolscap!" howled Skimpole. "That—that tailor's dummy has taken my foolscap from my study."

"Oh, don't be a silly ass!" said Blake. "If you say that Gussy has taken anything belonging to you, you want kicking. Kick him out!"

"Hear, hear!"

Skimpole was promptly kicked out of Study No. 6. He sprawled in the Fourth Form passage with a bump and a roar.

Blake looked round the study.

"Precious state for a room to be in when we've asked fellows to tea!" he grunted.

"Better come along to my study to tea," said Tom, laughing.

"But what was the row about?" demanded Herries. "What made that blinking idiot think you had taken his foolscap, Gussy?"

"That's all wight. I had it, Hewwies."

"You had it?" yelled Herries.

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Then we've chucked out the wrong man," said Manners.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"But it was not Skimpole's foolscap," explained Arthur Augustus. "Undah Extwemism all foolscap will be nationalised."

"Oh, my only hat!"

"As an Extwemist Skimmy is bound to see that I was entitled to take the foolscap if I wanted it. The wemarkable thing is that he entirely failed to see it when I pointed it out to him in the most weasonable mannah."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Weally, you fellows——"

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Tom Merry. "So that's the trouble, is it? You really thought a fellow believed in Communism in his own things?"

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I fail to see any cause for wibald mewwiment. I am extwemely shocked at Skimpole's wefusin' to act up to his own pwin-ciples."

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

A rather battered countenance, with spectacles slanting on a swollen nose, glared in at the study doorway.

"I want——" began Skimpole.

"Give him what he wants," grinned Dig.

And Skimpole was collared and run out of the study again. This time he was conducted, in a yelling bundle, as far as his own study in the Shell, and landed there with a bump and a crash. After which Skimpole let the matter drop for the present. He had to get his second wind before he could do anything but gasp and mumble.

Tom Merry & Co. returned to Study No. 6. They found Arthur Augustus in a state of great indignation, mopping a stream of crimson from his aristocratic nose. Both parties had suffered severe damages in the combat. There were marks



of Skimmy's bony knuckles all over Gussy.

"Fancy that cheekay wottah, you fellows!" gasped Arthur Augustus. "Actually comin' heah to take away the foolscap, makin' out that it was his, you know, aftah I had explained to him that I wanted it."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Pway don't cackle, deah boys. This is weally wathah shockin'. I have hitherto wegarded Skimpole as a vewy fat-headed

else's. Under Extremism all trouble will be nationalised."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You uttah ass!" hooted Arthur Augustus. "Pway don't make any of your wotten jokes on a sewious subject. Look at my eye."

"Whose eye?" asked Lowther.

"My eye, you ass! I feah it is goin' black."

"My dear chap, is it your eye more than anybody else's? Why should you bother especially about an eye that is the common property of mankind?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, we shan't get any tea here," said Blake, with a grunt. "We'll come along to No. 10 and bring the tuck. You'd better got a wash and a brush up, Gussy, before you come along to a respectable study."

"Oh, wats!"

Tom Merry & Co. departed in a state of great merriment. Arthur Augustus was left to attend to his injuries in the midst

of the wreckage of Study No. 6. Those Latin exercises were never delivered to Toby, to his great regret—perhaps!

It was not until the following day that Arthur Augustus met Skimpole, of the Shell, again. They met in the quad., and Skimpole gave the swell of St. Jim's a glare and turned his back on him. Arthur Augustus bestowed a stare of lofty contempt and disdain on Skimpole's back.

The two social reformers of St. Jim's were no longer on speaking terms!



Blake and Herries and Digby stared at Gussy's burden as he landed it on the study table. "What's that hefty stack of paper for?" asked Blake. "I am giving Tobay some instwuction in Latin this aftahnoon," explained Arthur Augustus. (See Chapter 9.)

cwank; but I am now bound to wegard him as a humbug as well. It is vewy shock-in'!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And now all the foolscap has been twampled on and splashed with ink and wuined, includin' the Latin exahcises I had got weady for poor old Tobay," gasped Arthur Augustus. "I have had all my twouble for nothin'."

"That's all right," said Monty Lowther. "It isn't your trouble more than anybody



Blake & Co. nourished a hope that Arthur Augustus would derive wisdom from the episode. But Arthur Augustus was too deeply in earnest for that.

He had disdained to speak to Skimpole. He had given up hope of making converts at St. Jim's. But he still ploughed his lonely furrow. He could, at least, carry the light below stairs, and he renewed his generous efforts on Toby's account with greater zest than ever.

For some days Toby led a hunted life.

Spotting Master D'Arcy in the distance, Toby would tiptoe round corners to elude him.

When he was run to earth in the boot-room, and could not elude his generous benefactor, poor Toby, still reluctant to speak out plainly, made all sorts of excuses. Upon one point Toby was determined—that he was not going to have any more Latin.

Finally, a brilliant idea occurred to Toby. A hint to Mrs. Mimms was enough, and the House-dame descended on Master D'Arcy and sternly forbade him to enter the boot-room again, or to come below stairs at all, under penalty of a complaint to his House-master.

After that Toby breathed more freely.

Below stairs was barred to Master D'Arcy; above stairs Toby could dodge him with more or less success.

Even upon Arthur Augustus' unsuspecting mind it dawned, at long last, that Toby was not keen on equality and the rights of man; that he had, indeed, matters of more importance to think of.

And then came the affair of Mr. Giggs!

## THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER

### A Redistribution of Bikes!

ARTHUR AUGUSTUS was tired.

The afternoon was warm—quite warm—and Arthur Augustus had walked rather far. It was a half-holiday at St. Jim's, and the swell of the Fourth had walked over to Wayland for the purpose of hearing a speech by that earnest and impassioned orator, Mr. Giggs.

It was not Gussy's lucky afternoon.

In the first place, he had never been able,

as an Extremist, to refuse the loan of his bicycle to any fellow that wanted it, and the result was that his bicycle was in a state needing serious repairs. Trimble, of the Fourth, had ridden it not wisely but too well.

In the second place, no Extremist could possibly keep money in his pockets when such sordid stuff was needed by his fellow-man. Gussy had quite a generous allowance, but Trimble, and other fellows like Trimble, helped him get rid of it at quite a rapid rate; and Gussy was falling into the state of never having a sixpence to bless himself with.

In these circumstances, D'Arcy had walked across to Wayland. There he made the discovery that he had mistaken the date, and that it was on the previous Wednesday that Mr. Giggs had been booked to deliver his impassioned and eloquent speech; and the speech had been delivered a week before, and probably forgotten by this time.

There was a match on the Ramblers' ground which Gussy might have witnessed for a shilling, and a picture-palace that he might have visited for sixpence. But he was in the state of Peter of old; silver and gold he had none.

As he trailed away from Wayland, D'Arcy rather wished that he had gone out with Blake & Co. that afternoon, or joined up with Tom Merry and Manners and Lowther. He was feeling rather lonely on his lonely own, and he was tired and rather discouraged. He stopped at last to rest under a shady tree by the side of a leafy lane, near where a path ran up to a little wayside inn. At that wayside inn ginger-beer could have been obtained for a small consideration, and Gussy was dry, and would have liked some ginger-beer. But the smallest fee was now beyond his means, and so he sat down to rest, still dry. Rest, at least, could be had for nothing; rest in the grass was free to all, although it had not yet been nationalised.

It was then that Gussy observed a red-painted bicycle leaning on the fence beside the path that led up to the little inn. He gazed at it with interest. He was not



acquainted with Mr. Giggs, but he had seen that strenuous young man at a distance more than once, scudding along on the bicycle, which was painted red as an advertisement of his crimson opinions. Mr. Giggs' necktie was the reddest ever, and his bike was painted in pleasing harmony with his tie.

"Bai Jove!" murmured Arthur Augustus.

Evidently Mr. Giggs had dismounted there and left his machine against the fence, while he went up to the inn for ginger-beer, or perhaps for some other sort of beer. Arthur Augustus eyed that bike and considered. He was tired, and he was three miles from the school. A ride back to St. Jim's, in time for tea, would in the circumstances be grateful and comforting. It would be easy to leave a note for Mr. Giggs pinned to the fence, telling him where his bike was if he wanted it again. D'Arcy reflected on this idea. But perhaps his experience with Skimpole and the foolscap made him hesitate, for he remained resting in the grass.

"Spare a copper, sir."

Gussy looked round as he heard the voice.

A weary gentleman halted and touched a rag of a cap. The gentleman was dusty and evidently tired, and there was a furtive look in his eye. His eye lingered on the red bicycle. Possibly, had not D'Arcy been there, the tired gentleman might have lifted that bicycle, not on the Extremist principles that Gussy was thinking of, but on the principles, or want of principles, of a common or garden sneak-thief. As Gussy was sitting only a few feet from the jigger, however, the tired gentleman gave up that idea,

if it was in his mind, and proffered his modest request for a copper to the swell of St. Jim's.

"I'm awf'ly sowwy, deah boy," said Arthur Augustus. "I weally haven't a coppah about me."

"Tanner would do, sir," suggested the tired gentleman humorously.

"Yaas, I pwesume so; but I have no



As a sonorous and unmusical snore proceeded from Toby, Arthur Augustus glanced up at him. "Bai Jove! He has dwopped off to sleepl Tobay!" Snore. (See Chapter 10.)

money at all," explained Arthur Augustus. "I am awf'ly sowwy."

The tired gentleman eyed him. It would have been obvious to anyone but Gussy that the tramp did not believe his statement.

"I've tramped five blessed hours on this 'ere road, sir, looking for work," said the tired gentleman pathetically. "It's a 'ard life, sir. 'Ow I shall get as fur as Wayland without dropping I don't know."

Arthur Augustus was deeply sympathetic.



"Bai Jove! That's vewy wuff," he said.

"Rough's the word, sir," said the tired gentleman, who had walked a hundred yards since taking his last nap under a haystack. "Jest a tanner, sir, would 'elp a cove on his way."

"I think I mentioned that I had no money," said Arthur Augustus, in surprise. "Howevah, pewwaps I can help you in anothah way. You are goin' to Wayland?"

"Yes, sir, two miles more from 'ere," sighed the tired gentleman, "and me sinking from 'unger and weakness, sir."

"That's too wotten, deah boy. Can you wide a bike."

"Eh? You bet I can," said the tired gentleman.

He would have been riding Mr. Giggs' bike by that time but for the circumstance that Arthur Augustus D'Arcy was so near it.

"Then I can help you," said the swell of St. Jim's. "Take this bike, deah boy, and wide it. Aftah you get to Wayland, pwobably you can sell it for a small sum, which will help you along."

The man stared at him. He seemed stupefied for some moments.

"You—you—you're giving me that there bike?" he ejaculated at last.

"Certainly, deah boy. Take it if you like. You are vewy welcome to it," said Arthur Augustus.

"You mean it, sir?" said the vagrant, obviously not quite able to believe his ears.

"Yaas, wathah!"

"I'm on, sir."

Arthur Augustus detached the bike from the fence, and handed it to the tired-looking gentleman.

Tired as he was, that gentleman mounted it quite rapidly, and pedalled away at a good speed. He did not stop to say thank you, even. Probably he was afraid that the schoolboy might alter his mind. Perhaps he thought he had fallen in with a lunatic. At all events, he disappeared on the bike at almost a record speed, and could hardly be seen for dust as he went.

Arthur Augustus gazed after him with a kind and benevolent smile as he vanished.

"That's all wight!" he murmured.

Gussy had no doubt that it was all right.

It was rather remarkable—to Gussy—that Mr. Giggs still possessed a bicycle at all when there were so many needy persons in Wayland who would have liked it.

Now Mr. Giggs no longer possessed a bicycle. He could have no objection, unless he was a humbug such as D'Arcy had discovered Skimpole, of the Shell, to be. And Gussy was not going to believe anything of that sort about Mr. Giggs. Gussy cultivated the best possible opinion about every fellow. The result was that he held many remarkable opinions. Among them, his opinion of Mr. Giggs was, perhaps, the most remarkable.

The matter was quite clear to Gussy. Under Extremism all bicycles would be nationalised, and distributed by officials to those who needed them most. Mr. Giggs was a hefty young man, quite capable of doing his ten miles a day on Shanks' pony. The tired gentleman, on the other hand, was sinking with fatigue. He had told Gussy so, and Gussy was not the fellow to doubt a fellow's word. Obviously, under Extremism Mr. Giggs' bike would have been handed over to the tired gentleman, who needed it more than Mr. Giggs did. Mr. Giggs was striving passionately to bring about the reign of Extremism. He was, therefore, eager for his bike to fall into the hands of the person most entitled to it. It was all so clear that Arthur Augustus entertained no doubts whatever.

It was merely to save Mr. Giggs any unnecessary trouble in the matter that he decided to leave a note for him.

He indited a brief message on a leaf of his pocket-book, tore out the leaf, and fastened it with a pin to the fence in the spot where Mr. Giggs' bicycle had leaned. It ran, pencilled in an elegant hand:

"Comrade,—I have given your bicycle to a poor man who needed it.

"Yours truly,

"A. A. D'ARCY."

"St. Jim's School."

That was all. That was all that was needed. If Mr. Giggs liked to drop D'Arcy

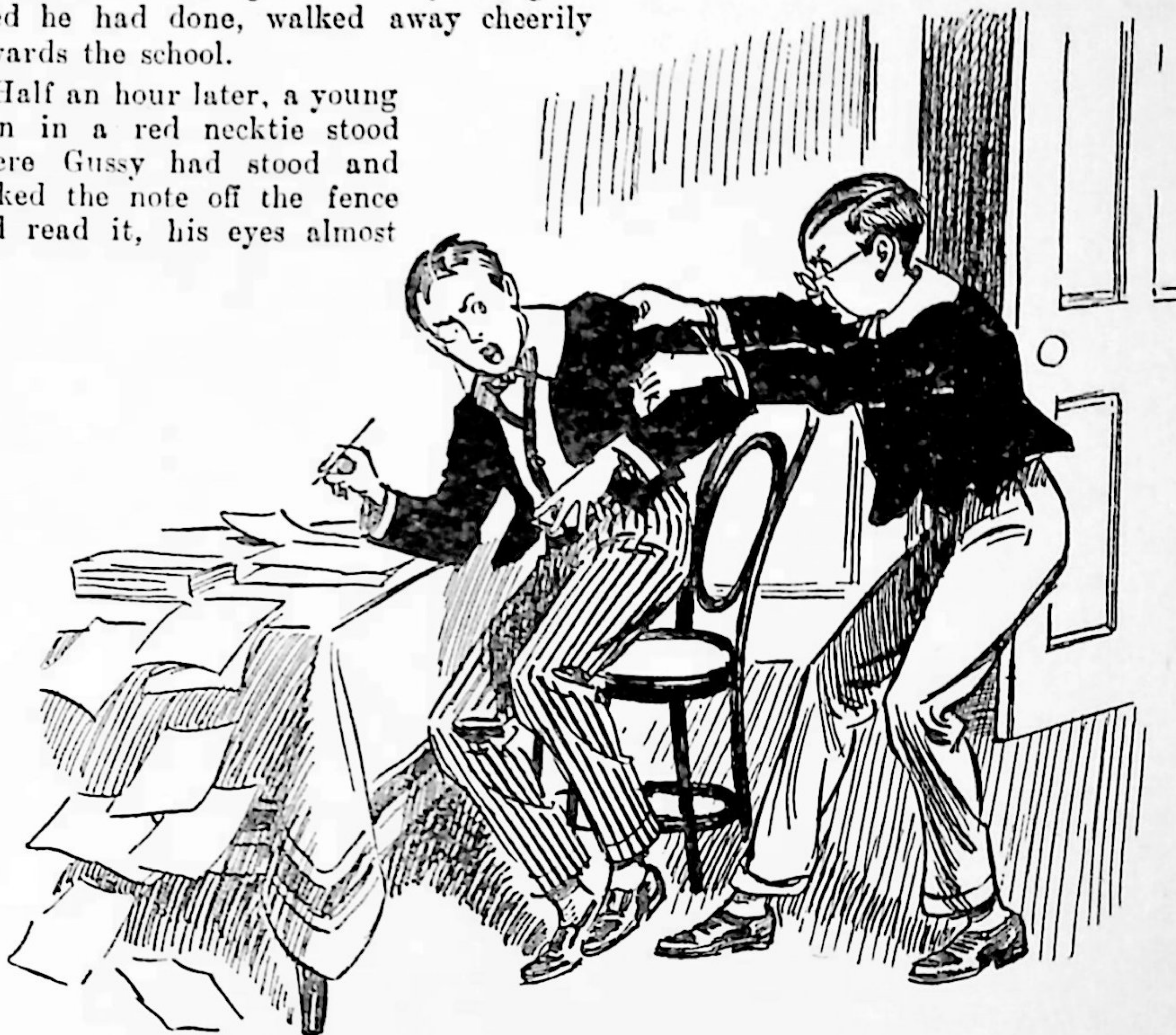


a line by post, thanking him, D'Arcy would be pleased to hear from Mr. Giggs. Anyhow, Mr. Giggs would know, as soon as he found that note, what had become of the machine, and would not worry about it.

This little matter satisfactorily settled, Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, feeling refreshed by his rest in the grass and by the good deed he had done, walked away cheerily towards the school.

Half an hour later, a young man in a red necktie stood where Gussy had stood and picked the note off the fence and read it, his eyes almost

Words failed Mr. Giggs. He brandished his fist in the air, and had Gussy been still present there would undoubtedly have been trouble. Still in a state of excitement for which Arthur Augustus would have seen no cause whatever, Mr. Giggs started for St. Jim's. And he assuredly did not look



"Give me that foolscap!" roared the enraged Skimpole as he clutched at Arthur Augustus and pulled him out of his chair. "You fwabjous chump!" shouted Gussy. "I shall have to handle you!" (See Chapter 11.)

oulging from his head with amazement and fury.

"My word!" gasped Mr. Giggs. "My bike! Blinking thief! Given it away! My eye! Lucky he's left his name and address. I'll give him 'poor man'! I'll give him beans! I'll—I'll—I'll——"

as if he was going there to thank Arthur Augustus for what he had done!

#### THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER Mr. Giggs Looks In!

"MERRY!"  
"Yes, sir!" said Tom, stopping at the call of Mr. Railton.



"Do you know whether D'Arcy, of the Fourth Form, is within gates?"

"Yes, sir. He came in some time ago. He's in my study now," answered the captain of the Shell.

"Very good. Please tell him that he is wanted in the Head's study at once."

"Oh! Yes, sir"

The expression on the Housemaster's face was very grave, and his gravity was reflected in Tom Merry's sunny countenance now. Tom, with a bundle under his arm, had just come in from the school shop; there was to be a spread in No. 10, in the Shell, and Tom was taking in supplies. Study No. 6 were guests in Tom Merry's study that afternoon, and Tom, as he went up the staircase, wondered what trouble was impending over his most distinguished guest. From Mr. Railton's look, it was plainly something serious.

"Oh, here you are!" said Manners as Tom came into No. 10. "Waiting for you, old scout."

"Anything up?" asked Blake, noting Tom's grave look.

"I'm afraid so. What have you been doing, Gussy?"

"Weally, Tom Mewwy——"

"Message from Railton. The Head wants you in his study at once," said Tom.

"Bai Jove!"

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy looked surprised. Also he looked displeased. He had come in tired from his long walk, and the chair he was occupying in Tom Merry's study was comfortable.

"More trouble!" sighed Blake. "What have you done, Gussy?"

"Nothin', deah boy."

"My hat!" exclaimed Lowther, in alarm. "You haven't been practising Extremism in the Head's study, have you?"

"Oh, crumbs!" ejaculated Dig.

"Weally, Lowthah——"

"Well, what does the Head want to see you for, then?" demanded Blake uneasily.

"I weally do not know, Blake, unless he desiahs a little chat with me," said Arthur Augustus. "That may be the weason."

"Fathead!"

"Weally, Blake——"

"You'd better go at once, old chap," said Tom Merry. "Railton looked jolly serious. We'd better go with him as far as the Beak's passage, you men."

"Yes, rather!"

Tea in Tom Merry's study was unavoidably postponed. The whole tea-party went down with Arthur Augustus, all but Gussy looking and feeling uneasy. Fellows were not summoned to the headmaster's study without cause, and it was really highly improbable that Dr. Holmes wanted nothing more than a chat with a Lower School fellow.

"He, he, he! Here he is!" cackled Baggy Trimble as the juniors came down the staircase. "You're in for it, Gussy! He, he, he!"

"Weally, Twimble——"

"Gussy, old man," exclaimed Julian, of the Fourth, "it can't be true. We know you never did it."

"Did what, deah boy?"

"A man's come here—man in a red necktie—and he said out loud before a dozen fellows that you'd stolen his bike."

"Gweat Scott!"

"What!" roared Blake. "Where is he? I'll jolly well kick him out of the House, and chance it!"

"He's in the Head's study now," said Levison, of the Fourth. "Mr. Railton took him there. It's that man Giggs, of Wayland!"

"Giggs! Bai Jove!"

"The rotter!" said Blake. "He's got the cheek to say that Gussy has pinched his bike! Why, the—the—the——"

"The man must be mad!" said Tom Merry, in wonder.

"He, he, he!" chortled Trimble. "He, he—— Yarooooooh!" Blake's boot came with a sudden impact upon Trimble's tight trousers, and his chortle was changed into a wild yell.

"Nothin' in it, of course, Gussy," said Cardew, with a curious look at the swell of St. Jim's.

"I twust, Cardew, that no gentleman



present will suspect me of stealin' a bike!" said Arthur Augustus stiffly.

"Of course not," said Levison hastily. "The man's made an idiotic mistake."

"I simply took the bike," explained Arthur Augustus.

"Eh?"

"What?"

"And gave it away," continued Arthur Augustus.

"You — you — you took a man's bike and gave it away?" stuttered Tom Merry.

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Oh, crikey!"

"But I left a note for Mr. Giggs explainin' it," said Arthur Augustus. "I weally cannot understand why he has come heah. Howevah, I dare say he will explain when I see him."

And Arthur Augustus walked on towards the Head's study, his friends walking with him with dazed expressions on their faces, and a crowd of other fellows following on, in a buzz of excitement. Various inhabitants of that part of Sussex had, at different times, had various complaints to make of St. Jim's fellows. But certainly no St. Jim's man had ever been accused of stealing a bicycle before. That was the limit; and it was the sensation of the term in the School House.

At the corner of the Head's corridor the crowd had to stop, and Arthur Augustus walked on alone to Dr. Holmes' study and tapped at the door. His head was erect, his face calm. There was nothing on Gussy's conscience; he had done nothing for which



"Take this bike, deah boy, and wide it," said the swell of St. Jim's. The man stared at him, stupefied. "You—you—you're giving me that there bike?" he stuttered. "Certainly, deah boy." (See Chapter 13.)

he was not prepared to answer. He was prepared to face his headmaster, or a whole conclave of headmasters, and avow that he had acted according to his—and Mr. Giggs'—principles.

"Come in!"

The Head's voice was very deep.

Arthur Augustus entered the study.

Dr. Holmes, seated at his writing-table, had a very stern expression on his face. Mr. Giggs was standing before the table, and his countenance was excited. Wrath and indignation struggled for predominance in Mr. Giggs' speaking countenance. What might be the cause of Mr. Giggs' wrath



and indignation was unknown to Arthur Augustus.

"D'Arcy!" said the Head sternly.

"Yaas, sir," said Arthur Augustus calmly.

"This young man, Mr. Giggs, accuses you of having taken away his bicycle, which he left against a fence in Wayland Lane."

"Stealing it!" hooted Mr. Giggs.

"I should hardly have listened to such an accusation, D'Arcy, but this young man has produced a paper which your House-master tells me is apparently written in your hand, admitting that the article was taken by you."

"Yaas, sir."

"This young man——"

"Not so much of your young man, sir," interrupted Mr. Giggs. "I'm as good a man as you any day in the week! Lot of nobs at this here school—I don't think! Stealing a man's bike—yah!"

Dr. Holmes waited patiently until Mr. Giggs had finished. Then he resumed:

"This young man has come here to claim his property. I am convinced that there must be some mistake in the matter. Kindly explain at once. Did you, or did you not, remove a bicycle belonging to Mr. Giggs?"

"Yaas, sir."

"Bless my soul! And what did you do with it?"

"I gave it to a twamp, sir."

"Bless my soul!"

Dr. Holmes gazed speechlessly at the cheery swell of St. Jim's, while Mr. Giggs glared at him as if he could have eaten him. And there was a pause in the Head's study.

## THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER

### Arthur Augustus Thinks Twice!

DR. HOLMES found his voice at last.

"D'Arcy!"

"Yaas, sir."

"You—you admit having committed an act of—of dishonesty——"

Arthur Augustus flushed crimson.

"Certainly not, sir," he exclaimed indignantly. "I twust you know me bettah than to suppose anythin' of the kind."

"I fail to understand you, D'Arcy. You

admit having taken away a bicycle belonging to this young man."

"Stole it!" hooted Mr. Giggs.

Arthur Augustus turned his eyes on Mr. Giggs. It was dawning upon his noble mind that Skimpole, of the Shell, was not the only Extremist who did not like Extremism when it came home to roost.

"Pway dwy up, Mr. Giggs," said D'Arcy, with dignity. "I should be sowwy to stwike you in the pwesence of my headmastah, but I cannot allow you to use such expwessions to me."

"My eye!" stuttered Mr. Giggs. "You took the blinking jigger! You boned my jigger! What do you call it?"

"You know perfectly well what it is called, Mr. Giggs. It is called a wedistwibution of wealth."

"Eh?"

"D'Arcy!" thundered the Head. "Explain yourself at once, if you have any explanation to give."

"Certainly, sir. I am vewy willin' to explain. Bein' an Extwemist——"

"A—a—a—a what?" stuttered the Head.

"An Extwemist, sir."

"Bless my soul!"

Dr. Holmes gazed at Arthur Augustus. The thunder in his brow cleared away a little. There even appeared a twinkle in his majestic eyes. It was barely possible that the Head saw something of a comic nature in Arthur Augustus having imbibed and adopted the latest "ism."

"Bein' an Extwemist, sir, I am bound to wegard bicycles, as well as ewewy othah form of pwopahty, as public pwopahty," explained Arthur Augustus. "Mr. Giggs' bike was no more his than mine. A poor chap who was vewy tired asked me for help. He was in need of immediate help, sir, and it was, of course, impossible to leave the mattah ovah until Extwemism comes in, and bikes are nationalised. So I gave him that bike to wide, and advised him to sell it when he had done with it. I have no doubt he has done so."

"Bless my soul!"

"Of course, I should not have acted in this mannah, sir, had the bike belonged to



anybody else," said Arthur Augustus. "As it belonged to an Extwemist, it was all wight. I cannot undahstand in the vewy least what Mr. Giggs is complainin' about."

"I want my bike!" roared Mr. Giggs. "I'll have the law of you! I'll send you a summons! I'll prosecute you for theft! I'll——"

Arthur Augustus eyed him haughtily.

"If you take that wepwehensible view of the mattah, Mr. Giggs, I shall certainly pay you for the bike."

"You certainly will, or else you'll go to chokey," said Mr. Giggs venomously.

"But I must we-mark," said Arthur Augustus sternly, "that I wegard you as an uttah humbug and hypocwite, Mr. Giggs. You are pwofessin' opinions upon which you wefuse to act. You are an awwant humbug!"

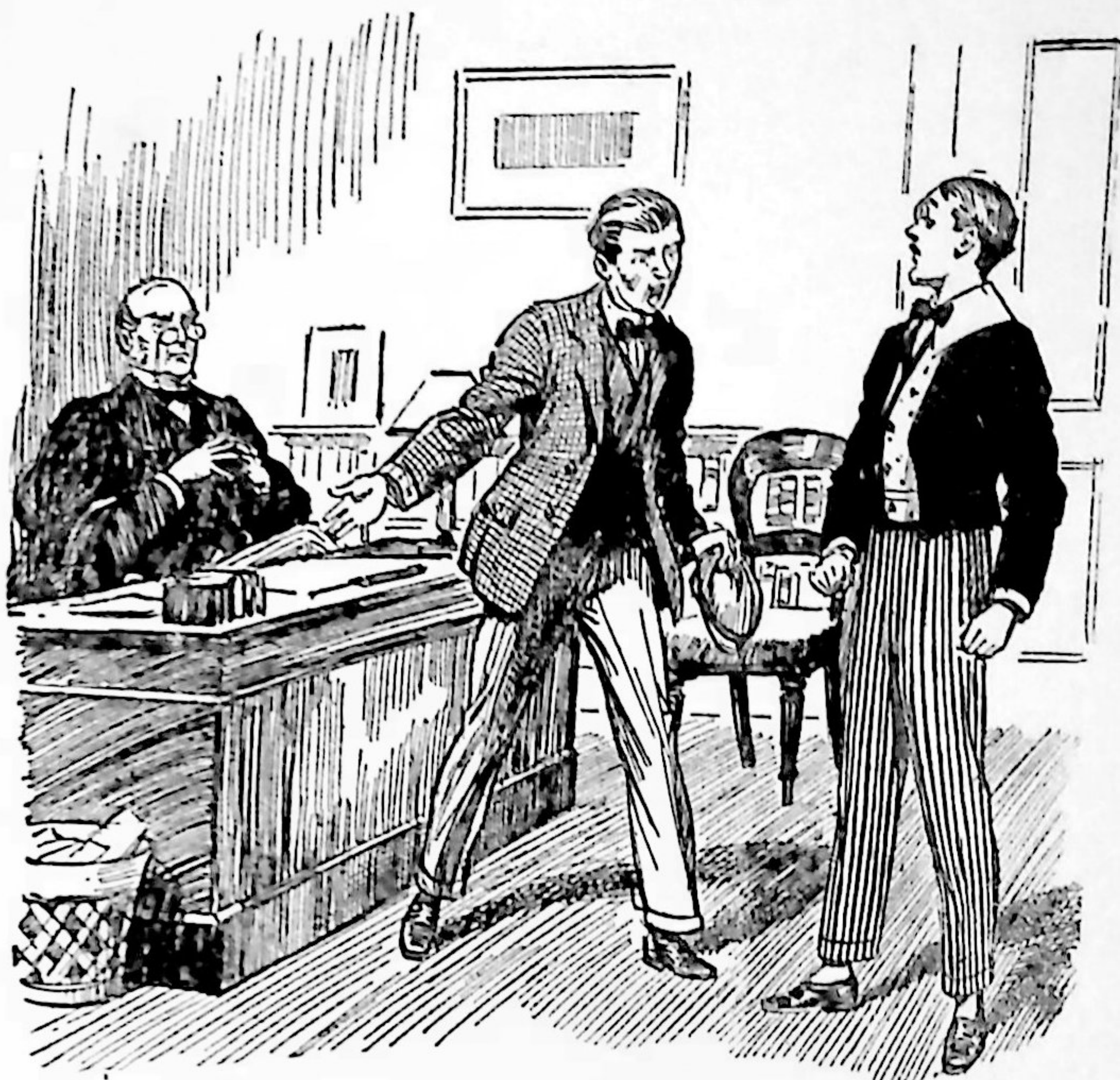
"Silence, please!" exclaimed the Head. "You utterly stupid and foolish boy——"

"Bai Jove!"

"If you have been reading or hearing of matters which you are not yet old enough to understand, it is very unfortunate," said the Head. "But it is no excuse for your conduct, D'Arcy. Whatever Mr. Giggs' opinions may be, if you believed that they would make him willing to part with his property without receiving its value in exchange, you must be a remarkably stupid boy."

"Weally, sir——"

"I shall pay Mr. Giggs for the bicycle——"



"I want my bike!" roared Mr. Giggs as Arthur Augustus eyed him haughtily. "I'll have the law on you! I'll prosecute you for theft!" (See Chapter 15.)

"Somebody will, or there'll be trouble!" hooted Mr. Giggs.

"And the bill will be sent to your father, D'Arcy."

"Bai Jove!"

"You will also be caned by your House-master——"

"Oh!"

"And if you should ever repeat this absurd conduct, you will be flogged by me!" rapped the Head.

"I—I—weally, sir——"

"You will now take this note to Mr. Railton."

"But weally, sir——"

"Silence!"

The Head wrote a brief note and handed it to Arthur Augustus. The swell of St. Jim's, note in hand, went to the door. There he paused to cast a glance of the



greatest scorn at Mr. Giggs, who gave him a glare and a snort in return. Then he left the study.

"Well?" exclaimed a dozen voices as Arthur Augustus reached the corner of the passage.

"I am sent to Mr. Wailton, you chaps."

"What for?" asked Blake.

"I am not suah, but I wathah think it is for a lickin'," said Arthur Augustus. "The Head appeahed to be quite watty. I weally feah it is goin' to be a lickin'."

Arthur Augustus' fear was well founded. It was a licking!

When the swell of St. Jim's emerged from Mr. Railton's study, he was looking quite pale and very grave.

Mr. Giggs, recompensed for the loss of his machine, shook the dust of St. Jim's from his feet and departed. He had not lost on the transaction. Dr. Holmes did not know so much about the value of bikes as Mr. Giggs knew. Tom Merry & Co. gathered round Arthur Augustus D'Arcy and walked him away to No. 10, in the Shell.

Arthur Augustus did not sit down to tea. He had his tea leaning in an elegant attitude on the mantelpiece. It appeared that Mr. Railton had put considerable beef into the caning.

Tom Merry & Co. were sympathetic, but they could not help grinning. After tea, Arthur Augustus had a few words to say.

"You fellows——"

He paused.

"Go it, old bean!" said Tom.

"I am goin' to give up Extwemism——"

"Bravo!"

"And I twust you fellows will take warnin'——"

"Eh?"

"And beware of the dangah of gettin' hold of cwanky opinions and airin' them," said Arthur Augustus seriously. "Thoughtless youngstahs like you fellows are vewy liable to make asses of yourselves in that way. I twust this will be a lesson to you!"

"Well, my hat!" said Tom Merry.

And that was all he could say!

THE END

## War from an Arm-Chair!

No longer does the greatest peril to warships threaten from the seas. From the air it comes: depth charges and wireless-controlled torpedoes dropped from aeroplanes! Thus destruction can come in a moment to battleships and cruisers that cost millions of pounds each.

But modern methods of warfare are not stopping at that. With the coming of television and the perfection of wireless, the "brains" of a future war will be farther and safer from the actual perils of combat even than they were in the Great War. It is predicted by scientists that future wars—if ever they arrive—will be conducted from headquarters in cement-and-armour-plate-shielded caverns far below the ground.

There the Headquarters Staff will sit back in padded armchairs, watching before them on a vivid screen the panorama of any piece of battle-front they switch on.

Orders will be sent out by wireless, and if experiments now being conducted progress successfully, the battleships and other fighting craft of the Navy will be worked without hands. Electrical equipment aboard the vessels will pick from the ether orders wirelessed in code from G.H.Q., and act on them, without human intervention.

Whether such things will be possible at some future date with bombing and raiding aeroplanes no man can yet tell.

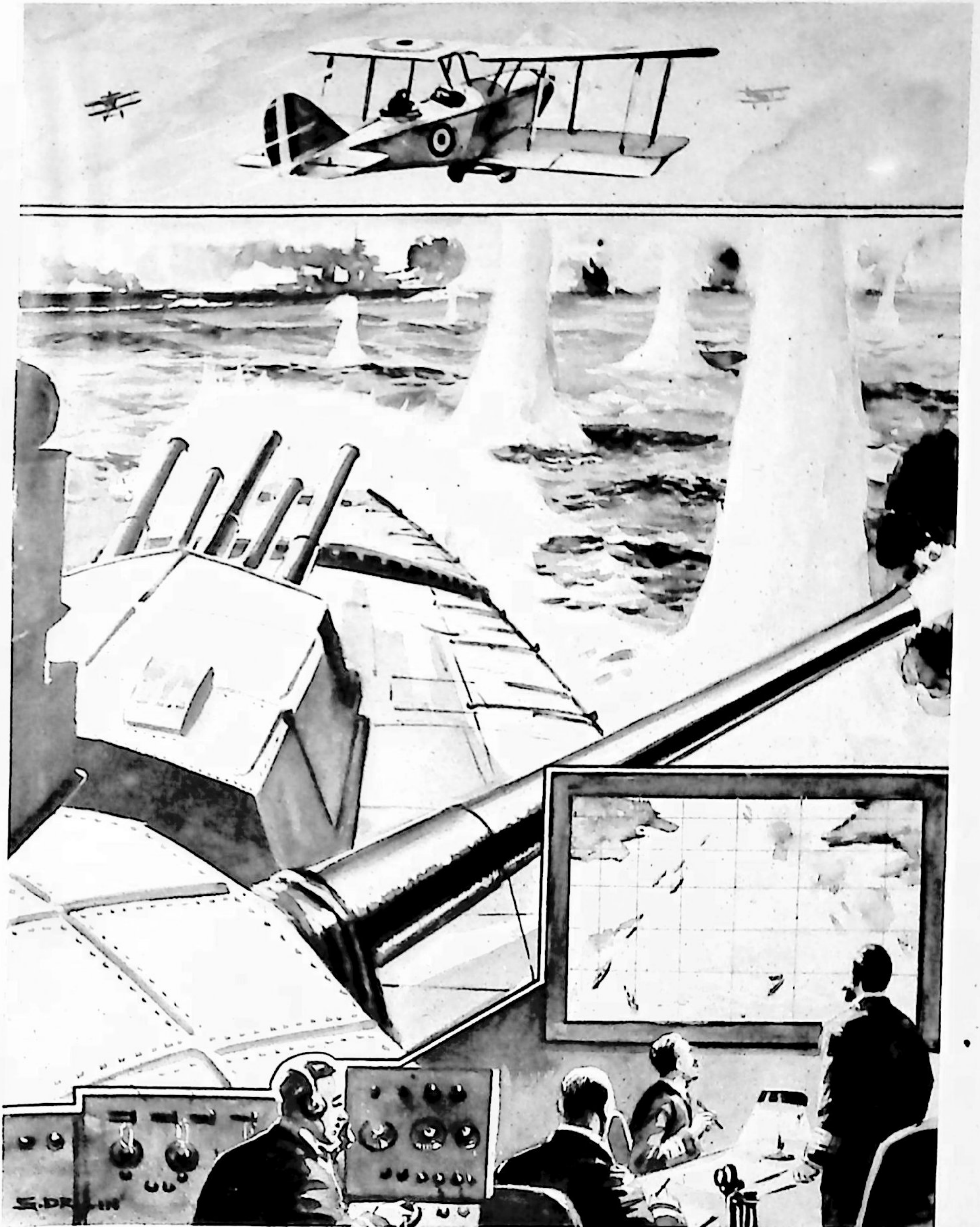
But improvements in aircraft have developed so rapidly in the last few years that *anything* may be possible. At present we have super-bombing machines that can carry four tons of bombs apiece, and travel 4,000 miles without a stop.

Three hundred miles an hour will be the speed of their successors. Soaring at a height of up to 45,000 feet, they will hurtle down at a lower enemy at a diving speed of upwards of 800 miles an hour!

Battleships will be defenceless against the appalling bomb-droppers—unless television and wireless combine to shatter the enemy 'planes as they hurtle through the air!



# The Eye of Science in War!



To face page 80

Watching a Naval Battle on the Tevisor Screen at the Admiralty.