



MAKING GAME OF GUSSY

By MARTIN CLIFFORD

No fellow at St. Jim's perhaps has had his leg pulled so much as the elegant, aristocratic Arthur Augustus D'Arcy; and once more, in this snappy humorous story, he finds himself—too late—the game of an enterprising japer.

THE FIRST CHAPTER

Gussy's Aunt Harriet

"MAN in!"
"Get a move on, Gussy!"
"You're holding up the game, slowcoach!"

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy was ready at last. He came out of the pavilion, padded and gloved, and looking capable of doughty deeds. And doughty deeds were necessary now, if the School House eleven was to have a winning chance in the duel with the New House.

Batting first on an excellent wicket, the New House had put together the very useful total of 172.

School House were now replying to this total, but it was not a very convincing reply. The batsmen were all at sea against the deadly bowling of Fatty Wynn, and the crafty deliveries of Koumi Rao, the Indian junior.

Tom Merry, who skippered the side, had played a fast ball into his wicket in the first over. Talbot, usually a sound reliable bat, was caught in the slips without scoring. Harry Noble and Jack Blake had manfully "stopped the rot" and stayed together for half an hour, snatching singles when oppor-

tunity offered. But Blake's wicket had fallen now, his stumps being spreadeagled by one of Fatty Wynn's "expresses."

Only twenty runs on the board, and three good men out. That was the position when Arthur Augustus D'Arcy marched majestically down the pavilion steps, gripping his bat with a business-like air.

"Play up, Gussy!" said Tom Merry.

"Wynn's stuff wants watching; it's uncanny!" remarked Jack Blake as he passed his chum.

Arthur Augustus nodded grimly. He was resolved to put a better complexion on the game. He felt good for fifty; he even had dreams of making a century, as he stalked gracefully on to the field. If only he could wear down the New House bowling and rob it of its sting, the rest would be easy. Runs would come fast and free. In his mind's eye, Arthur Augustus visualised himself being carried shoulder-high to the pavilion, to the strains of "The Conquering Hero."

But the fond dreams of the Swell of St. Jim's were rudely shattered. The voice of Kildare, the captain of St. Jim's, hailed him from the distance.

"D'Arcy! You're wanted on the 'phone in the prefects'-room—at once!"

"Oh, bothah!" ejaculated Arthur Augustus, ruefully retracing his steps.

"Come and have your knock first, Gussy!" called Fatty Wynn. "We shan't keep you a second. The first ball will do the trick!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Without deigning to reply to that impudent remark, Arthur Augustus returned to the pavilion. He threw his bat into a corner, and discarded his pads and gloves, and pulled on a blazer.

"Pway put me lowah down in the battin' list, Tom Mewwy," he said. "I've got to go an' ansawah a telephone call. It is most expewatin'."

And Arthur Augustus hurried away to the prefects'-room, wondering who had been thoughtless enough to ring him up at such a critical period in the fortunes of School House cricket.

"D'Arcy speakin'," he said tersely, having placed the receiver to his ear.

It was a feminine voice that replied over the wires—a somewhat sharp, strident voice.

"You are Arthur Augustus D'Arcy?"

"Yaas."

"My dear Arthur! I am your Aunt Harriet."

"Bai Jove!" ejaculated the swell of St. Jim's in surprise. "I was not awah that I possessed an Aunt Hawwiet!"

"Probably not. I have been abroad, Arthur, and have not seen you since you were a baby. You will not, of course, remember how I used to dandle you on my knee and comfort you when you squalled——"

"Ahem!" interjected Arthur Augustus hastily. "Are you stayin' with the patah, aunt, an' speakin' fwom Eastwood House?"

"No, Arthur; I am speaking from a public



Gloved and padded, Arthur Augustus D'Arcy emerged from the pavilion, looking capable of doughty deeds.

call-box at Wayland Junction. I am travelling to London, and thought I would break my journey here in order to spend a few hours with my little nephew."

"Yaas, of—of course!" said Arthur Augustus brightly.

Inwardly, he groaned. It was frightful luck, he reflected, that Aunt Harriet, who had not come into his life for fourteen years, should suddenly step into it again at a time when a House-match was in progress. Really, these long lost aunts should show more consideration!

"Will you come over and join me, Arthur? You will find me in the waiting-room. We will have a cup of tea somewhere, and then I should like to pay a flying visit to your school. I trust that will be quite convenient?"

It would not be convenient. It would be most decidedly inconvenient. But Arthur Augustus, who was the soul of chivalry and politeness, would not have dreamed of saying so. He could not explain that he was taking part in an important House-match, in which the School House were fighting with their backs to the wall, and runs were sorely needed. Aunt Harriet would not understand.

"Yaas, it will be quite convenient, Aunt Hawwiet," said Arthur Augustus. "I will come ovah an' join you wight now."

With a rueful countenance, the swell of St. Jim's replaced the receiver on its hooks. Then he sought out Tom Merry, and explained the position.

"What awful luck!" said Tom. "Still, it can't be helped. I expect Figgins will agree to let me play a substitute. And there's just a chance that your aunt may not keep you all the afternoon; in which case, you might be back in time for the second innings."

Arthur Augustus nodded.

"I hope that will be possible, Tom Mewwy. You will be badly needin' my services in the second innin's, I'm thinkin'. I shall hope to bag a centuwy, an' pull the game out of the fish. So-long, deah boy!"

And Arthur Augustus hurried away to keep his appointment. By taking short cuts across the fields, he soon reached Wayland, and it was in a state of breathlessness that he arrived at the general waiting-room on the station.

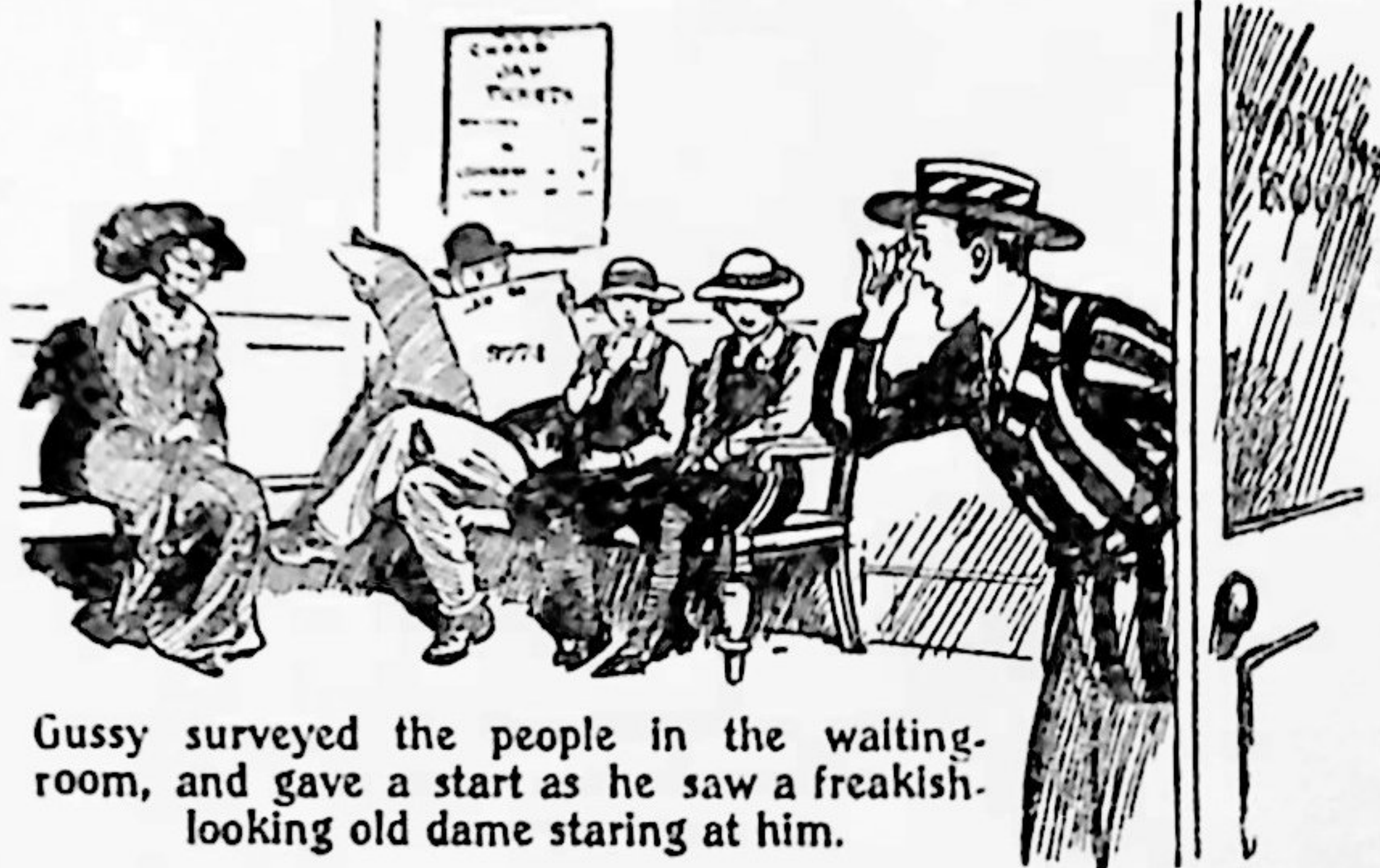
There were about a dozen people in the waiting-room. Arthur Augustus surveyed them in turn through his monocle. But he could not "place" his Aunt Harriet. There were only three members of the fair sex, and two of these were schoolgirls. The other was a very freakish-looking old dame, dressed in weird and wonderful attire, which was neither old-fashioned nor new-fashioned, but a fashion all its own. A long, trailing skirt, a blouse buttoned to the chin, and a very gaudy hat, with plumes, were among the old dame's equipment. She also wore an enormous pair of spectacles; and an extremely red nose lent the last ludicrous touch to her appearance.

Arthur Augustus fairly jumped when he caught sight of this strange female. The spectacle of ridiculous and ill-fitting clothes always shocked him, for he was very sensitive in such matters.

He did not suppose for one moment that the old dame could be his Aunt Harriet. The D'Arcy aunts were ladies of elegance and refinement. They dressed tastefully, and certainly they did not specialise in red noses.

Arthur Augustus was about to retreat, when suddenly, to his horror, the grotesque female rose from her seat and came towards him.

"Arthur!" she croaked. "My dear nephew! Your features



Gussy surveyed the people in the waiting-room, and gave a start as he saw a freakish-looking old dame staring at him.

have changed but little since you were a squalling infant. I should have known you anywhere."

So saying, the old dame flung her arms around the neck of Arthur Augustus, and hugged him fervently, at the same time kissing him soundly on both cheeks.

There was a titter from the onlookers. Arthur Augustus broke away, his face crimson. Out of the corner of his eye he saw that the two schoolgirls were convulsed with merriment.

"You—you are my Aunt Hawwiet?" he gasped incredulously.

"Of course!" was the reproachful reply. "Have you no greeting for your old aunt, who used to dandle you on her knee, and croon lullabies, when you were a fractious babe? Come! Kiss me like a dutiful nephew!"

With burning cheeks, Arthur Augustus obeyed.

There was a fresh titter from the onlookers, and the swell of St. Jim's felt that he could not endure this humiliating situation any longer. He took Aunt Harriet by the arm, and half-led, half-dragged her from the waiting-room. A chuckle followed them.

"Are you not pleased to see me, Arthur?" inquired Aunt Harriet, frowning over her spectacles.

Arthur Augustus gulped hard.

"Weally, aunt, I am delighted!" he murmured; though delight had no place in the emotions which surged within him at that moment. "I twust you are in the pink of condish—that is to say, in the best of health?"

"I am dying —"

"G w e a t Scott!" ejaculated Arthur Augustus in alarm.

"I am dying for a cup of tea!"

"Oh!"

"It has been a trying and vexatious journey," said Aunt Harriet.

"The porters have been appallingly rude, and I have been an object of mirth to my fellow-passengers—though why I can't for the life of me understand!"

Arthur Augustus was scarcely aware of what his aunt was saying. He hurried her out of the station, painfully conscious of his burning cheeks, and the fact that people were staring and sniggering. They had ample cause to stare and snigger, for Aunt Harriet's appearance was so quaint and comical that it was calculated to cause a breach of the peace.

As they passed along the High Street, a gang of urchins followed behind, cackling loudly, and making remarks which were the reverse of complimentary.

Undoubtedly, a large crowd would soon have collected had not Arthur Augustus piloted his aunt into the nearest tea-rooms. He had intended, originally, to take her to the Café Royal, where an orchestra played during the afternoon; but he now shrank from the publicity of a popular café. It was doubtful, even, whether the proprietor would have admitted so strange a female as Aunt Harriet.

THE SECOND CHAPTER

Hoaxed!

THE "Blue Bird" tea-rooms, into which Arthur Augustus ushered his aunt, were luckily deserted. They afforded a haven of refuge to Gussy at that moment. He escorted Aunt Harriet to a small table, and ordered tea for two.

"Will you take anythin' to eat, Aunt Hawwiet?" inquired Arthur Augustus.

"Well, I am not hungry, dear boy, but I might peck at a jam-tart or two."

The waitress brought a dish of jam-tarts,

and Aunt Harriet "pecked" at them to such good purpose that she soon succeeded in clearing the lot.

Arthur Augustus sat spellbound. He had not expected his aunt to have a voracious appetite, nor to appease that appetite with jam-tarts at a speed which Fatty Wynn or Baggy Trimble would have envied. Gussy had always associated old ladies with dry toast; never with jam-tarts.

But Aunt Harriet was not finished yet. She "pecked" at some doughnuts, and then at some cream-buns; and then she asked for a mouthful of plum-cake. Her "mouthful" disposed of half the cake.

Arthur Augustus sipped his tea, and gaped at his aunt in amazement.

"I—I thought you said you weren't hungry, Aunt Hawwiet?" he blurted out.

"Neither am I," was the reply. "This is merely a little light refreshment."

"Bai Jove!"

"Have you any ices, waitress? Yes? Well, bring me a strawberry-ice—the largest size."

The waitress brought the ice, and Arthur Augustus began to feel decidedly uncomfortable. He was thinking about the bill, which he would doubtless be expected to pay. Having come away in a hurry, he had left his wallet at St. Jim's; and he had only a few shillings in the pockets of his flannel trousers. Supposing—awful thought!—he had not enough money to meet the bill?

"Come, Arthur, you are very taciturn!" said Aunt Harriet reprovingly. "Tell me all about yourself, and your life at St. James's College. Is it a nice place? I will come up and see it presently."

Arthur Augustus groaned, and quaked inwardly. He was not a snob, and he knew



"My heye!" ejaculated Taggles as he saw Aunt Harriet arrive. "What a hextraordinary female!"

he ought not to be ashamed of his own aunt ; but the prospect of Aunt Harriet bursting upon St. Jim's, in all her grotesqueness, simply appalled him. What a sensation her appearance would create ! What endless chaffing and chipping he would have to endure from his school-fellows, afterwards ! He wondered how he could possibly survive such an ordeal.

"What time is your twain, aunt ?" he inquired, with a wild hope that considerations of time might prevent the visit to St. Jim's.

"Oh, never mind that, Arthur. Let me hear what you have got to say for yourself."

So Arthur Augustus chatted away, with a forced air of cheerfulness. Like Wilkins Micawber, he hid the ravages of care under a sickly mask of mirth. All the time he was talking his mind was haunted by two things—the amount of the bill, and the threatened visit of his aunt to St. Jim's.

Furtively, with his hands under the tablecloth, Arthur Augustus counted out his money. His chatter was punctuated by musical chinks. He calculated that he had six shillings and a halfpenny. And when the waitress bore down upon him, bringing the bill on a salver, Arthur Augustus scarcely dared to look at it.

Prepared for the worst, he forced his gaze towards the bill. It was for exactly six shillings. He was saved ! With a gasp of relief, he placed the money on the salver, and was left with only a halfpenny in his pocket. He could not insult the waitress by leaving her such a sum as a tip. It was unfortunate, but she would have to go without.

"And now," said Aunt Harriet, rising, "I will come and see this fine school you have been telling me about, and be introduced to your kind teachers and playmates. Gracious, boy ! Why do you groan ? Are you ill ?"

"Nunno !" stuttered Arthur Augustus, escorting Aunt Harriet from the tea-rooms. "I was not awah that I gwoaned, aunt. Pway excuse me, while I ordah a taxi."

It was Gussy's intention to proceed by taxicab to St. Jim's, and to pay the fare on arrival. It would be impossible to walk, without running the gauntlet of grinning crowds. And if Aunt Harriet were to be seen by P.-C. Crump, the local limb of the



Arthur Augustus had saved the game, and he was carried off the field shoulder-high by his comrades.

law, she would probably be arrested on sight as a suspected person.

The taxi was summoned, and the journey to St. Jim's was a nightmare to Arthur Augustus.

Fortunately, the quadrangle was deserted, all the fellows being on the playing-fields. The only person who witnessed the arrival of the taxi was Taggles, the porter ; and Taggles nearly fell down in his astonishment.

"My heye !" he ejaculated. "Wot a hextraordinary female ! I must speak to Master D'Arcy about this. Such characters ain't allowed in these 'ere presinks."

But before Taggles had a chance to tackle Arthur Augustus, that harassed youth fairly rushed his aunt into the building, and took her along to No. 6 Study. He excused himself a moment, in order to go and settle with the taxi-driver ; then he rejoined Aunt Harriet. He found her gazing out of the window across the green playing-fields.

"Arthur !" she said. "I see there is a cricket-match in progress. Were you taking part in it ?"

"Yaas, aunt. It—it's a House-match, you know."

"Then why did you not tell me, you foolish boy ? I would not have interrupted your

childish amusements for worlds. Would you like to go and finish your game? If so, I will wait here."

Arthur Augustus brightened up.

"That is vewy kind of you, Aunt Hawwiet."

"Not at all! Run along, little man!"

Arthur Augustus hurried off to the cricket-ground. He pelted breathlessly up to Tom Merry.

"How's the game goin', deah boy? Am I in time for a knock?"

"Just!" said Tom as another wicket was seen to fall. "You're last man in, Gussy, and we want seventy to win. It's up to you and Levison."

The swell of St. Jim's hastily buckled on his pads, and then hurried out to join Levison major at the wicket.

The New House fieldsmen grinned as they saw him coming.

"Last man in!" chortled Figgins. "It's all over, bar shouting."

But Figgins was wrong. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy was out to win the match, and he set about the bowling in wholehearted style. He concentrated his mind on the cricket, and resolutely banished from his thoughts the ordeal that was to follow—the introduction of Aunt Harriet to St. Jim's.

Levison, a sound batsman, and cool in a crisis, backed up Arthur Augustus in spirited fashion. Runs came readily, and Figgins, dismayed by this unexpected rally on the part of the School House, changed his bowlers. Kerr and Redfern relieved Fatty Wynn and Koumi Rao; but the only result of this manœuvre was to increase the rate of scoring.

It was a fine fight for victory, and the excitement became tense as the runs were speedily knocked off, until only four were wanted.

The winning hit fell to Arthur Augustus. Away went the whizzing leather, soaring over mid-on's head to the distant boundary. And from all the School House partisans came a deep-throated roar:

"Bravo, Gussy!"

"School House for ever!"

Arthur Augustus had made 50, and he was carried off the field shoulder-high by his exuberant comrades.

The swell of St. Jim's ought to have shown a happy, smiling face at such a moment; instead of which, he looked very glum as he suddenly remembered Aunt Harriet, waiting in the study.

"I—I say, deah boys!" he faltered, turning to his chums. "My Aunt Hawwiet is heah—waitin' in the study. Will you come along an' be intwoded?"

"Yes, rather!" said Tom Merry.

And Gussy's face grew longer and longer as the cricketers trooped into the building. He pictured the mirth and amazement which the spectacle of Aunt Harriet would provoke; and he actually shuddered as he led the way to No. 6 study.

On entering that apartment, however, Arthur Augustus had the surprise of his life.

Aunt Harriet was gone! And on the table was a note for Arthur Augustus—a brief but staggering message.

"Dear Gussy,—Thanks awfully for the topping tea! Sorry to have interrupted your cricket, but I didn't know there was a House-match on.

"Your noble leg has been pulled once again by

"Yours cheerily,

GORDON GAY (alias Aunt Harriet)."

Gussy's countenance, as he read that note, underwent a whole variety of expressions.

"Gordon Gay!" he ejaculated at last. "That Gwammah School boundah, in disguise! Oh, the uttah wottah! Next time I see him, I will administah a feahful thwashin'!"

"Where's Aunt Harriet, Gussy?" inquired Jack Blake, glancing round the study.

And when Arthur Augustus described his misadventures of the afternoon, and Gordon Gay's latest masquerade, the study rang with laughter.

The only person who failed to see where the joke came in was Arthur Augustus himself; though he was mightily relieved to find that "Aunt Harriet" was a myth, and that the ordeal he had so much dreaded was not to happen, after all!

THE END

HEROES OF GREYFRIARS HISTORY

By Mr. H. S. QUELCH, M.A.
(Author of "The History of Greyfriars.")



EVERY great school has its gallery of heroes, whose names and exploits are proudly remembered in its annals.

Greyfriars does not lag behind in this respect. Looking back down its long years of history I find many instances of heroic deeds which have been performed in various crises.

First on the roll of Greyfriars heroes I should place the name of Arthur Courtney, a prefect of the Sixth, who sacrificed his life during one of the war-time air raids. In circumstances of the greatest difficulty and danger he succeeded in rescuing a fellow senior from a blazing building which had been struck by a bomb. Unhappily, Courtney did not emerge unscathed from that fiery furnace. He suffered injuries of so severe a nature that he died shortly afterwards. Never shall I forget the ringing words of Dr. Locke in the school chapel on the Sunday following Courtney's death:

"He died as he lived—a very gallant gentleman!"

Great and sudden disasters always give the potential hero his opportunity. In such crises bravery is born and bravado dies. When Greyfriars School took fire on the fateful night of August 13th, 1873, it was only the heroism of Terence and Trelawny, of the Sixth, which averted serious loss of life.

After the alarm had been given, and the majority of the boys had made a successful dash for safety, it was found that the Third Form dormitory was cut off by a blazing staircase. There was no fire-escape in those days, and the unfortunate fags were trapped. Ladders were hastily fetched and reared up to the windows; and it was Terence and

Terence and Trelawny ran up and down the ladders repeatedly, rescuing fags and bearing them to safety.

Trelawny who, with untiring energy, played the part of firemen. They ran up and down the ladders repeatedly, rescuing the fags and bearing them to safety. Then a roll-call revealed the startling fact that two of the fags were still left behind in the dormitory, presumably overcome by the fumes. Terence and Trelawny sped up the ladders once more and forced their way through the blinding smoke into the dormitory, which was now a furnace. The fags were rescued in the nick of time, and were carried down the ladders amid tumultuous cheers from the crowd in the Close.

Heroic rescues from the River Sark have been so numerous that I cannot recount them all here, but there is one of these episodes of which I must make mention.

You would scarcely expect the name of William George Bunter, of my Form, to figure on a scroll of heroes. Yet Bunter has been responsible for one conspicuous act of bravery, when he plunged into the river and saved my own niece, Cora Quelch, from drowning.

Bunter has often bragged of feats of heroism which he has never performed, save in his fertile imagination; but on the occasion in question he proved himself a hero indeed. Yet, strange to relate, he never brags about that one genuine heroic exploit in his career.