

SPOOFED!



By Martin Clifford

THE FIRST CHAPTER GUSSY'S BARGAIN !

"WHAT'S that ? "

Blake, Herries and Digby asked the question together. They really did not need to ask.

For there was no doubt as to the nature of the article that Arthur Augustus D'Arcy placed on the study table. It was—or had been—a clock.

It was, however, a "has-been" of the most pronounced kind. One of the hands was gone; the other was immovably fixed. The glass was cracked, with a gap in it. Still, it was easily recognisable as the remains of a clock. There was no occasion for the question, or for the surprised stare that accompanied it.

"What the thump—" continued Blake.

"Weally, Blake—" "

"Well, what is it ? "

"It's a clock, deah boy !" said Arthur Augustus mildly. "I think

it is wathah in need of wunnin' wepairs ! But it is a clock."

"Somebody's sold you that clock!" said Blake, raising an accusing forefinger and pointing it at Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

"Yaas, wathah ! "

"Gussy's sold, as well as the clock !" remarked Digby.

"Weally, Dig—" "

"That is what comes of letting Gussy off his chain !" observed Herries. "He's bound to do these things. Still, we can find the fellow who sold him that clock, and give him a hiding."

"Weally, Hewwies—" "

"Trimble, I suppose," said Blake. "Trimble's the only fellow at St. Jim's who'd sell a thing like that to anybody."

"It was not Twimble, Blake."

"Well, who was it, then ? " demanded Blake. "Let's have his name and we'll go and strew the

*When Trimble spoofs his Form-mates,
With joy he's all a-bubble;
But sad to say, he rues the day,
For in its wake comes trouble!*

hungry churchyard with his bones."

"Weally, you know——"

"How much did you give for it?" asked Digby. "If you gave more than twopence, we'll bump you, as well as the chap who sold you a pup."

"I gave twelve shillin's, Dig."

Blake & Co. jumped up. They were quite prepared to hear that Gussy had given a shilling, or even half-a-crown, for that utterly useless piece of lumber. But well as they knew their noble chum, twelve shillings took them by surprise.

"Twelve bob!" roared Blake.

"Not at all, Blake!"

"You said——"

"I said twelve shillin's," said Arthur Augustus gently.

"What's the difference, ass?"

"There is a considewable diffewence, Blake, between givin' the wight name to a coin of the wealm, and usin' an absurd, slangay expwession. You see, the clock was wun up to twelve shillin's, and I bagged it. It is not weally a bad clock—in a way——"

"We've got a clock in the study, fathead!"

"That's all wight, deah boy. This clock does not keep time. We shall still need the old clock."

"What's the good of it, then?"

Arthur Augustus looked thoughtful. His chums looked exasperated. Twelve shillings was a considerable sum to Study No. 6 in the Fourth.

"Well, I don't know that it's any good specially," remarked Gussy. "But it may come in useful. If you will tell me the date of your birthday, f'winstance——"

"My birthday?"

"Yaas. Tell me the date and I will give you this clock for a birthday pwesent."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Herries and Dig.

"You utter ass!" ejaculated Blake.

"You give me that clock for a birth-

day present, and I'll shove it down your back!"

"I wegard that as ungwateful, Blake. It is not ewewy fellow who gives a fellow a twelve-shillin' clock for a birthday pwesent."

"Oh, kill him, somebody!" said Blake.

"Or we might give it to our Form-mastah on his birthday," said Arthur Augustus brightly. "Mr. Lathom might be pleased. Or perwaps we could get Glyn of the Shell to make it go. It's an Amewican clock; but Glyn is an awf'ly elevah chap."

"You gave twelve bob for that clock——"

"Shillin's, deah boy."

"As your keepers——"

"Bai Jove, I uttahly wefuse to wegard you fellows as my keepahs!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus indignantly.

"As your keepers," roared Blake, "we're bound to keep you from wasting your substance, and making ducks and drakes of the pecuniary resources of this study! We're going to give you a bump for each bob!"

"Hear, hear!" said Herries and Digby heartily.

"Weally, you fellows——"

"Collar him!"

"Welease me, you uttah asses!" shouted Arthur Augustus. "I am just goin' to explain. It was weally a case of noblesse oblige, you know!"

"Noblesse doesn't oblige you to waste twelve bob!" grinned Blake.

"Go it!"

Bump!

"Yawoop!"

"That's one bob," said Blake. "Eleven more to come. It's inconsiderate of you to give your friends a hefty job like this, Gussy, on a warm afternoon. But duty's duty!"

Bump!

"You uttah ass!" shrieked Arthur Augustus, wriggling in the grasp of his

devoted chums. "I tell you—
Ooooooop!"

"Ten more," said Blake. "You will have to stand us some ginger-pop after this, Gussy. The labourer is worthy of his hire."

Bump!

"Oh cwumbs! I wepeat—
Yawooooop!"

"Hallo, what are you killing Gussy for?" Tom Merry of the Shell looked in at the open doorway of Study No. 6. "Let him off, and I'll give you this handsome vase."

"What?"

Tom Merry was carrying a large, cracked vase in his arms. Blake & Co., in amusement, left Arthur Augustus on the study carpet and stared at the captain of the Shell and his extraordinary burden.

"Where did you pick up that rubbish?" asked Blake.

"At a giddy sale. I gave six bob for it!" sighed Tom Merry.

"Then you're as potty as Gussy! It's not worth anything."

"Of course it isn't," said Tom. "Is anything ever worth anything at a leaving-sale? Fellows are expected to play up, though."

Arthur Augustus struggled up.

"Tom Mewwy, pway lend me a hand to give these wuffianly wottahs a feahful thwashin' all wound!" he exclaimed.

Tom Merry chuckled.

"He bought that clock!" said Blake, pointing to the object on the table. "He gave twelve bob—"

"Shillin's!" gasped Arthur Augustus.

"Twelve bob for that thing. Naturally we pitched into him," said Blake. "I think Manners and Lowther ought to bump you for buying that silly vase. I would."

"You uttah ass!" explained Arthur Augustus. "It's up to a chap at a leavin'-sale."

"You didn't tell us it was a leaving-sale."

"Weally, you ought to have known, Blake. You know that Sturgis of the Sixth is leavin'."

"This study hasn't time to notice the Sixth," said Blake. "And I jolly well think that Sturgis will leave a blessed millionaire if he is getting rid of his props at this rate!"

"Weally, Blake—"

"Anybody like this vase?" asked Tom Merry, holding it up.

"What's the good of it?" grunted Herries.

"It isn't any good. That's why I'm offering it to you."

"Fathead!"

Tom Merry laughed, and carried his purchase away down the passage. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy dusted his clothes, adjusted his eyeglass, and gave Blake & Co. a look of great sternness.

"If you fellows are goin' to apologise—" he began.

"That reminds me," said Blake.

"It weminds you that you have acted in a wuffianly and wude mannah?"

"Not at all. It reminds me that you've got nine more bumps to come. Collar him!"

Arthur Augustus hastily retired from Study No. 6.

THE SECOND CHAPTER

THE LEAVING-SALE.

STURGIS of the Sixth was leaving St. Jim's.

Sturgis of the Sixth was nobody in particular.

But he was leaving, and when a fellow left, there generally was a sale of his belongings, and on such occasions fellows rallied round—though not all so generously and recklessly as Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

Obviously, a fellow couldn't take with him, when he left school, a study

carpet much the worse for wear, a screen that showed plain traces of fencing foils and Indian clubs, a clock that wouldn't go, an oleograph splashed with ink, and other belongings of that kind. Probably his people would have stared at such a cargo reaching home.

So generally there was an auction in the fellow's study the day before he left, and fellows—especially fellows in his own Form—came round to bid. Good prices were given—that was understood. The things were of no use to the chap who was leaving—probably of little use to anybody else—but cash was always of use, and a fellow who was going was a fellow to be treated decently.

Perhaps dear friends missed him when he went. On the other hand, perhaps his friends were pleased to see the last of him. They might say, "Old Sturgis is gone," or they might say, "Thank goodness that ass Sturgis has cleared at last!" In either case, it was felt the proper thing to look in at the sale of his stuff and appropriate at least one article at twice its value.

Nearly all the Sixth had turned up at Sturgis' sale. Even Knox, the meanest fellow in the Sixth, had given a shilling for a pen-wiper worth a fraction of a penny. It was not the custom for a fellow to hold the sale personally. Another chap would act as salesman, and it was a point of honour to realise the highest prices possible. Mulvaney major of the Sixth had played auctioneer on this occasion. He had realised quite a handsome sum for property worth, perhaps, a pound at the most.

Mulvaney was a business man born. Besides appealing to sentiment in the Sixth for a fellow who was leaving, Mulvaney had promised his own fag a kicking if he didn't turn up at the sale and buy something, and he had gone round among the juniors men-

tioning the sale, and mentioning that it would be decent to help in giving old Sturgis a send-off. Fags of the Third were flattered at the idea of giving such a tremendous big gun as a Sixth-Former a send-off. Quite an army of the Third had turned up—unfortunately provided mostly with coppers.

Some of the Fourth and the Shell had gone, and in the midst of a senior crowd they would have been too nervous to bid but for the encouragement of Mulvaney major. Mulvaney major knocked down articles to them at prices fixed by his own fertile fancy, and the juniors felt too sheepish among the big Sixth-Formers to argue the point.

Thus Arthur Augustus D'Arcy had become possessed of that valuable clock. Tom Merry had been landed with the vase quite unexpectedly. Mulvaney major had said to him, "Come to Sturgis' leaving-sale, like a good chap!" and like a good chap Tom had gone. It was rather flattering to be sought after like this by the Sixth. But when the vase was knocked down to Tom, he was surprised, as he had not, so far, opened his mouth.

"Going-going-gone at six shillings, to Merry of the Shell!" said Mulvaney major. "Here you are, Merry!"

"Here, I say—" began Tom.

"Take it away—clear the room, you know!" said Mulvaney major. "Put the money on the table!"

"But, I say—"

"Now, this handsome hearth-rug—" said the auctioneer, and Tom had no chance to say anything more. Prye of the Fifth was sitting at the table in the corner to take the money, and he signed to Tom impatiently.

"Buck up! Pay, and clear!" he snapped.



"Ten more bumps," said Blake . . . Bump ! "Oh, cwumbs I " gasped Gussy. "I wepeat—Yawooooop I " "Hallo, what are you killing Gussy for ? " Tom Merry looked in at the open doorway, with a cracked vase in his arm.

" But, I say— "

" For goodness' sake don't waste time ! "

" But I never— "

" You're interrupting the business, Merry. Get a move on ! "

Tom Merry found the vase shoved into his arms, and, almost in a state of bewilderment, he paid for it and promptly cleared. He did not linger. He was afraid that Mulvaney major might knock down the bedstead to him if he stayed longer.

" Now, this beautiful hearth-rug ! " said Mulvaney major. " Did I catch your eye, Cutts ? Going to Cutts for a pound ! "

" You may have caught my eye," smiled Cutts of the Fifth, " but you won't catch my quids."

" Any advance on a pound ? "

asked the auctioneer, unheeding. " Did you say twenty-five shillings, Knox ? "

" No, I jolly well didn't ! "

" Going to St. Leger for twenty-five-and-six ! " said Mulvaney major. " Pay at the table, St. Leger ! "

" Oh gad ! " said St. Leger.

St. Leger of the Fifth had plenty of money, and he laughed and paid. Mulvaney major already had an ornamental jar in hand. Once it had been a jam-jar ; but Sturgis, when in the Fourth, had covered it by sticking foreign stamps all over it, and that jar had followed him up the school from the Fourth Form to the Sixth. He had kept flowers in it, he had kept matches in it, he had kept ink in it, and he had even kept cigarettes in it. It was a jar of many

experiences, and in its old age it was somewhat cracked and chipped. It might have been a specimen of rare and priceless porcelain by the way Mulvaney major held it up and exhibited it.

"This fancy jar—this bootiful jar—covered with rare and now unobtainable foreign stamps—going at—did you say five shillings, Jones?"

"Not likely!"

"I think I caught your eye, Grundy?"

"Rats!" said Grundy of the Shell.

"Kick that cheeky fag out, Knox! Thanks!" There was a wild roar from Grundy in the passage. "Now, young Wilkins, if you want this jar—"

"I don't!" said Wilkins.

"Think again, Wilkins. This lovely jar—"

"Boil it!" said Wilkins.

"Throw that fag into the passage, Cutts, will you? The cheek of these fags is a bit too thick. Thanks! Seven-and-six for this handsome jar! Thank you, Master Trimble! It's yours for seven-and-six!"

"Oh, I say!" ejaculated Baggy Trimble.

"Pay at the table!"

"But—"

"This way!" said Prye. "Seven-and-six. What? What the thump do you mean by buying valuable jars if you haven't any ready money?"

"But I didn't!" gasped Trimble.

"Pay what you can, then," said Prye. "Get it over!"

"Oh, dear," said Trimble, "I've only got a bob! I say, Mulvaney, I never said anything. I didn't catch your eye. I never wanted to buy that jar. I didn't really, Mulvaney!"

But Mulvaney was already selling a damaged screen, and he had no ears for the hapless Trimble.

But Trimble had ears, and Prye of the Fifth had hold of one of them.

"Buck up!" he said. "Shell out!"
"Ow!"

Trimble shelled out his solitary shilling and escaped with the jar. He comforted himself with a faint hope of being able to sell it to some unwary fellow for threepence.

Conducted on business-like lines like this, the leaving-sale was quite a success. After it was over Mulvaney major sought out Sturgis of the Sixth.

"No end of a success," he told him. "What do you think of seven pounds ten shillings?"

"Oh, jolly good!" said Sturgis.

"And here's the money, excepting a quid that you're going to lend me till you see me again," said Mulvaney major.

And Sturgis pocketed six pounds ten.

After Sturgis of the Sixth was gone, various articles of problematical value were scattered in the other studies; and Baggy Trimble of the Fourth was making feverish attempts to sell a jar covered with rare and unobtainable stamps. The price of that jar came down from a shilling to twopence, then to a halfpenny; and still there were no takers. Finally, Baggy set it mournfully on the mantelpiece in Study No. 2—where sometimes he regarded it and thought of his shilling, and yearned to break it on the respective heads of Mulvaney major and Sturgis of the Sixth.

THE THIRD CHAPTER

MYSTERIOUS!

"Tom, old fellow—"
"Cut it out!" said Tom Merry.

"But I say, old chap—
persisted Trimble.

Tom Merry picked up a ruler.

"Where will you have it?" he asked.

"Old fellow—"

"You call me old fellow again, and

you'll get it on the napper," said the captain of the Shell. "That's a tip!"

Baggy Trimble grinned feebly.

The fat junior had butted into Study No. 10, in the Shell, where the Terrible Three were at prep—some days after the leaving-sale in Sturgis' study, and the unmarked and unlamented departure of Sturgis of the Sixth. Tom Merry & Co. had forgotten the existence of Sturgis, as most fellows at St. Jim's had—and the leaving-sale did not linger in their memory. But it lingered in Baggy Trimble's—as transpired subsequently.

"It's about that vase," said Baggy.

"That which?"

"That vase you bought from Sturgis—"

"Well, what about it?" asked Tom, puzzled.

"Baggy wants to buy it," suggested Monty Lowther. "You offered to give it to me, Tom. I'll accept it now, and sell it to Trimble."

"But I don't want to buy it," said Baggy hastily.

"Oh! That alters the case. I shall not accept your gift, Tom."

"Fathead!" said Tom Merry, laughing. "If you've got anything to say, Trimble, cough it up and clear. Prep, you know."

"Clear, anyway," suggested Manners.

"You don't want that vase, Merry?" asked Trimble.

"Not at all. It's cracked, and no good."

"Well, can I have it?"

Tom Merry laughed.

"Yes; if you like. Take it and go!"

"Good!"

Baggy Trimble jerked the vase out of the corner behind the bookcase, where it had been deposited, and departed.

"What on earth does he want the rubbish for?" said Manners.

"Blessed if I know—glad to get it out of the study, anyhow," said Tom, and he returned to his prep.

Baggy Trimble bore the vase away with great satisfaction. He landed it in his study, No. 2 in the Fourth, where Wildrake and Mellish were at prep. Both of them looked at him as he came in.

"More rubbish?" asked Wildrake.

"There isn't room in the study for all that stuff, Trimble," grumbled Percy Mellish.

Trimble did not trouble to answer. He put the vase in the bottom of the study cupboard very carefully, and retired. In the cupboard there were already a number of articles, about as valuable as Sturgis' vase, collected by Baggy Trimble. A football in a hopeless state of disrepair, a bat that had split, the skeleton of a tennis racket, an alarm-clock that was past praying for, and several other things formed quite a stack. Trimble's study-mates were puzzled. Trimble was an acquisitive youth, certainly; but why he was collecting rubbish like this was a mystery. Of late, Trimble seemed to have been smitten by a mania for acquiring all sorts and conditions of rubbish of no value whatever—and he was always ready to carry off any old thing that any fellow wanted to get rid of—indeed, Monty Lowther had already nicknamed him the Dust-man!

heedless of the surprise of his study-mates, Baggy left them to their prep—Baggy had no time for prep himself at present. He rolled along to Study No. 6.

Blake pointed to the door with his pen as Trimble rolled in. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy was more explicit.

"Pway don't wowwy, Twimble. Pweep, you know."

"It's about that clock," said Trimble.

"Eh! What clock?"

" That clock you bought at Sturgis' leaving-sale, old man. I heard you say it wasn't any good."

" Yaas, wathah ! "

" Well, if it isn't any good, you don't want it."

" Quite wight."

" Can I have it ? "

" Certainly. It will not keep time, Twimble. It is an Amewican clock ; and, besides, it has been damaged."

" That's all right ; I don't want it to keep time," said Baggy Trimble cheerfully.

" Bai Jove ! "

Baggy annexed the ancient clock, and rolled away contented. When he rolled into his own study with it there was a howl of protest from Percy Mellish.

" Look here, you ass, this study isn't a dustbin," exclaimed Mellish.

" What are you rummaging over the House and bringing all the cast-off crocks here for ? "

" I guess you're getting a little loose in the *cabeza*, Trimble," said Wildrake, staring in astonishment at the fat junior.

Trimble grinned complacently.

" That's all right," he said.

" It isn't all right," said Mellish tartly. " I've a jolly good mind to shove all that rubbish into the passage."

" Look here——"

" Oh, let him rip," said Wildrake. " It doesn't do any harm stacked in the cupboard. But what do you want it for, Trimble ? "

" That's telling ! " said Baggy Trimble mysteriously.

" You silly owl, tell us, then ! " snapped Mellish.

" D'Arcy gave twelve bob for that clock at the sale," said Baggy.

" D'Arcy's an ass—besides, Mulvaney major diddled him into it. Do you think anybody would give you

" twelve farthings for it ? " sniffed Mellish.

Trimble winked.

" Wait and see ! " he answered.

And he rolled away again, apparently in search of more useless plunder. The next morning, Trimble had some painful moments with Mr. Lathom in the Fourth Form-room. He had had no time for prep ; but, of course, he could not explain that to Mr. Lathom ; it never was any good talking sense to Form-masters, as Trimble had complained more than once. Trimble was given lines ; but, apparently, he forgave Mr. Lathom for the infliction ; for when the Fourth were dismissed, Baggy stopped at the Form-master's desk on the way out.

" If you please, sir——"

" I shall expect the lines after tea, Trimble."

" Yes, sir ; but that waste-paper basket——"

" Eh ? "

" It's jolly nearly worn out, sir," said Trimble, blinking at the astonished Form-master. " Isn't it time, sir, that we had a new waste-paper basket in the Form-room ? "

" Bless my soul ! " said Mr. Lathom.

" If it's done with, sir, I should like it in my study," ran on Trimble.

" I want one very much, sir."

" Upon my word ! "

" Can I have it, sir ? "

" No, Trimble, you may not have it. I gave you fifty lines, Trimble. They are doubled ! You may go."

" Oh, dear ! "

Baggy Trimble went, richer by fifty lines, but minus the desired object ; though what he wanted with a superannuated waste-paper basket really was a deep mystery.

During the next few days Trimble was an object of interest among the juniors in the School House of St. Jim's.



"That's the limit!" said Percy Mellish, when Trimble rolled into the study with a chair, of which two legs and part of the back were missing. "There's going to be a clearance here."

Collecting mania seemed to have seized him.

No matter how useless an article was, Trimble was eager to take possession of it; indeed, he routed over the box-rooms in search of abandoned lumber. His appearance in the passages was often hailed by the cry: "Here comes the Dustman!"

Mellish was loud in his protests against stacking the study with heaps of rubbish. In a few days the walls were almost covered with torn and discoloured pictures that nobody wanted; the mantelpiece was hidden by "ornaments" in various stages of chipping and disfigurement; the cupboard was full to overflowing with all sorts and conditions of articles.

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"Look here, Mellish——"

"I'm fed up!" roared Mellish wrathfully. "There won't be room to move soon, with your rubbish and your own fat carcase."

"I mayn't be here long, Mellish."

"What?"

"You'll be sorry when you don't see me in the study every day, Mellish," said Baggy in a tone more of sorrow than of anger.

Mellish stared at him.

"Why should I be sorry?" he asked.

"Look here——"

"If you went, I know it would be

a jolly lot more comfy in this study," said Mellish. "I jolly well wish you'd go and take your silly rubbish with you. But are you leaving?"

"I'm afraid so," said Baggy sadly.

"Hurrah!"

Mellish seemed quite bucked.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER PATHETIC!

TOM MERRY stopped, and he stared.

He was surprised.

Sauntering in the old quadrangle of St. Jim's after lessons Tom had come suddenly upon Baggy Trimble.

Baggy's aspect was peculiar.

He was standing with his fat chin lifted, looking up at the old ivied tower with a fixed and sorrowful gaze. He seemed unaware of Tom Merry's presence; though perhaps, from the corner of his eye, he had seen the captain of the Shell coming.

Baggy gave a deep sigh.

"The old grey tower—the dear old tower!" he murmured aloud. "Alas! The dear old school! To leave it—for ever—"

He sobbed a little.

"What the merry thump—" ejaculated Tom Merry.

He came up and bestowed a hearty slap on Trimble's shoulder.

"Ow!" exclaimed Trimble, brought back by that slap from poetic meditation to the common earth again. "Wow!"

"What's the row?" asked Tom. "What are you blinking up at the tower for? Can you see a bird's nest in the ivy?"

"I'm not thinking of birds' nests," said Trimble sadly.

"Not potty?" asked Tom.

"No!" roared Trimble.

"Not wandering in your mind?"

"No, you ass."

"Then what's the matter?"

Trimble gave him a sorrowful look.

"A fellow can't help feeling it a bit," he said, with a catch in his voice.

"Feeling what?"

"The parting of the ways," said Baggy.

"The which of the what?" ejaculated Tom Merry.

"The old school—the dear old school!" said Baggy poetically. "How it twines round the heart, you know—"

"My hat! Does it?"

"Of course it does. You feel a lump in your throat when you're leaving your old school," said Baggy.

"Every grey old stone touches a chord of—of memory, and—and so on."

"You're not leaving, are you?" asked Tom Merry, quite perplexed. Even if Baggy was leaving, Tom would not have expected him to feel pathetic and poetical about it. The only part of St. Jim's that might have been supposed to have twined itself round Trimble's heart was the tuckshop. And he was blinking at the old tower, not at the tuckshop.

Trimble gave a deep sigh.

"It's hard!" he said. "Wouldn't you feel it if you had to leave St. Jim's, Merry?"

"I suppose so," said Tom. "I hope I shouldn't go round the quad looking like a dying duck, though. But I say, are you really going?"

Baggy nodded his head as if his heart were too full for words.

Tom Merry's heart, always ready to err on the side of tenderness, was quite touched. Certainly it would have been a blow to him to leave St. Jim's; and he could feel for another fellow in the same fix. He did not like Baggy Trimble. Tom Merry had a wide tolerance, but somehow he simply could not stand Baggy Trimble. But if Baggy was leaving that altered the case. It was up to a

fellow to make the best of any chap—even a slippery and unpleasant chap like Trimble—if he was going for good.

"Dash it all," said Tom, "I'm sorry, Trimble."

And he spoke quite sincerely and cordially. He simply couldn't feel sorry personally to see the last of Trimble; that was asking too much of human nature. But he was sorry for Trimble.

"You mean that?" asked Baggy.

"Of course I do," grunted Tom.

"We haven't been very good friends, I'm afraid," said Trimble.

"Well, Fourth and Shell don't pal," said Tom. "Never mind that."

"But I do mind," said Baggy. "We've had our differences. You've kicked me more than once."

"Well, if you sneak a fellow's grub, you know—"

"I know! I know! I was to blame," said Trimble. "I couldn't bear malice—not now I'm leaving the old school for ever. The grey old stones—"

"Yes, yes! But why should you leave, when you're only in the Fourth?" asked Tom. "If you don't want to go, why not stay?"

"I'm not my own master," said Trimble sadly. "It's not for me to dispute the pater's wishes."

"Oh, certainly not," said Tom. "If that's it— Dash it all, I'm really sorry, old chap."

It was the first time on record that Tom had addressed Baggy Trimble as "old chap." But circumstances alter cases. Tom could not help feeling that this was "hard cheese" for Baggy. Certainly he was a rather unpleasant little beast. But he was leaving.

"I want to part friends with everybody," said Trimble.

"That's right."

"We've had our little troubles. A

ST. JIM'S JINGLES

TOM MERRY

(Captain of the Shell)



TOM MERRY, captain of the Shell,
Is famed the wide world over;
From Canada to Camberwell,
From Delaware to Dover.
They talk about him in Ceylon
(where every prospect pleases),
They yarn about him in Yukon,
And love his japes and wheezes.

Some readers may remember how,
A kid in knickerbockers,
Tom Merry made his primal bow,
And met with many mockers.
But Tommy very quickly showed
That he was not a "softy";
But one who cherished, on life's road,
Ambitions keen and lofty.

Jack Blake had been the leading light
Prior to Tom's appearance;
But Merry showed, in many a fight,
Such pluck and perseverance,
That Blake was banished from his throne,
And Tom became the leader;
The enterprise which he has shown
Delights each ardent reader.

He "digs" in Study Number Ten
With Lowther and with Manners;
This trinity of mighty men
Draws dozens to its banners.
Three British schoolboys of the best,
In friendship's bonds united,
They work and play with zeal and zest,
And see that wrongs are righted.

Tom Merry boasts a governess,
The worthy Miss Priscilla,
Who sends him hints on food and dress
From her secluded villa.
"Wear chest-protectors, Tommy dear,
And feed on rice and sago;
Then you'll be safe, and need not fear
Pneumonia or lumbago!"

If "darling Tommy" took this tip,
How all the chaps would snigger!
But Tommy fears no icy nip;
He's full of health and vigour.
Explore these islands all around,
From Leeds to Londonderry,
No finer fellow will be found
Than world-renowned **TOM MERRY!**

I'm going to forget all about them. There's my hand!" said Baggy, holding it out.

It was a large, fat hand, flabby, and distinctly in want of washing. Tom Merry felt a strong repugnance to that fat paw. He had all a healthy boy's horror of a pathetic scene, and all the nerves in his healthy body shrank from demonstrativeness. But Trimble was evidently prepared to work the pathos of the situation for all it was worth; and Tom hated to hurt anybody's feelings. So he took the fat, flabby paw, hastily and rather gingerly.

"In that hearty grip——" said Trimble.

"What?"

"In that hearty grip all animosity is buried."

"Oh, my hat!"

Tom Merry walked away. He had had as much pathos as he could stand for one occasion.

Trimble blinked after him. Tom, in turning the corner of the tower, happened to glance back, and saw Trimble standing, with deep and sorrowful sadness in his fat face. Tom walked on, feeling rather uneasy—wishing that somehow he had gone a little easier with Trimble—that the little fat beast had let a fellow go easier with him. Possibly Tom's compunction would have vanished, however, if he had seen Trimble a few minutes later. As soon as the Shell fellow was quite out of sight, Trimble's sad and sorrowful countenance relaxed into a grin. He winked at the pigeons in the quad.

"It's working!" he murmured.

Which really was a mysterious remark for Baggy Trimble to make.

The fat junior looked round him—perhaps in search of further audience—but he was alone, and he rolled away without bestowing any more pathetic looks on the dear old ivied

tower. As he came towards the School House he fell in with Grundy of the Shell. Grundy gave a whoop, and rushed down on him like a tank in full career.

"Got you!" roared Grundy.

"Yarооh!"

"Where's my cake?"

"Yow-ow!"

"I'll burst you! I'll——"

"Yow-ow! I say, Grundy, even you might be a bit decent when a fellow's leaving the school——"

"You're leaving!" Grundy released Trimble's collar. "Jolly good thing for St. Jim's, I must say! When are you going? Soon, I hope!"

"Saturday," said Trimble, with manly dignity.

"That's good!" said Grundy. "Well, if you're going, that's luck enough, and I'll let you off about the cake. But if I catch you rooting in my study again you'll get home on Saturday with a face that your people won't know! Mind that!"

"Let's part friends, old chap——"

"Bunkum!" said Grundy.

"There's my hand on it, Grundy——"

"Take it away and wash it!" said the unfeeling Grundy. "None of your film-play clap-trap for me, you little beast!"

And Grundy stalked away, evidently impervious to pathetic considerations.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER MONTY LOWTHER TAKES A HAND!

TRIMBLE was leaving!

The news spread through the Lower School of St. Jim's and excited great interest in both Houses.

The New House, in this matter, was the lucky House, Trimble being in the School House. Still, the New House saw enough of Trimble to be pleased that he was going.

Figgins & Co. of the New House looked as if they had won a House

match when they heard the news.

In the School House fellows said to one another in the studies and the passages, "Trimble's leaving!" in the same tone in which they might have said "Congratulations, old chap!"

Trimble became almost popular.

Nobody had even expected Trimble to do anything or to say anything that would confer pleasure on other fellows. But it had happened.

This was, as Monty Lowther said, real kindness. Lowther declared that Baggy had been misjudged. Somewhere, deep down under his layers of fat, there was a generous heart—a heart that found pleasure in making other fellows happy. For this reason, declared Lowther, Baggy had decided to go.

Wildrake was very kind to Trimble these days—even Mellish was civil. Both of them reflected how nice the study would be without Baggy Trimble in it, and the prospect solaced them for Baggy's present company; indeed, they felt grateful.

Baggy, perhaps, did not feel flattered when he observed the effect of the news upon his schoolfellows. Perhaps the unanimous and spontaneous jubilation came as a surprise to him. But there it was.

"We must do something for Trimble!" Monty Lowther remarked in Study No. 10. "He's doing a lot for us."

"Eh! What is he doing?" asked Tom Merry.

"Going!" explained Lowther.

Tom Merry laughed.

"I suppose he'll have a leaving-sale," said Manners. "We'll go and put up a few bob."

"Ch, certainly," said Tom at once. "I'm sorry for the chap. It's rotten to have to go."

"I dare say a good leaving-sale will console him," remarked Manners.

"Well, he seems very much cut up."

"Piling on the agony to get a good sale, perhaps. That would be like Trimble."

"Um!" said Tom thoughtfully.

"Well, it's so jolly good of him to go that I feel I can forgive him anything," said Lowther. "We'll help to make the sale a success."

"Yes, rather!" said Tom.

"He's asked me to be the auctioneer," continued Lowther. "Like his check, of course; but in the circumstances—"

"Oh, do it," said Tom. "After all, he's going, and—and he's got his good points."

"Blessed if I know where he keeps them, then. This is the first act of real kindness he's ever done."

"And this is unintentional," said Manners. "He wouldn't leave if he could help it."

"Still, he's leaving," said Monty. "Mustn't forget that! I think his leaving-sale will be a record. Everybody's so jolly pleased that he's going that they're sure to roll up and give him a send-off. It's up to this study to rally the fellows for a good sale—we'll get the New House chaps to come, too. Might get some of the seniors. They don't see so much of Trimble as we do—still, they must be glad he's going; it stands to reason. Cutts and his gang have lots of money—if they'd come!"

"You won't get any seniors," said Tom, shaking his head. "But it ought to be a good sale, if we rally the Shell and the Fourth and the fags. Where are you holding it?"

"In the hobby club-room. No room in a study for a sale of these giddy dimensions. I'm going to do the thing in style," said Lowther. "Trimble's going to have the best send-off I can manage, bless him! Why, I'm so pleased that I almost

feel inclined to buy something myself. Luckily the auctioneer doesn't have to buy anything; that's why Mulvaney major did the job for old Sturgis last week. Now, you fellows, shut up while I draw up the sale notice."

Monty Lowther was very busy with pen and paper for some time after that.

Monty was taking his task seriously.

He liked to make a success of anything that he took in hand, and he hoped—since he was going to be auctioneer—that this particular leaving-sale would break all records.

On Thursday afternoon, the sale notice was pinned on to the notice-board in Hall.

It was quite an interesting document, and crowds of fellows gathered to read it. It ran :

"NOTICE !

Saturday, at 3 o'clock, in the junior club-room,

A SALE WILL BE HELD

comprising part of the furniture of a study, and many objets-d'art, valuable curios, etc. All the innumerable friends of Bagley Trimble, Esq., are requested to ROLL UP for his leaving-sale, and give him a Handsome Send-Off. No reserve. All goods knocked down to the highest bidder.

Auctioneer : M. LOWTHER.

N.B.—Don't forget to bring your Cash. No cheques taken. Any Bidder requesting Tick will be ejected on his Neck."

Kildare of the Sixth came along and found a dozen juniors reading the new notice on the board. He looked at it.

"Hallo! Is this another of Lowther's potty jokes?" asked the captain of the school.

"No; it's genuine!" said Kan-

garoo. "Trimble's leaving, you know."

"Is he?" said Kildare. "I hadn't heard!"

And the great man walked on, leaving the notice on the board. Trimble came along and found the crowd reading it, and looked rather worried.

"Better stick that up in the junior common-room," he said, taking down Lowther's paper.

"Leave it where it is!" said Bernard Glyn. "The seniors will see it here, and they may come to the sale."

"The masters might see it—"

"Well, why shouldn't they?"

Trimble did not answer that question.

"I don't want any dashed seniors at my sale," he said. "They'd bag the stuff for any price they liked, and perhaps wouldn't pay."

"Something in that!" remarked Wilkins.

When Lowther saw his sale notice again, it was pinned on the wall of the junior common-room in the School House.

For some reason best known to himself, Baggy Trimble did not want the news of the leaving-sale to penetrate to the masters. He did not, however, confide that circumstance to the other fellows. They would have been surprised, and would have wanted to know why and wherefore. Leaving-sales were an institution at St. Jim's, and no objection would have been raised to Trimble's sale—if he was leaving. Trimble probably had good reasons for not wanting to go into particulars.

With all his care, however, Baggy had to take the risk—and the risk materialised. On Friday, when Mr. Lathom dismissed his Form after lessons, he signed to Trimble to stop as the rest of the Fourth left.

Baggy approached the Form-

master's desk with his fat knees trembling a little.

"I'm sorry I haven't done the lines, sir!" he began. Some of the Fourth were still within hearing, and Baggy wanted to give them time to get clear before Mr. Lathom started.

"The lines!" said Mr. Lathom. "Ah, yes! Quite so! Bring them to my study this evening without fail, Trimble!"

"Yes, sir!"

"It was not, however, on that subject I was about to speak, Trimble," said Mr. Lathom.

"Wasn't it, sir?" said Baggy, who was quite well aware that it wasn't. Mr. Lathom had forgotten the lines, or they would have been asked for earlier than this.

"No, Trimble. I hear that you are leaving the school."

"Indeed, sir?" murmured Baggy.

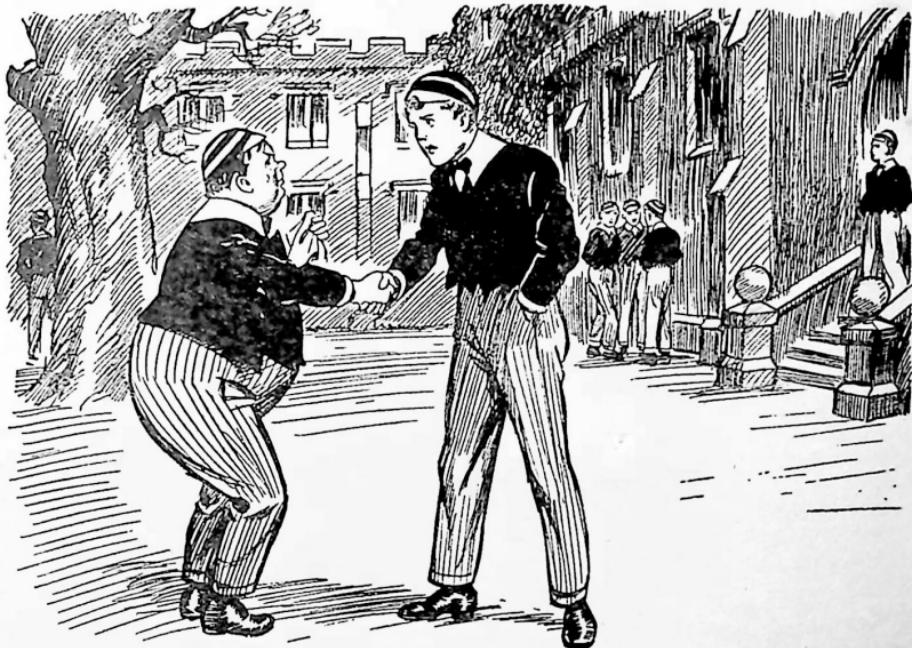
"I was very much surprised to hear it, Trimble, as naturally the Head would have informed me, and he has not done so. I spoke to Dr. Holmes on the subject, and I find that he knows nothing of it."

Baggy breathed hard. The Fourth were all out of hearing now, that was one comfort.

"You see, sir——" he stammered.

"If it is your father's intention to take you away, Trimble, it is very odd that he has not communicated with the Head in the first place," said Mr. Lathom, blinking at Trimble over his glasses. "I must ask you to explain what this means, Trimble."

"The—the fact is, sir——"



"We've had our little troubles. I'm going to forget all about them. There's my hand!" said Baggy, holding it out. It was a large, fat hand, distinctly in want of washing, but Tom Merry shook it, for he hated to hurt Baggy's feelings.

" Well ? "

" I—I'm not leaving, sir ! " gasped Baggy.

" I am aware of that. But it appears that you have stated that you are leaving, and that the whole of the Lower School seems to be under that impression. Is this some silly practical joke, or what is it ? "

" That's it, sir, " said Baggy. " One of Lowther's silly jokes. You—you know what an ass Lowther is, sir ! "

" Lowther should not make such jokes, and I certainly fail to see the point of this one ! " said Mr. Lathom.

" However, if there is nothing in the rumour, it is a matter of no consequence. You may go, Trimble ! "

And Trimble went.

Mr. Lathom dismissed the matter from his mind ; it was, as he said, of no consequence. It was, however, of very considerable consequence to the wily Baggy. And he congratulated himself that no one had overheard that little talk with his Form-master.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER THE AUCTION !

ROLL up ! "

" Sale now on !

" Woll up, you fellows ! "

There was a crowd in the junior club-room in the School House of St. Jim's, although three had not yet struck. And more and more fellows were coming in every minute.

Tom Merry & Co. had " whipped " up a good attendance. The Terrible Three were there in an official capacity —Monty Lowther as salesman, Manners to take the cash, and Tom Merry as general superintendent to keep order. Grundy of the Shell had consented to act as doorkeeper—Grundy, being a very hefty fellow, was calculated to be able to deal effectively with any reckless bidder who forgot to pay before he left.

Tom Merry's friends all came—and their name was legion. Kangaroo and Dane and Glyn of the Shell and Talbot and Skimpole and Gore, and other Shell fellows came—even Racke and Crooke turned up. Study No. 6 came in a body to represent the Fourth, and Cardew and Clive came in, and Julian, Hammond, Reilly, and Kerruish. Mulvaney minor came in with Tompkins, and Kit Wildrake came, and Lumley-Lumley and Durrance. The crowd thickened in the club-room.

Wally & Co. of the Third turned up. Arthur Augustus had impressed upon his minor that he was expected to come, and Wally had come. He had carried his complaisance so far as to borrow ten shillings off his major to bid with.

The arrival of D'Arcy minor and Reggie Manners and Frayne and Jameson and Curly Gibson and Hobbs and a dozen more fags added to the liveliness of the proceedings. Manners minor played tunes on a comb wrapped in paper to cheer up the gathering while they waited for the sale to start. Wally projected paper balls in various directions, with a very creditable aim.

Then came Figgins & Co. of the New House, with Redfern and Owen and nearly a dozen more New House fellows.

By this time there was rather a cram in the club-room. Three o'clock sounded out from the clock-tower.

Monty Lowther took up his official hammer and stood at the table. On either side of the table were stacked the goods belonging to Baggy Trimble, now to be disposed of.

They were many and various.

A leaving-sale generally brought to light a rather curious collection of goods of very problematic value.

Trimble's leaving-sale brought to light an unusually curious collection,

of which the value was more than problematic.

The few articles of value that Baggy possessed were not included. Apparently he was taking those articles home with him.

The stack was, in fact, chiefly composed of the goods that Trimble had bagged for nothing, or next to nothing, during the few days on which the collecting mania had seized him.

Prominent among them were the vase, once the property of Sturgis, and then of Tom Merry, and the clock for which Arthur Augustus had given twelve shillings.

That Baggy had been preparing for his leaving-sale in advance was now fairly clear to the most unsuspicious mind. Even Arthur Augustus D'Arcy could not help recognising that obvious fact. Nevertheless it was all taken good-humouredly. It was to be the last, at all events, of Baggy's knavish tricks.

Baggy was going. When a fellow was going much could be forgiven him. Fellows could afford to be indulgent to a fellow whom they were never going to see any more.

And Baggy had turned on the pathos stop, so to speak, with great skill and untiring energy. The dear old school, the old grey, familiar stones, the ivied tower, the initials carved on the old oaken desk and so forth, had been worked for all they were worth. Fellows were surprised and touched to see Baggy so cut up at leaving. It was surprising that a fellow who was so sorry to go should not have tried to be a credit to his school while he was there. Still, Baggy's sorrow was loud and deep and prominent, and fellows felt sympathetic. Indeed, some tender-hearted fellows felt some compunction at feeling so much satisfaction at Baggy's departure, and for this reason they

ST. JIM'S JINGLES

RICHARD REDFERN
(of the *New House*)



A SPLENDID lad, with sturdy limbs,
Courageous, strong, and clever;
Who won his entry to St. Jim's
By honest, hard endeavour.
His sire is not a millionaire,
Like Aubrey Racket's proud pater,
And Reddy's therefore had to bear
The sneers of that "third-rater."

The hero of a hundred fights
On Little Side's arena,
His prowess pleases and delights—
No sportsman could be keener.
He plays the game in every sense,
And plays it to a finish;
His popularity's immense,
And may it ne'er diminish!

Cads such as Mellish, Racket, and Gore,
He views with keen abhorrence;
But always has a handshake for
Owen and Edgar Lawrence.
These are his chums, the first and best,
Who rally to his banner,
And hold their own against the rest
In a courageous manner.

Once Reddy ran away from school,
And joined a Wayland paper;
His nerve was voted "pretty cool"—
It was a reckless caper!
He set to work, and soon displayed
A genius for reporting;
And thrilling articles he made
Concerning topics sporting.

But this adventure fizzled out,
And he was reinstated;
To be a writing-man, no doubt,
He's fitted and he's fated.
But he will have to wait awhile,
And rein his keen ambition
Ere he surrenders, with a smile,
His present-day position.

"Good luck to Reddy of the Fourth!"
Whose exploits keep us wondering;
From east and west, from south and north,
Shouts of "Hear, hear!" come thundering.
For he's a champion, I declare,
In whom all virtues mingle;
(But, being modest, he'll despair
When he perceives this jingle!)

resolved to do their best at the leaving-sale.

From one cause and another it was clear that Baggy's farewell auction was going to be a record.

Rap! Rap! Rap! Monty Lowther rapped on the table with the hammer.

"Gentlemen, the sale is now on!" announced Lowther. "Gentlemen, I have only a few words to say. You all know our respected schoolfellow, Bagley Trimble, of Trimble Hall."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"The shadow of misfortune has darkened the ancient stained-glass windows of the Hall!" said Lowther. "It seems that cash is scarcer than one would suppose from hearing Trimble talk. It may even be, gentlemen, that the brokers are hanging on the backyard wall, as the poet expresses it."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"In these circs, it is up to St. Jim's to rally round Trimble. He is leaving us——"

"Hear, hear!"

"Like the gentleman who left his country for his country's good——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Trimble is leaving! No more shall we see his graceful form rolling across the quad. No longer shall we behold him wedged in a doorway; no more shall we chase him along the passage in desperate pursuit of stolen tarts and cakes——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Trimble is leaving! On this sad occasion I am glad, gentlemen, to see you looking so sorrowful——"

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

"Weally, Lowthah——"

"On this sad occasion we must do all we can. The sale of the late Trimble's property must be a great success. A sum of cash in hand will comfort him on his sad journey

from the greatest public school in the three kingdoms!"

"Hear, hear!"

"Bravo!"

"With sufficient cash resources in hand Trimble will be able to feed at every station on the way home. Think what a consolation that will be to him! Now, gentlemen, the sale is on. The first lot, gentlemen, is this handsome clock—once the property of a Sixth-Former of this school, and later in the possession of a member of the nobility."

"Bai Jove!"

"What offers for this handsome timekeeper, gentlemen?"

"Twopence!" came from Wally, of the Third.

"This is not a place for fag jokes!" said the auctioneer severely. "I beg you, gentlemen, to look at this clock. A handsomer timekeeper was seldom or never found in a junior study."

"Does it go?" asked Gunn.

"Gentlemen are requested not to put irrelevant questions to the auctioneer. The clock was a present from a member of the nobility to Baggy Trimble. That alone makes it valuable."

"Oh, cwumbys!"

"This clock has been the property of a peer's son, the glass of fashion and the mould of form at St. Jim's. What offers for this highly connected clock?"

"Threepence!" said Redfern.

"Order!"

"Look here, you know——" came a fat voice in remonstrance.

"Hallo, Trimble's here! Get out, Trimble!"

It was against all rules for the fellow who was leaving to attend his own sale. Baggy was too keen on the proceeds to heed that rule. But two or three fellows helped Baggy out.

"I say," roared Baggy as he went, "I want——"

"Outside!"

" I want to keep an eye on the money ! "

" What ? " yelled Manners.

" Of course, I know you won't pinch any, old chap——"

" Ha, ha, ha ! " roared the juniors, greatly taken by the expression on the face of Manners of the Shell.

" You—you fat villain ! " gasped Manners. " I—I——"

" But a chap wants to keep an eye on his own money ! " gasped Trimble. " I'm coming in ! "

" Kick him out ! " roared Tom Merry.

" Yaroooooooooh ! "

Grundy's large-sized boot came into play and Trimble quickly disappeared, and the door was shut on him. And as soon as order was restored Monty Lowther's voice was heard again :

" What offers for this handsome clock—still bearing the finger-marks of a distinguished member of the nobility ? "

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER SALE NOW ON !

" FIVE shillings ! "

" Six ! "

" Seven-and-six ! "

" This handsome clock is going for seven shillings and sixpence. Going—going— Did I catch your eye, Talbot ? "

" Eight shillings, " said Talbot, smiling.

" Eight shillings I am offered for this excellent clock which will shed an aroma of aristocracy over any fellow's study, having been handled by a member of the peerage. Going for eight shillings—going—going—gone ! The clock is yours, Talbot ! Pay at the table."

" Right-ho ! "

Talbot of the Shell handed the money over to Manners at the table. Manners made his first entry upon a

neatly ruled sheet of paper, and dropped eight shillings into an empty marmalade-jar placed there for the purpose.

" Lot Two, " said the auctioneer. " And up that handsome vase, Kangy."

" Where is it ? " asked Kangaroo.

" There—under your silly nose, old chap ! "

" Oh, my hat ! Is that a handsome vase ? I took it for a cracked old pot ! " said Kangaroo.

" Gentlemen, this handsome vase, once in the Sixth, and after that the property of no less a person than the captain of the Shell, is offered without reserve. Talbot, don't be in a hurry to go. There are other bargains as well as that clock——"

" Thanks ! One's enough, " said Talbot, laughing.

And he departed with his bargain.

" Gentlemen, this magnificent vase — Did you say ten pounds, Grundy ? "

" No jolly fear ! "

" Gentlemen, what offers for this objet d'art ? "

" What's an objy dar ? " inquired Wally of the Third.

" An object of art, " the auctioneer condescended to explain. " This beautiful object of art——"

" More object than art about it, " said Reggie Manners.

" Ha, ha, ha ! "

" Order ! Gentlemen, I will not say that this is a rare specimen of Etruscan art——"

" My hat ! I should say not, " grinned Kangaroo.

" But you can see for yourself what its value is, " said the auctioneer persuasively. " How much did you offer, Durrance ? "

" Sixpence."

" Gentlemen, this is a serious matter. Pray do not jest, gentlemen. Did you say a guinea, Wilkins ? "

"No! I said sixpence-halfpenny."

"Dash it all! Sevenpence," said Grundy.

"Eightpence!" sang out Frayne of the Third.

"Ninepence, and chance it!" said Hobbs.

"Gentlemen, be serious! This splendid artistic vase of great age—the cracks are a sign of its great antiquity—this handsome vase, an ornament to any gentleman's study, is going at ninepence!"

"A bob!" said Clive of the Fourth.

"We are getting on! Did any gentleman say eighteenpence?"

No gentleman did, and the vase was knocked down to Sidney Clive for a shilling.

Clive grinned, and paid his shilling, and the vase was tossed to him by Kangaroo, who was acting as auctioneer's assistant.

"Catch!" said Kangaroo.

Sidney Clive was a good catch in the cricket field. But that vase was rather unhandy for catching. It slipped his fingers and landed at his feet in a hundred pieces or so!

Crash!

"Oh, my hat!" ejaculated Kangaroo. "Clumsy!"

A fat face was blinking in at the doorway.

"I say, Manners, don't you give him his bob back!" yelled Trimble.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Kick that fat rotter out!" roared Manners.

"Yaroooooh!"

The catastrophe did not seem to worry Clive very much, his bargain was not an object of value. There was no time for worrying, anyhow, as the auctioneer had Lot Three in hand now, and his voice was resounding through the club-room.

"Lot Three—a handsome art jar, covered with foreign stamps—all hand done!"

"Couldn't have been done with the feet, could it?" asked Grundy.

"Order! This artistic jar, once—"

"Once a jam-jar!" said Cardew.

"Once a Sixth-Former's favourite study ornament, covered with foreign stamps with wonderful artistic effect. What offer for this handsome jar?"

"One penny!"

"Three-ha'pence!" grinned Wally of the Third.

"Gentlemen, this artistic specimen of pottery is going for three-halfpence. Going, going, gone! D'Arcy minor, the jar is yours. Kindly pay my colleague at the table."

"My only Aunt Jane!" said Wally. He had not expected to bag that object of art; but he had bagged it, and he sorted out three-halfpence to hand over to Manners.

"Lot Four—a magnificent tennis-racquet."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the juniors as they looked at the magnificent tennis racquet.

"A bit thin in parts, perhaps, but still a very handsome racquet," said the auctioneer. "It has unique characteristics. A fellow can show his skill playing tennis with this racquet—a lot of skill would be required. What offer for this unequalled and unique tennis racquet?"

"Sixpence."

"Ninepence."

"Going at ninepence! Did you say a shilling, Gunn? Thank you! Going for one shilling—fifteen-pence! Do you hear, gentlemen? This unique tennis racquet is going for fifteen-pence! Going, going, gone! Tompkins, the tennis racquet is yours."

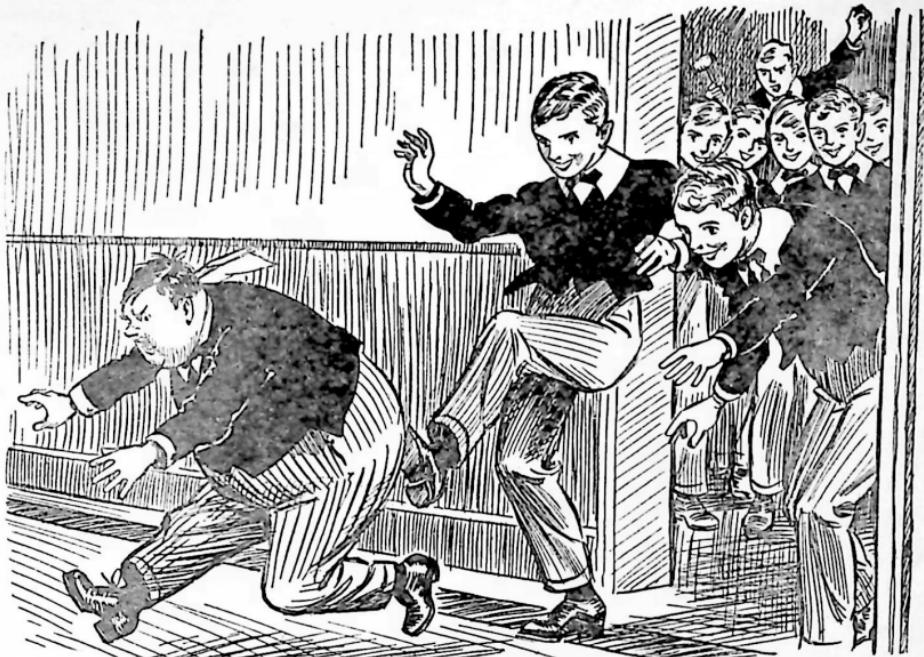
Clarence York Tompkins of the Fourth jumped.

"I didn't speak," he ejaculated.

"You looked at me," said the auctioneer.

"I didn't mean—"

"What you didn't mean isn't



"Kick him out!" roared Tom Merry. "Yaroooooh!" yelled Trimble as Grundy's large-sized boot came into play. Baggy went out of the club-room, and the door was shut on him.

evidence, Clarence York Tompkins. You've got a rich uncle, anyhow. The racquet's yours!"

"Oh, my hat!" said Tompkins. "But—"

"Pay at the table. Lot Five—a splendid alarm clock—cost originally something under five pounds!"

"About four nineteen six under?" suggested Cardew.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Four nineteen six I am offered by Master Cardew—"

"You're jolly well not!" roared Cardew, in alarm, while the other fellows chortled.

"I distinctly heard you say four nineteen six, Cardew!"

"I was sayin'—"

"Make it nineteen-and-six for a start; that's letting you off lightly.

Gentlemen, I am offered nineteen shillings and sixpence."

"Not by me!" yelled Cardew.

"Any advance on nineteen shillings and sixpence? No advance? Going, going, gone!" The hammer rapped.

"Master Cardew, you've secured that splendid bargain for nineteen-and-six. Pay at the table."

"But I haven't—" shouted Cardew.

"Lot Six—"

"Pay here, Cardew!" called out Manners. "Buck up! You're stopping business!"

Cardew breathed hard for a moment. He was paying rather dear for his little effort at humour. As he hesitated, the door opened a few inches, and there was a shout from Trimble.

" Make him pay up ! Make him shell out ! He's bought it ! Make him shell out, you fellows ! "

" Outside ! " roared Grundy.

And there was a yell as Baggy disappeared again with the assistance of Grundy's boot.

" Lot Six—a tin saucepan." The auctioneer was going on. " Very useful in a fellow's study. Tin saucepan, jewelled in every hole—jewels missing, but holes still there. What offers for this handsome saucepan ? "

" Look here ! " Cardew was protesting.

" Pay up and look pleasant, old man ! " suggested Manners. " It's a leaving-sale you know. I'm waiting to enter the item ! "

And Cardew decided to pay up, though not with the best grace possible. He did not butt into the sale with any more humorous remarks, however.

The sale went on merrily, and considering the utter uselessness of most of the articles, the prices realised were startling. Monty Lowther rapped off article after article with great success.

All the goods that Trimble had cadged or routed out of lumber-rooms went like hot cakes. A fellow was supposed to weigh in generously at a leaving-sale, and the fellows played up. Figgins & Co. of the New House were landed with perforated pots and pans at half-a-crown each, which they dropped into a dustbin before they returned to their own House. All sorts and conditions of things were disposed of, and Monty Lowther was getting a little husky when he came to the last lot. The last item was a pair of slippers, which had once been Mr. Railton's, and had then been used for a year or so by Toby, the page, and finally consigned to the dustbin by Toby—rescued thence by Trimble for the purpose of

his leaving-sale. Monty Lowther held them up with an air as if they had been equal to Cinderella's slipper, at least.

" Gentlemen ! Lot Forty-five, and last ! This wonderful pair of slippers —this handsome and elegant pair of slippers——"

" They look as if they want a bit of mending," remarked Blake.

" They do—they does ! " grinned Figgins.

" Gentlemen, this is an auctioneer's sale-room, not a shoemaker's establishment. The goods are here to be sold, not to be healed."

" Oh, my hat ! "

" This magnificent pair of slippers, that once adorned the respected tootsies of our Housemaster—did you say half-a-crown, D'Arcy ? "

" Bai Jove ! I did not say anythin' at all ! "

" Half-a-crown I am offered. Did I catch your eye, Blake ? "

" Not at all ! "

" Half-a-crown for these beautiful slippers, which have had a long and useful career. Going for half-a-crown to Gussy——"

" Weally, Lowthah——"

" Going-going-gone ! " Rap !

" Pay at the table."

" But weally, I did not——"

" Gentlemen, the sale is now over." Monty Lowther descended from his rostrum. " Any gentleman who has not paid will now be dealt with. You haven't taken your slippers, D'Arcy."

" But weally——"

" He hasn't paid yet," said Manners.

" Blake, I'm surprised at a fellow in your study bilking," said Lowther.

" Bai Jove ! I am not bilkin', you wottah ! But I weally did not——"

" Ha, ha, ha ! "

Manners held out his hand for the half-crown, and Arthur Augustus, still vainly trying to explain that he

had not bid for the slippers, dropped a half-crown into it. Then the crowd of juniors dispersed. The auction was over, and it only remained for the proceeds to be counted and handed over to the fellow who was leaving.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER GOING—GOING—

“FOUR pounds eleven shillings and sixpence.”

“Oh, good !”

Baggy Trimble beamed.

It was a handsome sum for a junior in the Fourth Form. True, it was not so extensive as the big cheques which Trimble—according to his own account—was in the habit of receiving from Trimble Hall. But it seemed to afford Baggy Trimble very great satisfaction.

“There’s the money, and there’s the account,” said Manners, rather gruffly. “Better go over it.”

“That’s all right, old fellow. Look here, you can keep the sixpence, if you like,” said Trimble, with a burst of generosity.

“Fathead !”

And Manners departed.

“Well, you’ve had a jolly good leaving-sale, Trimble,” said Tom Merry. “I hope you’ll have a good journey home. What train are you catching ?”

“Train ?” said Trimble.

“You’re going by train, I suppose ?”

“Or is the Rolls-Royce coming from Trimble Hall ?” asked Monty Lowther, with gentle sarcasm.

“Oh ! Ah ! Yes, exactly !” said Trimble, with a gasp. “Quite so. I—I’m going in the morning as it happens.”

“On Sunday ?” exclaimed Tom in surprise.

“Yes ; that’s how it is. Better the day, better the deed, you know,” said Trimble. “I—I felt I had to have one more night at St. Jim’s, the—the

dear old school, you know—the old grey stones—the—the ivied tower. I felt I couldn’t tear myself away so suddenly.”

“Well, good-bye, in case we don’t see you in the morning,” said Tom.

And Baggy Trimble was left to himself, gloating over his plunder.

Trimble of the Fourth disappeared from view soon afterwards. The general impression was that he was gone.

That impression turned out a mistaken one at calling-over, when Trimble turned up and answered “Adsum” to his name as usual.

“Bai Jove ! Twimble’s still heah !” whispered Arthur Augustus to his chums in surprise.

When the fellows came out of Hall, Gussy tapped Trimble on the shoulder. Trimble gave a sort of convulsive start.

“Ow ! Don’t touch me !” he gasped.

“Bai Jove ! What’s the mattah ?”

“Don’t jolt me !” gasped Trimble.

“Ha, ha, ha !” roared Blake. “He’s been stuffing the profits. How many jam-tarts have you put away, Trimble ?”

“Only twenty-four,” murmured Trimble, whose fat face was almost ghastly in hue. “It wasn’t the tarts. Two dozen jam-tarts don’t hurt a chap. It wasn’t the toffee, either. And I feel sure it wasn’t the doughnuts.”

“Bai Jove !”

“It can’t have been the cold chicken,” continued Trimble. “How could a cold chicken upset a fellow ? It may have been the lobster.”

“My only hat !” gasped Blake. “If you’ve got a cold chicken, a lobster, and twenty-four jam-tarts inside, I don’t envy you the state of your works. Have you got enough money left for the funeral ?”

“Ow !”

“You’ll be pretty sick travelling

on that hefty meal!" grinned Herries.

"Wow!"

"You'll have to be carried to the train!" chuckled Digby.

"I—I'm not going to-night, you know."

"What?"

"I—I mean the Head's letting me stay over to-morrow as—as I'm ill."

"Phew!"

Trimble rolled away to his study, looking as if he were not enjoying life. Undoubtedly he had overdone it, and the lobster was on the most unfriendly terms with the chicken, and the jam-tarts did not seem to agree with either.

"Trimble's staying over to-morrow," Blake told Tom Merry that evening, with a chuckle. "He's been stuffing at the bunshop, and the Head's had to let him leave it till to-morrow."

"Eh? He told us just after the auction that he wasn't going till to-morrow," said Tom.

Blake stared.

"Did he? Then it's not because he's ill. It's queer."

"I was thinking so," said Tom.

"I—I suppose——"

"What?" asked Blake, looking at him.

"Oh, nothing!" said Tom.

On the following morning Trimble was quite himself again. He rolled into the quadrangle looking bright and cheery. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy bore down on him with a time-table.

"I've been lookin' out the twains for you, deah boy," he said.

"Eh?"

"Sunday twains are wathah a wowwy," said Arthur Augustus. "Are you goin' befoah or aftah dinnah?"

"Oh, after!" gasped Trimble.

"There is an expwess at thwee fwom Wayland. Would you like me to walk to the station with you?"

"Delighted!" said Baggy.

"Start soon aftah dinnah, then."

"Oh, yes! Certainly!"

After dinner, however, Baggy Trimble was conspicuous by his absence. The kind-hearted Gussy sought him, but he found him not. Gussy was considerably perplexed. Trimble missed the only good train of the afternoon; but it did not seem to weigh on his mind when he turned up for call-over.

"You'll have a wathah slow twain this evenin'," said Arthur Augustus, after the roll was called.

"The fact is, I don't approve of Sunday travelling," said Trimble.

"I'm leaving it till Monday."

When Baggy Trimble rolled into the Fourth-Form dormitory that night he was eyed on all sides in a very curious way. Certainly it was odd that Baggy was still there. On the strength of his departure on Saturday the leaving-sale had been held; and Baggy apparently had already consumed most of the proceeds in the shape of tuck at the bunshop. Now it was Sunday night, and he was not gone. Fellows could not help thinking it odd.

Baggy Trimble seemed to fall asleep immediately that night. At all events, he did not answer any of the remarks addressed to him.

On Monday morning he was looking quite thoughtful at breakfast. When the juniors came in for morning classes Baggy Trimble rolled along to the Fourth-Form room, as usual.

The Fourth-Formers eyed him still more expressively than in the dormitory.

"Packed your box?" asked Blake.

"Eh? No! Yes!"

"You're not coming in to lessons?" said Herries.

"Oh, yes! The dear old Form-room——"

"Stow that!" said Blake abruptly.

"Look here, Trimble, what does this

mean? Why aren't you gone?"

"He's been raisin' our giddy hopes, only to dash them to the ground again!" grinned Cardew.

"Bai Jove, Twimble—"

"You—you see—" stammered Baggy.

"Well?" snapped Blake. Blake could not help feeling suspicious by this time.

"I—I feel it hard to tear myself

know—dear old St. Jim's. You see —"

"Here comes Lathom!" murmured Clive.

And Baggy Trimble rolled into the Form-room, saved by the arrival of Mr. Lathom. But during morning lessons, the Fourth-Formers eyed Baggy Trimble almost wolfishly.

The truth was dawning upon all of them now. It was a spoof—a gigantic



"Collar him!" "Scalp him!" "Lynch him!" Hotly pursued by the enraged juniors, Baggy made a frantic break for the School House, and bolted fairly into the arms of the Terrible Three.

away, you know. The dear old Form-room, the—the dear old blackboard—" stammered Trimble.

"The what?"

"Twines itself round a fellow's heart, and all that, you know," said Trimble. "Every grey old ivied stone in it—"

"In the blackboard?" yelled Blake.

"Nunno! In the—the school, you

spoof! Trimble was not going!

And at that thought—obviously the true explanation—the Fourth-Formers fairly shook with wrath. The fellows fairly shook with wrath. The well-known wrath of Achilles, destructive as it undoubtedly was, was "not in it" with the wrath of the St. Jim's Fourth when they realised that Baggy Trimble, after all, was not going. Baggy Trimble had "diddled" the whole Lower School with a spoof

leaving-sale—the idea, evidently, had been put into his head by Sturgis' leaving-sale—and all the time he was not going. He had realised nearly five pounds for a heap of rubbish worth, perhaps, five shillings—and he was not going! He had fed himself to his fat chin on the profits of his wonderful scheme—and he was not going!

Not going!

Most of the fellows had said that it seemed too good to be true. Now they knew that it was what it seemed.

Never had morning lessons seemed so long to the Fourth—never had they seemed so short to Baggy Trimble. In the looks of the fellows around him Baggy learned what he had to expect. He would have been glad had Mr. Lathom kept the class in all day—even on mathematics or deponent verbs. But it was not to be. The long, long morning—or the short, short morning—according to the point of view—had to come to an end at last. And then—

THE NINTH CHAPTER BUT NOT GONE!

COLLAR him!

“Scalp him!”

“Lynch him!”

“I—I say! Leggo! Oh, my hat! It's all a misunderstanding! Oh, crumbs!”

Baggy Trimble ran for his life, with Blake & Co. in hot pursuit.

Baggy was across the quad like a streak of fat lightning. He was round the corner by the school shop; he dodged round the old tower; he broke back along the gymnasium wall. Round the fountain in the quad went Baggy, hot and hard; and then he made a frantic break for the School House, and bolted fairly into the arms of the Terrible Three, who had come out with the Shell.

Tom Merry caught him as he butted.

“Hold him!” roared Blake.

“Seize the scoundrel!” yelled Arthur Augustus.

“Leggo!” roared Baggy, struggling desperately. “Leggo! Oh, my hat! They're after me! I'm going—I swear I'm going! Besides, it was all a joke! Oh, crumbs!”

Blake & Co. had him the next moment. Trimble roared and yelled as they clutched.

“But what—” gasped Tom Merry.

“He's not going!” shrieked Blake. “It's all spoof! Raising the wind with a leaving-sale, and blowing it on tuck and staying on!”

“Great Scott!”

“Not going!” roared Monty Lowther. “Why, he made me his auctioneer! Didn't I raise four pounds eleven shillings and sixpence for his rubbish? Not going!”

“The villain!” gasped Manners.

“Lynch him!” roared Kangaroo.

“Yank him away behind the elms, so that we can kill him quietly,” said Cardew. “We don't want the prefects butting in.”

“Yaas, wathah!”

Fifty enraged fellows were round Baggy Trimble. He was rolled and shoved to a secluded spot behind the elms. Then the enraged juniors stood round him, in towering wrath and vengeance.

“Hold on! Let me explain!” yelled Trimble. “I—I wasn't spoofing you fellows. I—I didn't get the idea from Sturgis' leaving-sale! Nothing of the kind! I—I never went round collecting stuff to be sold! I—I never thought of taking you fellows in! The fact is, it's all a misunderstanding. Owing to a—a change of circumstances, I'm not going. That's all. Fellow isn't responsible for a change of circumstances, is he? Besides, I'm prepared to hand

the money back, if any fellow wants it!"

"Shell out, then!"

"I'm going to write to my pater at—
at Trimble Hall—"

"What?"

"For a specially big cheque—"

"Great pip!"

"And then square up all round, as the leaving-sale was a—a mistake," said Trimble. "That's all right, I suppose?"

The juniors looked at Trimble. Judging by their looks, it was not "all right." It was far from all right.

"Gentlemen," said Monty Lowther, "we've been spoofed. We've had our leg pulled. We've rallied round Trimble's leaving-sale, and he's not leaving. He's bagged our spare cash. And, worse than that, he's staying on. We'd give him twice as much to go; but he's not going! Gentlemen, I suggest that we ought to make Trimble wish he'd gone."

Monty Lowther's suggestion was adopted unanimously and without discussion. The juniors flowed over Baggy Trimble like a tidal wave, and he disappeared from view in the midst of them.

What happened to him Baggy had no clear idea. But he knew that it was something dreadful. It was the wreck of Baggy Trimble that crawled away when the juniors tired.

And that was not all. It was agreed nem. con. that for a week to follow, every fellow in the School House should kick Baggy whenever he saw Baggy; and that sentence was carried out with gusto. During that week, Baggy's life was crammed with excitement. The leaving-sale had been spoof. Baggy had not left. But during that painful week, from the bottom of his fat heart, he wished that he had!

THE END

ST. JIM'S JINGLES

D'ARCY Minor

(of the Third Form)



THIS cheery, inky-fingered fag,
Great Gussy's merry minor,
Has taken part in many a "rag"—
He thinks there's nothing finer!
He's always organising japes
That drive his seniors frantic;
And with the other Third Form apes
He's up to many an antic.

Some fellows seem to drift through life
In gloom and melancholy;
They relish not its storms and strife—
That's not the way with Wally!
It takes a lot to put him out;
He's happy as a sandboy
(Except, perhaps, at Selby's shout,
"D'Arcy! Hold out your hand, boy!")

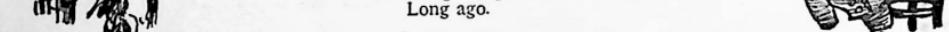
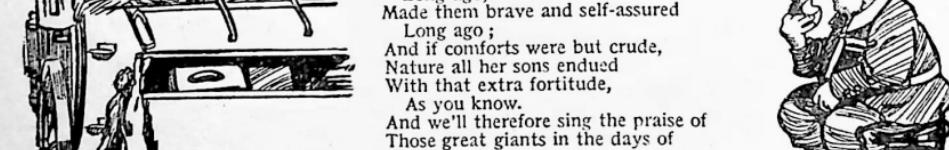
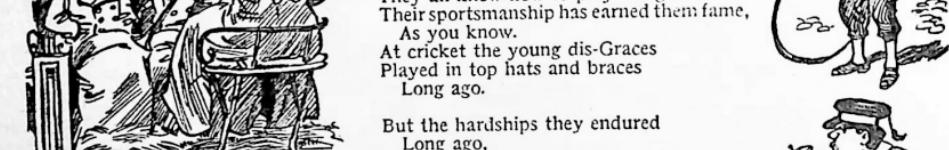
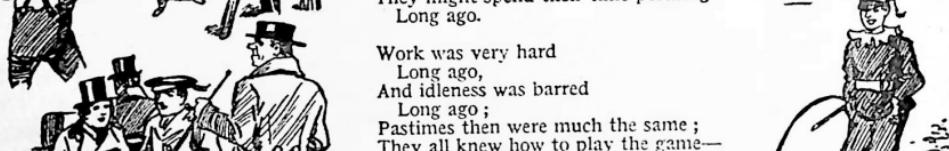
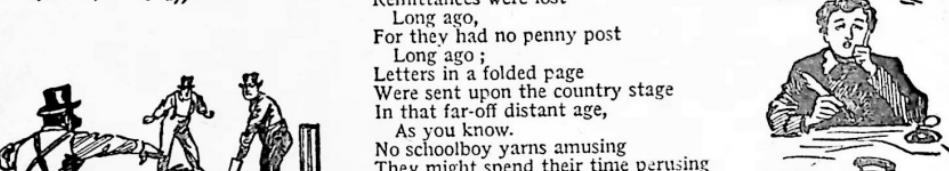
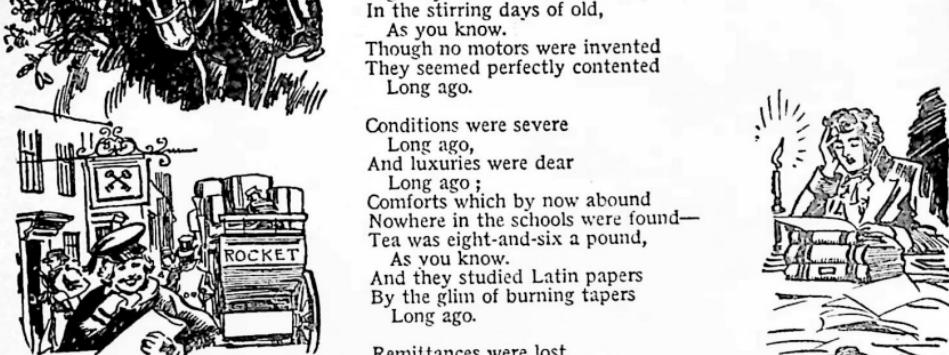
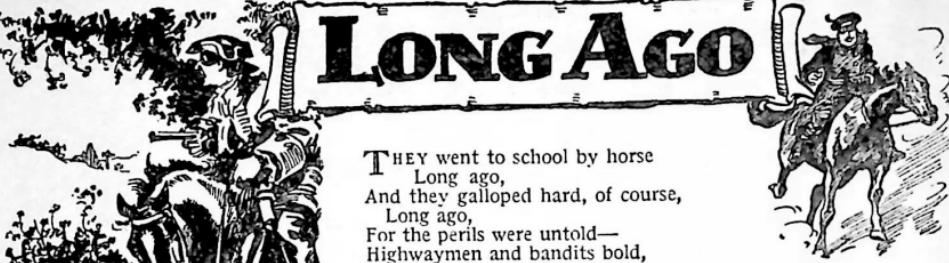
He doesn't worship silk top-hats
Like the resplendent Gussy;
On matters such as socks and spats
He's not a trifl' fussy.
His Eton coat is often torn,
"A thing of shreds and patches,"
Through being dragged in bramble thorn,
Or rent in wrestling matches!

His faithful friends are young Joe Frayne,
Gibson, and Ernest Jameson;
They join the fray with might and main
When there are sports or games on.
The reputation of the Form
Is in their jealous keeping;
And never, even in the dorm,
Do they believe in sleeping!

The revels of these gay young Turks,
The pranks they've taken part in,
Are they not written in the works
Of the illustrious Martin?
Week after week, in breezy style,
He tells of all their capers;
And those who want to laugh and smile
Read the Companion Papers!

Here's to this mischief-loving Puck,
The minor of Augustus!
To wish him nothing but good luck
He certainly may trust us!
Long may his merry antics be
A source of jubilation
To readers all, on land and sea,
Of every rank and station!

LONG AGO



THEY went to school by horse
 Long ago,
 And they galloped hard, of course,
 Long ago,
 For the perils were untold—
 Highwaymen and bandits bold,
 In the stirring days of old,
 As you know.

Though no motors were invented
 They seemed perfectly contented
 Long ago.

Conditions were severe
 Long ago,
 And luxuries were dear
 Long ago ;
 Comforts which by now abound
 Nowhere in the schools were found—
 Tea was eight-and-six a pound,
 As you know.
 And they studied Latin papers
 By the glim of burning tapers
 Long ago.

Remittances were lost
 Long ago,
 For they had no penny post
 Long ago ;
 Letters in a folded page
 Were sent upon the country stage
 In that far-off distant age,
 As you know.
 No schoolboy yarns amusing
 They might spend their time perusing
 Long ago.

Work was very hard
 Long ago,
 And idleness was barred
 Long ago ;
 Pastimes then were much the same ;
 They all knew how to play the game—
 Their sportsmanship has earned them fame,
 As you know.
 At cricket the young dis-Graces
 Played in top hats and braces
 Long ago.

But the hardships they endured
 Long ago,
 Made them brave and self-assured
 Long ago ;
 And if comforts were but crude,
 Nature all her sons endued
 With that extra fortitude,
 As you know.
 And we'll therefore sing the praise of
 Those great giants in the days of
 Long ago.