

'HONOUR BRIGHT!' A Tale of Tom Merry & Co.

The

GEM

1^d

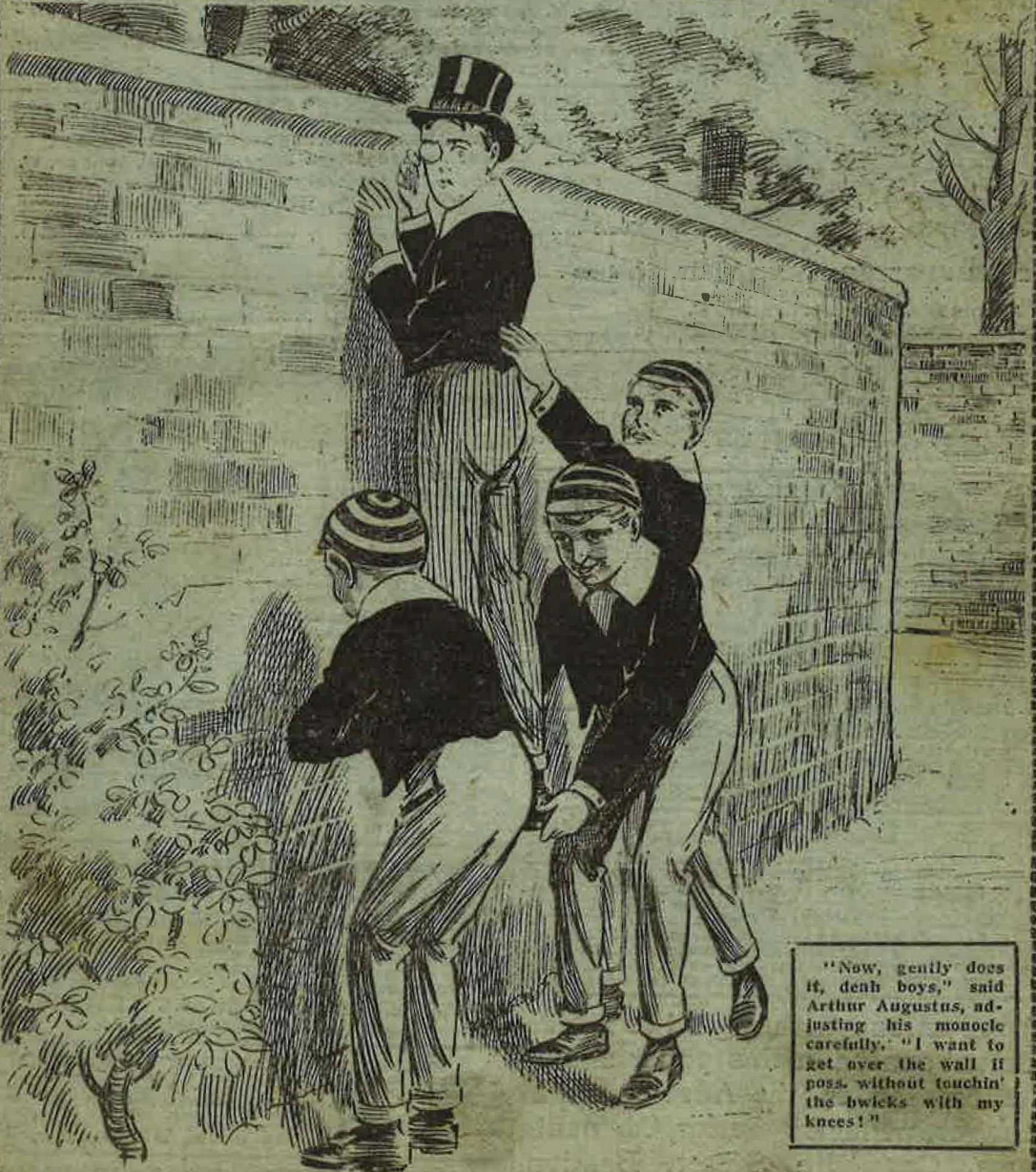
LIBRARY NO. 106.

VOL. 4.

Grand Long
Complete
Tale

A Tale of the Terrible Three.

by
MARTIN
Clifford.



"Now, gently does it, deah boys," said Arthur Augustus, adjusting his monocle carefully. "I want to get over the wall if poss. without touchin' the bwicks with my knees!"



£760 CASH FREE PRIZES FREE

EVERY DAY 40 READERS OF THIS PAPER RECEIVE £1.
SEND NOW! IT COSTS YOU NOTHING TO TRY.
SEND NO MONEY.

1st PRIZE.

Every morning to the first 40 readers of this paper who send for our Special Bargain List we will give absolutely free a sovereign. We mean 20s. sterling—20s. in money.

CONSOLATION PRIZES.—To every person after the first 40 we will send a handsome 18-ct. Gold-finished brooch set with lovely gems, or a very handsome Fountain Pen. The only condition we make is that if you win a First Prize you must purchase goods from our Special Bargain List to the value of 4/0 or upwards, or if you win a consolation prize you must give away three of our Lists to your friends. We are also giving away quite free 12 Ladies' and Gents' High-C adio Bicycles, particulars of which will be sent with price list. Our object in giving away these Prizes is to induce people to mention us to their friends and so obtain a large number of new customers quickly.

REMEMBER! You are sure to win a cash or consolation prize in return for 1d. expended in postage. Should any dispute arise, our decision must be accepted as final. Anyone sending more than one application will be disqualified. Bargains from 1s. to £20.

CASH PRIZES. WRITE NOW.



THE WELLINGTON WHOLESALE SUPPLY CO., LTD.
(Dept. 9), 9, Linden Arcade,
High Road, Chiswick, London, W.



FREE.
We Supply

- ACCORDEONS, 03
 - WATCHES, 48
 - SILVER WATCHES, 76
 - PHONOGRAPHS, 73
 - GOLD RINGS, 40
 - FUR SETS, 116
 - TEA POTS, 88
 - ROLLER SKATES, 86
 - BOOTS, 86
 - WEDDING RINGS, 88
 - CRUETS, 86
 - FIELD GLASSES, 70
 - TROUSERS, 86
 - UMBRELLAS, 66
 - CINEMATOGRAPHS, 69
- etc., etc., etc.

Cut Out & Send this

PRIZE COUPON

or send a postcard

TO THE WELLINGTON WHOLESALE SUPPLY CO., LTD.
(Dept. 9), 9, Linden Arcade, High Road, Chiswick, London, W.

DEAR SIRS,—Please send me your wonderful Bargain List in accordance with your Special Offer mentioned above.

Name

Address

BLUSHING.

FREE. To all sufferers, particulars of a proved home treatment that quickly removes all embarrassment and permanently cures blushing and flushing of the face and neck. Enclose stamp to pay postage to Mr. D. TRIMPER, Specialist, 6, Blenheim Street, Bond Street, London, W.



6d. DEPOSIT

This Handsome Phonograph, with large Flower Horn and Two Records, complete, will be sent to any address on receipt of 6d. DEPOSIT and upon payment of the last of 18 weekly instalments of 6d. Two 1/- Records are given free. Send for Price List of Latest Models.—

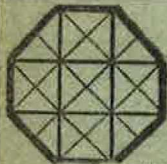
The British Mfg. Co., P 24, Great Yarmouth.

ROLLER SKATES 6d. DEPOSIT.

For a short time only we will send, as an advertisement, a limited number of our Celebrated Olympic Roll-Runner Skates to any address, carriage paid, on receipt of 6d. deposit and upon payment of the last of 20 weekly instalments of 6d. A handsome present is given free. When ordering, state size of boots. Price list of latest models sent free.—**OLYMPIC SKATE CO., MORLEY, YORKS.**

DON'T READ THIS

unless you want to win a real simulation GOLD WATCH (guaranteed five years). All sending us the correct number of squares in this puzzle (count all squares, whether lines cross or not) will receive FREE a genuine Watch, as above, provided the condition which we send is complied with, and that a stamp be enclosed with answer for result. We require the Watch to be shown to friends to advertise our goods.—**THE PREMIER WATCH CO., Dept. G, 37, Cheapside, London**



our goods.—THE PREMIER WATCH CO., Dept. G, 37, Cheapside, London

Applications with regard to advertisement spaces in this paper should be addressed to the Advertisement Manager, "Pluck" Series, Carmelite House, Carmelite Street, London, E.C.

DELIVERED ON PAYMENT OF

4/6

DEPOSIT

Send 4/6 for the world-famed "ROBEY-PHONE," with 24 selections and massive 17-inch horn, sumptuously hand-painted, powerful steel motor, 10-inch disc, and loud-tone sound-box, which I sell at HALF shop prices.

I control the largest stock in the world of GRAMOPHONE, ZONO-PHONE, EDISON, COLUMBIA, ODEON, PATHE, RENA, EUFON (horoblast), CLARION, and EXCE SIGE Phonographs, and offer you over 350 magnificent models to select from.

Thousands of the very latest records of all the well known makes always in stock.

Write for List 10.

Robey
The World's Finest Country.

F A Stamp Album, illus., handsomely bound; a Duplicate Case, fitted for stamps, richly embossed; the "Animal" Pack of Stamps from China, French Guiana, Malay States, Prussia, O.R.G., etc.; **E** Pack of "Superb" Mounts and Perforation Gauge; Guide to **E** Stamp Collecting (usual price, 6d.), including World's Catalogue. The lot free on receipt of 2d. (about 4d. for postage and packing).—**HENRY ABEL & CO., WHITSTABLE.**

FRETWORK

Send us three penny stamps, and we will, as an advertisement, send you a SHILLING PARCEL of our novel Art Fretwork Designs, including a 6d. book of 13 dainty small designs, and two 3d. sheets of large designs. Address: Secretary, NATIONAL FRETWORKERS' ASSOCIATION, 65, Farringdon Street, London.

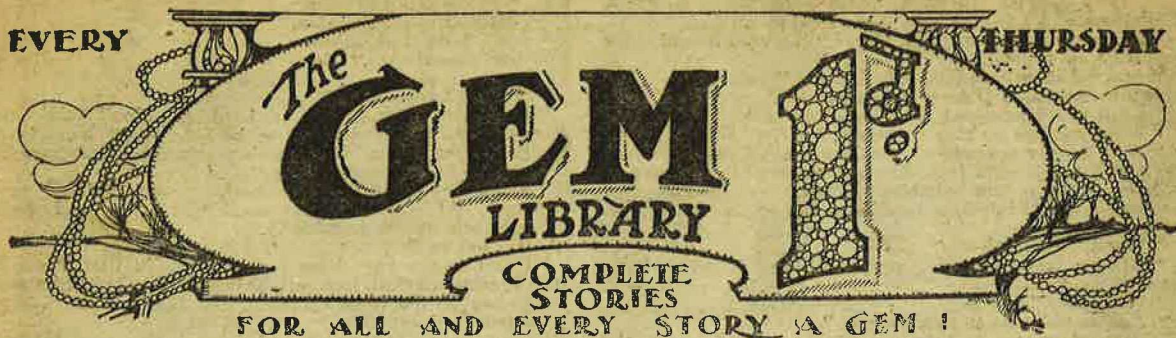
GIVEN AWAY FREE!!
A STAMP COLLECTOR'S 5/- PARCEL, which contains the Stamp Collector's Hand-book (usual price 6d.), a valuable BOOK OF BARGAINS and USEFUL INFORMATION; the "Record" Pocket Stamp Case; 20 DIFFERENT GENUINE STAMPS (cost, over 3/6); Packet "RECORD" Mounts; and Perforation Gauge. Send 2d. as note for postage and packing (about 3d.) and receive the Magnificent Parcel by RETURN OF POST.

RONALD STONE & CO., WHITSTABLE.

IF YOU WANT Good Cheap Photographic Material or Camera, send postcard for Samples and Catalogue FREE.—Works: JULY ROAD, LIVERPOOL.

EVERY

THURSDAY



HONOUR BRIGHT!

A Grand, Long, Complete School
Tale of
TOM MERRY & CO

BY

MARTIN CLIFFORD.

CHAPTER 1.

Arthur Augustus is Anxious.

"WALLY!"
"Wally!"
"Weally, Wally—"

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy's voice rose crescendo. D'Arcy was strolling in the quadrangle at St. Jim's, with his hands in his pockets and a thoughtful shade upon his brow, when he caught sight of his hopeful younger brother.

D'Arcy, as a matter of fact, was thinking out a rhyme for a poem he was composing for the next number of "Tom Merry's Weekly," and he was deep in thought; but he was brought back suddenly to the things of this world by the peculiar actions of the younger scion of the house of D'Arcy.

Wally D'Arcy—who resembled his elegant major as much as chalk resembles cheese—was stealing along by the wall of the Head's garden, in the stealthiest possible manner. Following him, in the same stealthy manner, were Jameson and Curly Gibson, two of the brightest lights of the Third Form at St. Jim's—the Form of which D'Arcy minor was the acknowledged leader.

It was evidently the intention of the three Third-Formers to steal into the Head's garden—forbidden ground to the juniors. Prefects in the Sixth were allowed to walk there, in great state; but juniors were barred, on the ground that they did not keep to the paths, and that damage was done to the garden when they were admitted. They frequently admitted themselves, all the same; and damage certainly was sometimes done to the garden.

"Wally!"
Arthur Augustus called out to his minor as the latter nipped over the garden wall in the shadow of an overhanging tree, which was beginning to put on its spring green. Wally did not even look round. He must have

heard his major's voice, but he did not take the slightest notice. Like the Dying Gladiator, he heard it but he heeded not.

Wally was over the wall in a twinkling. The curly-haired, inky-fingered hero of the Third disappeared from the gaze of his anxious major.

"Wally!"
There was no reply.
"Jameson! Gibson!"

The two fags followed D'Arcy minor over the wall without so much as looking round. The colour came into Arthur Augustus D'Arcy's cheeks. He felt that he was being treated with less respect than was due to Wally's major, and to a member of a higher Form.

"Bai Jove!" he ejaculated.

He quite forgot the fact that he had been seeking a rhyme to moonlight. He was only thinking of his minor now.

He stood undecided what to do.

At that season of the year, Wally & Co. certainly had not gone into the Head's garden to purloin fruit, but they were certainly after some mischief.

What was it?

As an elder brother, D'Arcy felt that he ought to look into the matter. Only to do so he would have to follow Wally into the forbidden precincts of the Head's private garden, and if he were caught there, there would be painful explanations with the Head.

"Hallo, Gussy! Here you are!"

D'Arcy started at the sound of a voice behind him, and staggered as he received a hearty slap on the shoulder.

"Ow!"

He swung round, and jammed a monocle into his right eye, and glared wrathfully at the cheerful, sunny-faced junior who had greeted him. It was Tom Merry of the Shell.

A DOUBLE-LENGTH TALE OF TOM MERRY NEXT THURSDAY.

"Weally, Tom Mewwy——"
 "I was looking for you," said Tom Merry brightly.
 "Manners and Lowther have come to help me look."
 "Exactly," said Monty Lowther. "We were afraid there would be an accident."

"And we came to administer first aid," said Manners.
 Arthur Augustus D'Arcy looked puzzled.
 "I fail to compwehend, deah boys," he said.
 "Why, you are making up poetry for the 'Weekly'!"
 "Well, poetry is made up with the brain," said Lowther.
 "That is a scientific fact, which Skimpole could prove to you in words of six syllables. Now, any unaccustomed exercise is likely to cause damage to any organ in a human being——"

"Weally, Lowthah——"
 "So when we heard that you were doing brain-work we naturally felt anxious——"

"Weally——"
 "And so we came to look for you."
 Arthur Augustus D'Arcy turned his monocle upon the Terrible Three in turn.

They met his withering stare with cheerful grins.
 "I wegard you as an ass, Tom Mewwy!"
 "Oh, really, Gussy——"
 "I wegard you as anotheah ass, Mannahs."

"Rata!"
 "I wegard you as a still gwateah ass, Lowthah."
 "Well, you ought to be a judge of your own kind," said Monty Lowther cheerfully.

"Weally, Lowthah——"
 "Have you found the rhyme?" asked Tom Merry.
 "No, deah boy. I was twyin' to think of a rhyme to moonlight. What do you think of 'soon light'?" asked D'Arcy.

"There isn't such a thing. I've never heard of soon-light, anyway. Is it a new pronunciation of sunlight?"

"Weally, Tom Mewwy——"
 "Well, what is it? I've never heard of it."
 "It is not a substantive at all, you duffah. I meant somethin' like this:

"The fields of ether will soon light
 In the waptawous glowy of moonlight."

"My only hat!"
 "Do you think that is good?"
 "Ripping! Does it mean anything?" asked Lowther.

"Weally, Lowthah——"
 "Oh, don't be exacting!" said Tom Merry. "The best poetry never means anything, especially if it's in blank verse. That will do."

"I wegard you as a chap of taste, Tom Mewwy."
 "So I am," agreed the youthful editor of "Tom Merry's Weekly." "Come and help us make up the copy. We've got to get it to the printer to-day."

D'Arcy shook his head.
 "I haven't quite finished my poem——"
 "Never mind; you can put in 'To be continued in our next.'"

"That would wathah spoil the effect, I am afwaid, Tom Mewwy. But it isn't only the poem. I have anotheah engagement at present."

"I always knew it would come to this," said Lowther, with a shake of the head. "This is what comes of being a lady's man. Who is she, Gussy?"

"I fail to undahstand you, Lowthah."
 "I suppose you cannot be engaged without a 'she' in the case," said Lowther. "Is it the young lady at the draper's in Rylcombe?"

"Weally, Lowthah——"
 "Or the charming girl at the confectioner's——"
 "I refuse to listen to wibald jokes," said D'Arcy, with dignity. "You know perfectly well that you are wottin', and that you did not think that I meant that I was engaged to be mawwed."

"Well, I only go by what you say; but, of course, I ought to have remembered that you generally talk out of your hat," agreed Lowther.

"Weally, you ass——"
 "But what is the other engagement?" demanded Tom Merry. "As chief editor of the 'Weekly,' I can't have my staff buzzing off on other engagements on publishing day."

"It's my young bwothah——"
 "Oh, Wally in trouble again!"
 "Ynas, wathah!"

"He'll get out of it all right," said Manners. "Come along to the study."
 "Quite imposs, deah boy. Wally has just gone into the Head's garden."

"The young ass!" said Tom Merry. "He's been in trouble once to-day already."
 "Bai Jove!"

"Selby was in a bad temper with the Third, I hear," said
 THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 106.

Tom. "Wally checked him in the Form-room, and was sent in to the Head to be caned."

"That was wathah wottin'."
 "Yes, Selby has a down on D'Arcy minor," Monty Lowther remarked. "It's curious, too, when he is such a kind, nice, inoffensive, peaceful, and lovable youth."

"Weally, Lowthah——"
 "Still, his Form-master is hard on him," said Tom Merry. "Selby never seems to be able to let him alone. Wally caught it hot this morning; though, of course, he oughtn't to have checked Selby."

"Yaas, he is wathah a cheeky young duffah," said D'Arcy. "I weally do not know how it is, as I have bwought him up vewy carefully."

"Ha, ha, ha!"
 "I fail to see any cause for laughter in that remark. But I must go and look aftah Wally. The young ass is twespassin' in the Head's garden, and Jameson and Gibson have gone with him."

"Better leave him alone——"
 "Imposs, deah boy. I must look aftah him as an eldah bwothah, and command him to come out of the garden at once."

The Terrible Three chuckled.
 "Do you think he is likely to come out if you command him, Gussy?" inquired Tom Merry.

"I trust he will treat my ordahs with the respect due to the ordahs of an eldah bwothah."

"I rather think he won't."
 "In that case, I shall have no wesource but to give him a feahful thwashin'."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the Terrible Three.
 "Weally, deah boys——"
 "Better let well alone——"

"Pway don't be obstinate, Tom Mewwy. You can come and give me a bunk up ovah the wall if you like."

"Well, if you're determined to go——"
 "I am quite wesolved."

"Then we'll give you a bunk up."
 "Thank you vewy much, deah boys."
 And Arthur Augustus put his hands on the garden wall, and waited for the required "bunk."

CHAPTER 2.

Bunking Up.

TOM MERRY took the swell of St. Jim's by one leg, and Monty Lowther took him by the ether. Manners laid a grasp upon the tail of his jacket to steady him.

"Now, gently does it, deah boys," said Arthur Augustus, adjusting his monocle carefully. "Pway don't wumple my twousahs, or cwumple up my jacket. I want to get ovah the wall if poss. without touchin' the bricks with my knees. I wegard it as extremewy howwid to have anythin' w'eng with the knees of a chap's twousahs."

"Careful, Lowther!"
 "Careful, Manners!"
 "Careful, Tom Merry!"
 "Weally, deah boys——"

"Up he goes! And do be careful!"
 Up went Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, with a sudden bunk that shot him up beyond the level of the top of the wall.

But as the Terrible Three were carefully standing three paces distant from the wall, the bunk up was not of much service to Arthur Augustus.

He swayed in the air, with his hands wildly clutching at vacancy.

"You asses!" he gasped.
 "What's the matter?"
 "I asked you to give me a bunk up."

"Well, we're giving you one, aren't we?" demanded Monty Lowther. "Do you want us to let you down again?"

"No, you ass! I want you to bwing me neawah the wall, so that I can climb ovah it, you uttably stupid duffah!" said D'Arcy witheringly.

"How stupid of you, Lowther!"
 "How stupid of you, Manners!"
 "How stupid of you, Tom Merry!"

"I believe you wottahs are wottin'!" said Arthur Augustus frowningly. "Pway bwing me closah to the wall, and don't play the gidday goat."

The Terrible Three swung the junior closer to the wall. D'Arcy had just time to clutch at it with his hands to save himself from being bumped suddenly on the bricks.

"You uttah asses!"
 "What's the matter now?"
 "You nearly wubbed my clothes on the wall."

"You awfully careless person, Manners!"
 "You awfully careless person, Lowther!"
 "You awfully careless person, Tom Merry!"



On the window-sill of the summer-house Wally & Co. had lifted a bucket of tar, and they were even now tilting it so as to swamp the contents over the head of the unconscious master of the Third.

"I wogard you as a set of asses, and I wefuse to be assisted by you any furthah," said D'Arcy, struggling to release himself. "Pway let me get down."

"But you asked for a bunk up."

"I wefuse to have a bunk up fwom you sillay duffahs!"

"He refuses to have a bunk up, Lowther!"

"He refuses to have a bunk up, Manners!"

"He refuses to— Ow! Wow!"

The last remark was suddenly cut short as D'Arcy, struggling desperately, brought all three reeling to the ground, with himself on top.

Tom Merry sat down violently, Monty Lowther rolled over, and Manners sprawled across his legs, and D'Arcy sat on Manners.

"Ow!" gasped Manners.

"Yaroo!" howled Lowther.

"My hat!" ejaculated Tom Merry.

"Bai Jove!"

"Gerroff me legs!"

"I can't. There's a babbling idiot sitting on my back. Gerroff my back, D'Arcy, you champion chump!"

"Bai Jove!"

"Are you going to get off my back?"

"No huwwy, deah boy."

"I—I—I—"

"Pway don't get excited, Mannahs. I must west for a few minutes. You have thwown me into quite a fluttah!"

"You frabjous ass! Get off!"

"I wefuse to be called a fwabjous ass. I—"

"Gerroff!" gurgled Lowther.

"Get off!"

"Weally, Mannahs—"

"Hallo! What on earth does this mean?" exclaimed Jack Blake of the Fourth Form at St. Jim's, coming on the scene with Herries and Digby. "My only hat!"

Herries was trying to hold in a savage-looking bulldog by the chain. Towser, the bulldog, showed a decided desire to sample the limbs that were scattered on the ground belonging to the chums of the Shell.

"Hold that beast off!" exclaimed Tom Merry, jumping up in hot haste.

D'Arcy jammed his monocle into his eye, and glanced round.

"Pway keep that beast away, Hewwies!"

"Oh, Towser's all right," said Herries, dragging at the chain. "He's only a little excited. He's a wonderful dog."

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 105.

NEXT
THURSDAY:

"TOM MERRY & CO."

By
MARTIN CLIFFORD.

He knew something was going on here, and he made us come. Didn't he, Blake?"

"I thought he was just trying to get away, that's all," said Blake.

"Look here, Blake, you know jolly well—"

"Oh, of course! Towser's a wonderful dog, and he can track down a red herring any day in the week," said Blake resignedly. "Ask Towser to explain what these silly asses are spreading themselves over the ground for."

"Ass!"

"Well, Towser's so jolly clever he ought to be able to do a little thing like that. Is this a new game, Tom Merry?"

"No, it's an old one," said Tom Merry. "It's Gussy playing the giddy ox again."

"Weally, Tom Mewwy—"

Grrrr!

D'Arcy jumped up.

"Keep that beast away, Hewwies!"

"I tell you he's all right. Towser's always all right so long as you don't look at him. Then he gets roused sometimes."

"I wefuse to wogard him as all wight. The beast has no wespert whatevah for a fellow's twousahs."

The Terrible Three rose, and they looked at D'Arcy, and looked at the chums of the Fourth, and finally at Towser. They decided that hostilities were not worth while just then.

"If we had a thing like that in our study," said Monty Lowther, pointing with his forefinger at Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, "we'd drown it!"

"In hot water!" said Manners.

"And bury it in the back garden," added Tom Merry.

"Weally, deah boys!"

"Br-r! Scat!"

"I wefuse to do anythin' of the sort. I—"

"Rats!"

And the Terrible Three, feeling considerably limp and sore, walked away. Arthur Augustus adjusted his monocle carefully, and stared after them.

"I wogard those three individuals as three boundahs," he remarked. "If I had not nothah important engagement at the pwesent moment, I should wogard it as impewative to give them a fearful thwashin'."

"But what was the trouble about?" asked Digby.

"I asked them to give me a bunk up, and they began to play the giddy ox," said Arthur Augustus. "Pway oblige me by givin' me a bunk up ovah this wall, deah boys."

"But you can't trespass in the Head's garden!" exclaimed Blake.

"It's an absolute necess., deah boy."

"Looking for a licking?"

"I am lookin' for my minah. He has gone into the Head's garden, and I wogard it as my duty to go and fetch him out before he gets into twouble."

"More likely you'll get into trouble too."

"I must wisk that. Pway wait here for me."

Blake and his companions bunked D'Arcy up—without playing any practical jokes. They knew it was useless to argue with the swell of the School House when he had made up his mind, and the sooner it was over, the safer it would be. D'Arcy reached the top of the wall, and put one leg over it.

"Pway don't make a wow here, deah boys, and attwact attention—"

"Who's making a row?"

"Nobody at pwesent, Blake. I was warnin' you not to begin. I—oh!"

Arthur Augustus's eyeglass slipped from his eye as the cord caught on a twig over the wall, and he made a clutch at it, lost his balance, and rolled down into the garden. He dropped into a mass of shrubs, and gasped.

"Ow!"

There was a quick footstep in the garden, and a startled voice.

"What's that?"

CHAPTER 3.

D'Arcy Minor's Vengeance.

D'ARCY scrambled to his feet. He was not hurt, but he was considerably shaken up, and what he would have described as thrown into a flutter.

He groped for his eyeglass, and jammed it into his eye.

Three youths were peering round the trees to discover what it was that had fallen from the wall into the garden.

They were D'Arcy minor, Jameson, and Gibson, of the Third Form. Jameson had thick, tarry stains on his hands, and there was tar on Wally's shirt cuffs, and on Gibson's trousers. It was evident that the three scamps of the Third

THE GEN LIBRARY.—No. 105.

No. 1 of THE EMPIRE LIBRARY is Now on Sale. The New Complete Story-Book. Price ONE HALFPENNY.

had had a close acquaintance with tar since entering the Head's garden.

Arthur Augustus gasped a little, and gave the Third-Formers a severe glance.

"It is I, Wally!"

"Hush!"

"I wefuse to hush. I—"

"Shut up, you ass! Selby'll hear you!"

"Mr. Selby!"

"Yes; our Form-master. He's in the garden, up at the other end, sitting in a garden-chair, and reading."

"Then the soonah you get out of the garden the bettah, Wally!"

"Rats!"

"That is neithah a pwopah nor wespentful way to address your oldah bwotchah, Wally," said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy severely.

"Oh, don't you begin, Gus! What did you want to come poking into the garden at all for?" demanded Wally impatiently.

"Weally, Wally—"

"Buzz off!"

"What!"

"Buzz off! Here, I'll give you a hand over the wall. Get out!"

D'Arcy gave his minor a freezing glare.

"I wefuse to get out, Wally. I distinctly wefuse to leave this spot. I have come here to make you young wascals get out of the Head's pwivate garden."

"Rats!"

"If you say wats to me, Wally, I shall have no wescource, as your majah, but to administah a fearful thwashin'."

"Oh, come off!"

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy pushed back his cuffs. He was the best-tempered fellow in the world; but there was a limit to his patience, and his cheerful younger brother had reached it.

"I am extremely sowwy, Wally, but I shall have to intewwupt this discuss, by givin' you a fearful thwashin'," he remarked.

Wally backed away a pace or two.

"Don't play the giddy goat, Gussy. Look here, if you make a row Selby'll hear you, and he'll go for us. The beast is down on me already—got me licked by the Head for nothing at all." Wally gritted his teeth. "I'm jolly well going to make him sit up for it, and Jim and Gibby are helping me."

"What do you mean, Wally?"

"We're going to jape the beast," said Wally, with a grin. "He's in this garden, and so are we—and so is the bucket of tar Taggles has been using to tar the fence!"

D'Arcy looked considerably startled.

"You young duffah! Have you had the feahful cheek to come in here to play a pwactical joke on your Form-master."

"Yes, rather!"

"I cannot appwove of anythin' of the sort."

Wally snorted.

"Fat lot of difference that will make," he remarked.

"Weally, Wally, I wogard that expression as vulgah. And I cannot allow you to pwocceed with this wisky biznay. Mr. Selby is already angwy west you, and if you play such a twick on him, he will nevah west till he has found you out, and then you will be flogged, or pewwaps expelled from St. Jim's."

"I don't care, so long as I get even with the Selby beast," said Wally recklessly. "I'm jolly well going to pay him out for sending me in to the Head. I tell you I did nothing at all; but he had indigestion as usual, and he went for me."

"I am afwaid Mr. Selby is sometimes unjust—"

SANDOW'S BOOK FREE!

Just published, a new book showing how Sandow won Health and Fame, beautifully illustrated, and explaining how every man and woman can obtain robust health and perfect development by exercise.

SPECIAL OFFER.

To every reader who writes at once a copy of this book will be sent free.

Address: No. 17, SANDOW HALL, BURLEIGH STREET, STRAND, LONDON, W.C.

"The beast always is."

"But that does not justify playin' tricks on a Form-mastah. I cannot approve of anythin' of the sort. It shows a lack of pwopah respect."

"Oh, come off!"

"As your majah, I ordah you to quit this garden at once—"

"Yes, I'm likely to obey that order—I don't think. Come on, you kids! If Gussy makes a row here, he'll give us all away, and we shall all be flogged."

"Look here," began Jameson, in some alarm.

"Oh, it's all right—come on!"

And Wally disappeared among the shrubberies, and his two companions followed him. Arthur Augustus started in pursuit, but the scamps of the Third had disappeared.

The swell of St. Jim's stopped, irresolute.

He wanted to save Wally from getting into further trouble, not to bring fresh trouble upon him, and so he had to be very careful not to betray his presence in the garden. But this necessity made it impossible for him to force Wally to leave. He could not do that without a tussle, if Wally was determined to remain—as he evidently was.

"Bai Jove!" murmured D'Arcy. "I wergard this as an extremely awkward posish."

He thought it over for a few minutes. But one thing at least was clear—it was useless to stand there doing nothing; and the swell of St. Jim's started again to look for Wally, and try to persuade him to leave the garden peaceably.

Suddenly Aarihur Augustus halted.

He was following a path through the shrubberies, and he came upon a quiet sunny spot, where a gentleman sat in an easy garden chair close by a small rustic summer-house. He was sitting in the shade of the summer-house, reading.

It was Mr. Selby, the master of the Third Form.

Mr. Selby's thin, meagre face was disconcerted and indeed ill-tempered in expression. His lunch evidently had not wholly agreed with him. The Third Form-master had a weak digestion, and this, added to a carelessness in his diet, gave him great torment at times. At such times his unlucky pupils were often in hot water. When Mr. Selby had indigestion, his nose became red—and when his nose was red, it was a well-known danger-signal in the Third Form-room.

It was very red now.

The Form-master was reading, with a frowning brow. But D'Arcy hardly looked at Mr. Selby. What attracted his attention was something much more startling than the disconcerted face of the Form-master.

Behind Mr. Selby's head was the window of the summer-house—and that window was open. Three faces were looking out of it—three faces flushed with excitement, with the lips breathlessly parted.

They belonged to Wally & Co.

On the window sill the Third Form fags had lifted a bucket of tar, and they were even now tilting it so as to swamp the contents over the head of the unconscious master of the Third.

D'Arcy stood spell-bound, horror-stricken.

Wally and his comrades had entered the summer-house from the rear, and the Third Form-master was evidently utterly unconscious of their presence in the garden.

Not the faintest notion had Mr. Selby of the vengeance that was about to fall upon him. Arthur Augustus gave a gasp.

He could not warn Mr. Selby of his danger without betraying the fags—and that would be a serious matter for them. But without calling out to Mr. Selby, it was impossible to stop the execution of Wally's design.

D'Arcy's faint gasp reached the ears of the Form-master. Mr. Selby raised his eyes from his book, and saw Arthur Augustus standing in the garden path, looking towards him.

"D'Arcy!"

"Ah—ah—ah—Oh!"

Even as Mr. Selby uttered D'Arcy's name, the tar swamped in a thick black flood over his head, and ran down over his face, blinding and choking him. It was not hot—it was thick, and sticky, and cold, and it flooded over Mr. Selby's head and face like treacle.

D'Arcy stood transfixed.

With a horrified gasp Mr. Selby sprang to his feet, and stood staggering, with black tar streaming all over him, his face completely hidden by the swamping tar.

CHAPTER 4.

D'Arcy Declines to Speak.

"GREAT SCOTT!"

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy murmured these words feebly.

He felt that it would be better for him to beat a retreat, but he could not move. The dreadful apparition fascinated him.

Mr. Selby stood before him, streaming with tar. The

master's hair was matted with tar, his face was hidden, his eyes covered up, and tar was streaming over his clothes, down his neck, and into the corners of his mouth.

It was a terrifying sight.

The unfortunate master of the Third gasped and staggered, clutching out wildly for support, and D'Arcy stepped forward politely to help him, as soon as he recovered from the first shock of what he had seen.

He grasped the Third Form-master by the arm, carefully selecting a spot where the tar was not streaming, and steadied him.

Meanwhile, the three fags had disappeared from the summer-house by the door at the back, and were making good their escape.

There was nothing to connect them with the incident, and Wally & Co. congratulated themselves upon having revenged their wrongs upon the obnoxious master, without the danger of being called to account for it.

Mr. Selby rubbed the tar from his eyes with his knuckles.

"Wh-wh-what has happened?" he gasped.

"I'm afraid you've had some tar spilt ovah you, sir."

"Tar! Yes, indeed, it is tar."

"Looks like it, sir."

"Did you do this, D'Arcy?"

Arthur Augustus started.

"I, sir! Certainly not. I twust you would not suspect me of twentin' a Form-master in such an extremely diswespful way."

"No. I recall now that you were standing in the path, and the tar must have been thrown over me from behind. You must have seen who did it."

Arthur Augustus was silent.

He realised that it was perfectly clear that, as he had been standing at a short distance facing Mr. Selby, he must have seen who tilted the tar over the Third Form-master.

It dawned upon him that he would be called upon to give information on the subject; and he heartily wished he had never crossed the wall into the Head's garden.

Mr. Selby glared at him through the tar.

"You saw who committed this unheard-of outrage, D'Arcy."

"I'd wathah not say, sir."

"What! What?"

"I'd wathah not say, if you don't mind, sir."

"D'Arcy! But I will not talk to you—the Head shall do that. I—"

"What—what is that?"

There was the rustle of a gown, and Dr. Holmes came down the path. He had been reading at his window, and the wild exclamations in the garden had drawn him out to see what was the matter.

He stared in blank astonishment at the Third Form-master, not recognising Mr. Selby in his coating of tar.

"Who—who are you?" he exclaimed heatedly. "How dare you trespass in this garden?"

"Dr. Holmes!"

"Dear me! I seem to know that voice."

"Dr. Holmes!"

"Is it Mr. Selby?"

"Yes, sir; certainly it is, sir."

"Bless my soul! How did you come into this dreadful state, Mr. Selby? Have you upset a bucket of tar over yourself?"

Mr. Selby almost danced with rage.

"No, sir, I have not. I have had this tar hurled over me by a notorious joker, sir."

"Good heavens, D'Arcy! Surely you—"

"Weally, sir, I twust you know me bettah than to suspect me of such an extremely wude and diswespful action!"

"Who was it, Mr. Selby?"

"I do not know, sir. It was done from behind. D'Arcy knows, however—he was standing directly before me, and must have seen it done."

The Head turned a severe glance upon Arthur Augustus.

"Did you see this outrage, D'Arcy?"

"Yaas, sir," said D'Arcy reluctantly.

"You saw who perpetrated it?"

The swell of St. Jim's did not speak.

"D'Arcy! You must, as Mr. Selby says, have seen who perpetrated this outrage, if you were standing facing him at the time—you must have recognised the person."

"You see, sir—"

"Answer my question!"

"Wh-what question, sir?"

"Did you see who threw this tar over Mr. Selby?"

"Weally, sir—"

"I order you, as your head-master, to reply at once!" exclaimed Dr. Holmes, with a frowning brow.

"Yaas, sir; I saw him."

"You recognised him?"

"Yaas, sir."

"Who was it?"

CHAPTER 5.

An Awkward Position for D'Arcy.

"WHAT'S the row?"

Jack Blake asked the question as Arthur Augustus dropped into the quad.

The chums of the Fourth had been waiting there for their comrade, and they had heard indistinct sounds from the garden which warned them that something was toward. And Arthur Augustus's face as he rejoined them was a sufficient intimation that something was decidedly wrong.

"Anything wrong?" asked Digby.

"Yaas, wathah!"

"What is it?"

"There's goin' to be a wow."

Arthur Augustus walked off towards the School House, and his chums accompanied him.

Blake gave him a dig in the ribs.

"What's it all about, Gussy?"

"Ow!"

"Well, enlighten us, then, you ass!"

"I wefuse to be called an ass."

"Look here, what are you marching off for? What's the row?"

"I've got to go to my study."

"What for?"

"To stay there."

"But why?" howled Blake.

"Because the Head has told me to. I'm to stay there till I'm sent for."

"Phew!"

"Curious thing how Gussy is always getting into trouble," Digby remarked. "If there's any bother knocking around, you can always rely on Gussy to go and put his head into it."

"Weally, Dig—"

"Well, tell us what happened in the garden," said Blake.

"Has your giddy minor been getting into fixes, as usual?"

"Pewwaps I had bettah not tell you too much," said Arthur Augustus thoughtfully. "It will be safah for you not to know, as I'm afraid there's goin' to be a feaful wow."

"But what happened?" exclaimed Herries.

"Somebody upset a pail of tah ovah the head of Mr. Selby."

"Great Scott!"

"He was vevy angwy—"

"Ha, ha! Naturally."

"Yaas, I suppose it was natuwal under the cires. He will have a feaful lot of work gettin' the tah out of his hair, I should think; and I don't suppose he will show up in the Form-room this aftahnoon."

"Probably not. Who did it?"

"That's the twouble."

"Your minor, of course—though really that was going a bit too far, even for Wally," said Blake gravely. "Look here, if he's found out he will be expelled. They will call it an assault upon a Form-master."

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Was it Wally?"

"As a mattah of fact—"

"I suppose you saw who it was?" asked Digby.

"Yaas."

"Well, who was it?"

"That's the question the Head asked me, deah boys, and I declined to answer."

Blake stared.

"Declined to answer!" he murmured faintly. "Declined to answer the Head!"

"Yaas."

"My only hat!"

"I fail to see any cause of surpris, deah boy. I was in honah bound to keep dark the name of the culpwit."

"Yes, but—"

"I was weally upon my honah, and I declined to weply. The Head seemed vevy angwy."

"How surprising!" said Digby sarcastically.

"Well, I put it to him as one gentleman to another, but he didn't seem to see it," said D'Arcy. "Howevah, I shall not say who it was that thwew the tah ovah Mr. Selby, and I won't tell you fellows, either. You'd bettah not know, in case any questions should be asked. If you don't know, you can say you don't know."

"We can jolly well guess."

"You are not bound to state your guesses if you are questioned, deah boy, but only what you know—and you know nothin' unless I tell you."

"A Daniel come to judgment," said Blake admiringly.

"You ought to be a blessed lawyer, Gussy."

"Yaas, I wathah think I should make a pwetty good

D'Arcy's lips closed in a tight line.

Nothing would have induced him to give the name, even if the fellow concerned had been his enemy—and he had doubly a reason for keeping silent, as it was his own minor who was concerned in the matter.

Dr. Holmes's brow darkened more and more.

"D'Arcy!"

"Yaas, sir."

"Did you not hear my question?"

"Yaas, sir."

"Then answer it."

"You see, sir—"

"Tell me at once the name of the boy who perpetrated this outrage."

"Weally, Doctah Holmes—"

"I do not understand you, D'Arcy. Surely you cannot have the astounding impertinence to refuse to reply to my question."

"As a mattah of fact, sir—"

"Answer me at once!" thundered the Head.

"I should be extremly sowwy, sir, to be regarded as impertinent, especially by a gentleman I wespect so highly," said D'Arcy.

"Well, answer me, then, at once."

"It would be sneakin', sir."

"What!"

"I feel that I cannot give the name of the silly ass who played this wotten twick on Mr. Selby, sir," said Arthur Augustus. "I feel that it would be sneakin'." Upon reflection, sir, I am sure you will not pwess me to weply."

Dr. Holmes almost gasped.

To be thus read a lecture by a junior of the Fourth Form was a new experience to him, and not exactly a pleasant one.

But the Head controlled his anger.

"Now, listen to me, D'Arcy," he said, very quietly.

"This is not a matter in which a boy's natural scruples about tale-telling can be allowed to weigh. A tale-bearer is an odious creature, and I should always disapprove of anything of the kind. But no boy has a right to disobey the direct order of his head-master. You understand that?"

"Ya-a-s, sir."

"Then tell me at once the name of the boy who perpetrated this unheard-of outrage."

D'Arcy was silent.

"You hear me?"

"Yaas, sir."

"Answer me at once, then."

"Weally, sir—"

"I am waiting for your reply, D'Arcy," said the Head, in an ominous tone.

"Weally, sir, as one gentleman to another, I must say—"

"No impertinence, D'Arcy."

"Weally, sir, I—"

"Will you give me the name of the culprit at once, D'Arcy?"

"Pway excuse me, sir—"

"You refuse?" exclaimed Dr. Holmes, greatly incensed.

"Oh, no, sir. Only—"

The Head waved his hand.

"Go to your study at once, D'Arcy, and stay there till I send for you."

"Certainly, sir."

Arthur Augustus turned slowly to leave the garden. He was feeling extremely disturbed, but his determination was fixed, not to give Wally away to the avenging powers. Dr. Holmes turned to the unhappy master of the Third.

"I am sorry for this, Mr. Selby—very sorry indeed. I need not assure you that the culprit shall be discovered, and expelled from the school. Such an outrage has never been heard of in the history of the school. The wrongdoer shall not remain an hour after I have discovered his identity."

Arthur Augustus's heart sank as he heard the words. His face was very gloomy as he climbed the wall and dropped into the quadrangle.

The Head's words were all that was needed—if anything was needed—to confirm him in his determination.

If Wally was discovered he would be expelled!

Expelled from the school!

D'Arcy's resolution was firmly fixed.

Whatever happened to himself, he would not say a word; whatever might be the result, he would face the music without flinching.

ANSWERS

THE GEN LIBRARY.—No. 106.

No. 1 of THE EMPIRE LIBRARY is Now on Sale. The New Complete Story-Book.

Price ONE HALFPENNY.

lawyer," said D'Arcy. "A vewy keen and active bwain is required for that pwofession."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I fail to see any cause for laughtah. Hewwies, I twust you are not bwingin' that beast into the house."

"Why shouldn't Towser come in?" demanded Herries aggressively.

"It's against the wules, for one thing."

"Well, I like that! It's against the rules to cheek the Head, if you come to that," said Herries.

"Weally, Hewwies—"

"Better take the beast away," said Blake. "I shall vewy likely brain him with a bat if he gets under my feet, you know, and we don't want a dead bulldog lying about the study."

Herries glared, but he led Towser away to the kennels, and Blake and Digby entered the School House with D'Arcy. They went up to Study No. 6 in the Fourth Form passage. Arthur Augustus selected an ivory-backed brush, and proceeded to brush away the dust that had collected on his garments through climbing the garden wall.

Blake thrust his hands into his pockets and looked worried.

"This looks to me like a serious matter," he exclaimed.

"Did you tell the Head that you jolly well wouldn't answer him, Gussy?"

"Well, I put it a little more politely, deah boy, but it amounts to the same thing. Is all the dust off my twousahs?"

"Blessed if I know. Now—"

"You might look, deah boy."

"Oh, blow your trousers!"

"Weally, Blake, I expect to be called into the Head's study at any moment now, and I do not want to appeah there with dustah twousahs."

"You'll vewy likely get them dusted there," said Digby, "if you don't answer up to the Head when you're questioned."

"Weally, Dig—"

"Here, give me the brush!" said Blake.

"Thank you vewy much, deah boy."

Blake brushed his elegant chum down, and Arthur Augustus changed his collar, and donned a fresh necktie, tying it with great care before the glass. He seemed to think more of his appearance in the Head's study than of what would happen there.

Digby and Blake watched him in silence.

Though they generally found considerable amusement in chipping their elegant chum, they were really vewy much attached to him, and when he was in trouble they felt it as keenly as if the trouble had been their own.

And he certainly was in trouble now—more deeply in it than he seemed to realise himself.

It was no light matter to refuse to answer the Head.

A fellow might be expelled for such disrespect. It was not likely to come to that with D'Arcy, no doubt. But if he persisted in his refusal, and the Head did not let the matter drop, there was little doubt that D'Arcy would be flogged.

He could expect nothing else.

The juniors knew their chum only too well to imagine for a moment that the prospect of being flogged—or of being out to pieces, for that matter—would ever make him do anything that he regarded as dishonourable.

D'Arcy's lips were sealed!

But if the Head insisted—and he was absolutely certain to insist—what would happen then?

The thought of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, the elegant junior of St. Jim's, being flogged in public in the school hall made the Fourth-Formers shudder.

But it was quite certain, if he did not speak; and it was equally certain that he would not speak.

D'Arcy, having finished the last touches to the improvement of his toilet, glanced at the serious faces of his chums.

"I'm in a doocid awkward posish," he remarked.

"You are," said Blake. "I don't know what's to be done."

"I twust that Dr. Holmes will see weason."

"Ass!"

"I wufuse to be called an ass. I—"

"Look here, the best thing you can do is to answer the Head plainly," said Blake abruptly. "The Head's opinion on the subject is better than yours; and if he thinks you ought to answer, you ought."

D'Arcy shook his head.

"Imposs., deah boy."

"He will be awfully wrahty."

"Yaas, I'm afwaid so."

"You will be flogged."

D'Arcy started.

"I should uttably wufuse to be flogged."

"Ass! You wouldn't be asked."

"Weally, Blake—"

"Now, look here—"

"I should wufuse to be flogged, as I should wegard it as uttremely dewogatory to my personal dig."

"I tell you—"

Binks, the School House page, put his head in at the door.

"Please, the 'Ead wants to see Master D'Arcy in his study," he said.

"Vewy good, Binks."

Binks gave the swell of St. Jim's a commiserating grin, and vanished. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy turned towards the door.

"Cheer up, deah boys," he said; "I dare say it will be all wight."

Blake grunted.

"What are you going to do, Gussy?"

"I am goin' to put it to the Head as one gentleman to another."

Blake groaned, and Arthur Augustus quitted the study, and made his way to the dreaded apartment where the Head of St. Jim's awaited him.

CHAPTER 6.

In the Punishment Cell.

DR. HOLMES sat at his writing-table with a quiet, grave expression upon his kindly face.

The Head was evidently troubled, and evidently determined. It was a question of upholding his authority as Head of St. Jim's, and he was not likely to give way.

Mr. Selby was there, too. Mr. Selby had washed and scraped off as much of the tar as he could, but there were patches of it adhering to his hair and his ears; and his face, flaming from recent scrubbing, was very ill-tempered.

The bell had gone for classes, and the boys were trooping into the Form-rooms as Arthur Augustus D'Arcy came to the Head's study. Mr. Selby was not taking the Third that afternoon. He did not feel equal to it, and the Third Form chuckled and rejoiced in his absence, especially the three young scamps who were responsible for it.

Dr. Holmes glanced quietly at D'Arcy as he entered.

"I have sent for you, D'Arcy, to repeat my question to you," he said. "You have had time to reflect over the matter now."

"Yaas, sir."

"I trust you have decided to obey my order."

Arthur Augustus looked deeply troubled.

"If you please, sir—"

"A most unparalleled outrage has been perpetrated," said the Head. "It is an assault upon a Form-master of a most outrageous description. The perpetrator, when discovered, will be flogged and expelled from the school. There is no alternative open to me. You know the name of the culprit?"

"Yaas, sir."

"I shall, in any case, discover him," said the Head.

"The inquiry will not cease till his identity is known."

"Vewy good, sir."

"You will save time and trouble by telling me what you know, D'Arcy."

"If you please, sir—"

"I insist upon your telling me," said the Head. "I command you to do so. You will refuse to obey me at your peril."

"It would be sneakin', sir."

"I am a better judge of that matter than you are, D'Arcy," said Dr. Holmes, with a heightened colour. "In any case, you are bound to do as you are ordered by your head-master."

D'Arcy was silent and troubled.

"Well, D'Arcy?"

"I am sowwy, sir, but—"

"But what?"

"I cannot weply, sir."

Dr. Holmes rose to his feet. He was frowning, and there was a flush of anger in his face now.

Mr. Selby raised his eyebrows.

"Really, I have never heard of such insolence!" he exclaimed.

"Weally, Mr. Selby, I do not think my wemarks ought to be chawacterised as insolence. There is nothin' I wegard with so much howwah as insolence to one's eldaha."

"You refuse to answer me, D'Arcy?"

"It is imposs., sir."

"You understand the consequences, I suppose?"

The colour faded a little in D'Arcy's cheek, and his heart beat faster. The Head's tone was hard and grim. D'Arcy knew what he risked, but he did not falter.

"Yaas, sir."

"I shall give you time to reflect," said Dr. Holmes.

"You have so good a record in the school, D'Arcy, that I should be sorry indeed to be compelled to flog you in public. That, however, is the only possible course if you persist in this impertinence."

"Oh, sir!"

"Meanwhile, you shall have time to reflect. You will be locked up in the punishment room for twenty-four hours, and will have only bread and water for that time. If at the end of that time you decide to obey me, I will pardon you. If you are still obstinate, you will be publicly flogged in the school hall."

"Weally, sir—"

"Enough!"

Arthur Augustus was silent. The Head touched a bell, and it was answered by Grimes, the school sergeant.

The Head made a gesture towards D'Arcy.

"Grimes, you will take Master D'Arcy to the punishment-room, and lock him in, and see that no one is allowed to communicate with him. His diet will be bread and water, till I give you further instructions."

"Yes, sir."

"You will follow Grimes, D'Arcy."

"Yaas, sir. I am sowwy—"

"That will do."

"I am vewy sowwy, sir—"

"You may go."

"Yaas, sir, but you must allow me to express my wergwet for havin' made you waxy, sir," said the swell of St. Jim's earnestly. "It is vewy wotten for you to considah that I mean to be impertinent, and I am vewy sowwy you should look at it in that light. I—"

"Take Master D'Arcy away, Grimes."

"Yes, sir."

The sergeant dropped his hand upon D'Arcy's shoulder, and the elegant junior was walked out of the room. Grimes closed the door, and looked curiously at D'Arcy.

"Anything very bad, Master D'Arcy?" he asked respectfully enough.

"I'm afraid so, Gwimes."

"I'm sorry, sir."

"Thank you vewy much. I suppose you will have to lock me up, as the Head gave the ordah, and I will excuse you, Gwimes."

The sergeant grinned.

"Thank you, sir."

He led the way to the punishment room.

The sergeant was in a state of astonishment, and that state was likely to be shared by the rest of St. Jim's when they heard the news.

For the punishment cell at St. Jim's was seldom or, rather, never used.

In the old days of the school, under the hard, grim rule of the head-masters of long ago, the cell had been used frequently enough. But of late years it had fallen into disuse, and, in fact, a boy was not confined in it once a year. Its very existence had almost been forgotten.

The sergeant led the way to the upper corridor where the cell was situated, and opened the door.

The cell was about eight feet square, and had a square, barred window looking out upon a corner of the quadrangle.

Outside, the tall branches of a tree brushed against the glass.

The room was shadowy. The small grate had a bar across above it, though the chimney was too narrow to admit any but the smallest fag at St. Jim's.

The room was furnished with a table, a chair, and a wash-stand—all of them covered with dust, for the room was seldom entered.

Sergeant Grimes looked round him with a shiver.

"I'll have a few things put in 'ere, Master D'Arcy, if you like," he said.

"Thank you, Gwimes."

"The House-dame will do it," said the sergeant. "It might be made a bit more comfortable. I shall have to lock you up, according to orders."

"Certainly, Gwimes."

The sergeant retired, and the key grated in the rusty lock.

Arthur Augustus sat down on the chair, and looked round him.

The room was cold, and dull, and lonely. The swell of St. Jim's shivered. Twenty-four hours there, without a soul to speak to, on bread and water! His heart sank.

But he did not falter.

CHAPTER 7.

Bad News.

JACK BLAKE looked towards the door of the Fourth Form-room a dozen times or more during the first ten minutes of the afternoon's lessons.

Arthur Augustus had not arrived to take his place in the class.

Where was he?

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 106.

No. 1 of THE EMPIRE LIBRARY is Now on Sale.

The New Complete Story-Book,
Price ONE HALFPENNY.

Herries and Digby were equally concerned. A good many other Fourth-Formers remarked upon the absence of Arthur Augustus.

Where was the swell of St. Jim's?

Figgins, Kerr, and Wynn, of the New House—albeit deadly rivals of the School House juniors, showed considerable concern in the matter. Figgins leaned over his desk and jabbed Blake with the point of his pen.

Blake turned round with a gasp and a wrathful glare.

"You ass!"

"I say, Blake—"

"You chump! What did you do that for?"

"I wanted to attract your attention. I—"

"Why couldn't you use the other end of the pen, then?" said Blake.

"By Jove, you know, I never thought of it!" said Figgins. "But never mind that!"

"But I do mind, you ass. I—"

Mr. Lathom, the mild little master of the Fourth, blinked round through his spectacles.

"Someone is talking," he said.

"Go hon!" murmured Figgins.

Blake glanced towards the door again. Why did not Arthur Augustus come? Was he even then being flogged in the Head's study for his obstinacy?

Blake was feeling decidedly worried. Figgins leaned over his desk again and whispered to Blake.

"Where's Gussy, Blake?"

"I don't know."

"Why doesn't he come into class?"

"Blessed if I know."

"Not ill, I hope?"

"No."

"In a row?"

"Yes."

Figgins gave a soft whistle.

"I'm sorry. Not serious?"

"I'm afraid so. He was sent for to go into the Head, and he hasn't come back," said Blake glumly. "It's rotten!"

And he passed on the information to Kerr and Fatty Wynn, who were sorry, too. They might have endless rows with the School House fellows, and never agree upon the disputed question as to whether the School House or the New House was cockhouse of St. Jim's; but they could not help liking D'Arcy, and they felt deeply concerned to know that he was in serious trouble.

Blake glanced towards the door again. He would have given a term's pocket-money to see Arthur Augustus stroll in in his usual free-and-easy way.

But the swell of St. Jim's did not come.

Mr. Lathom glanced at Blake over his glasses

"Blake!"

"Ye-es, sir."

"Will you kindly pay a little more attention to the lesson, and a little less to the Form-room door," said Mr. Lathom severely.

"Ye-es, sir."

"Why, there you are, looking at the door again!" said Mr. Lathom. "What do you mean, Blake?"

"I—I was thinking about D'Arcy, sir," said Blake desperately. "Isn't he coming to lessons this afternoon, sir?"

"No," said Mr. Lathom.

"Oh!"

The Fourth-Form master did not vouchsafe any further information, and Blake was forced to be content with that.

He waited anxiously for lessons to be ended, so that he could get out of the Form-room and discover what had become of his chum.

Never had an afternoon's lessons seemed so interminable to Jack Blake.

He looked at the clock a hundred times, and it seemed to him that the hands were crawling with extraordinary slowness, and that they would never indicate half-past four.

But they did at last; and Mr. Lathom dismissed the class, much to the satisfaction of the chums of Study No. 5.

Jack Blake, Digby, and Herries hurried out first, narrowly escaping being called back and detained for their unseemly haste; but Mr. Lathom was the most good-natured and the most short-sighted of masters, and they escaped.

The Shell had just been dismissed, and the Terrible Three were coming along the passage. They at once stopped as they saw Blake's worried look.

"Anything the matter?" asked Tom Merry.

"Yes. Have you seen Gussy?"

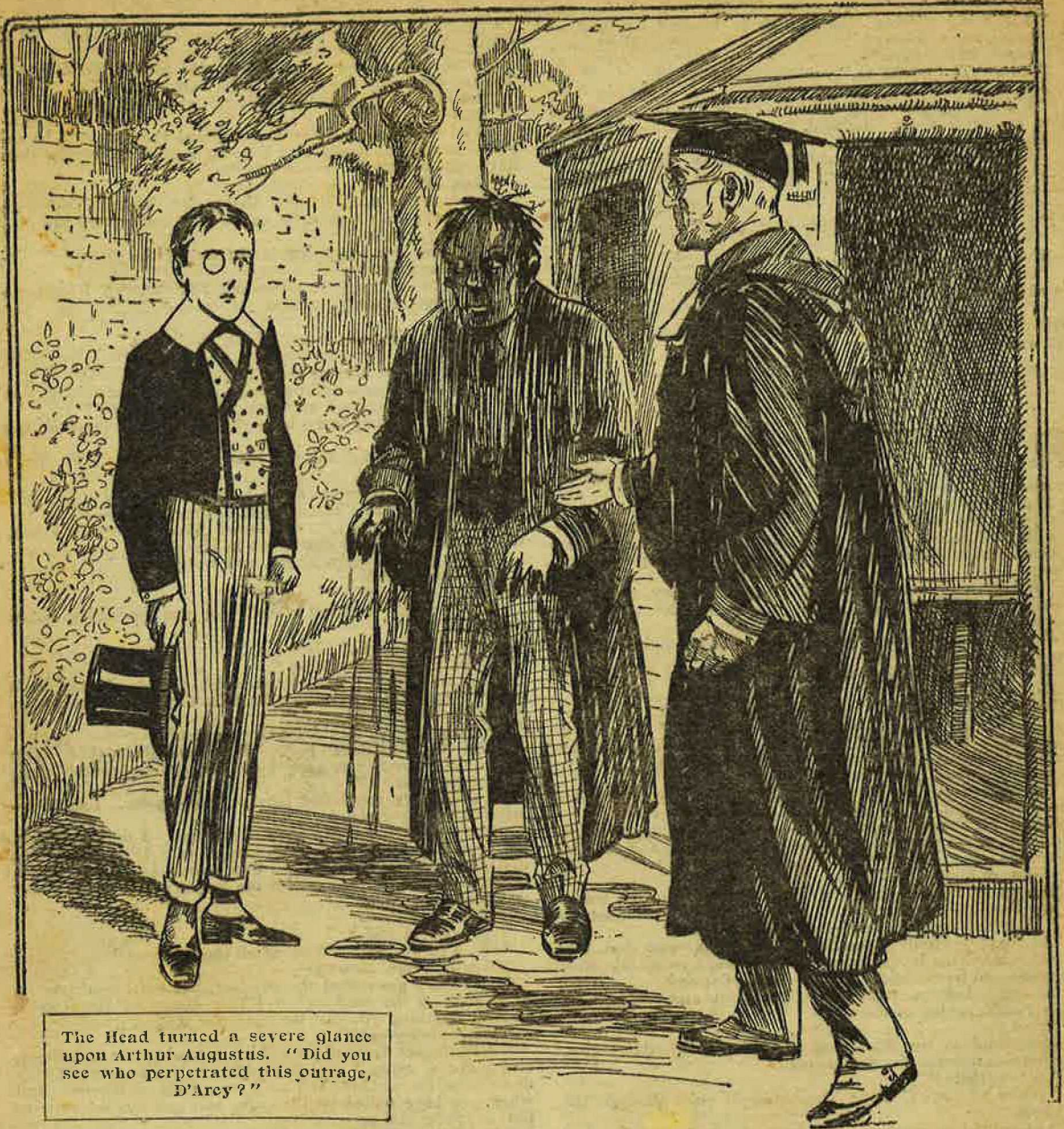
"No. Wasn't he in class?"

"No."

"Gussy playing truant!" exclaimed Monty Lowther.

"He's getting reckless in his old age."

"Ha, ha, ha!"



The Head turned a severe glance upon Arthur Augustus. "Did you see who perpetrated this outrage, D'Arcy?"

"It's not a laughing matter," said Blake anxiously. "Gussy's in trouble, and I'm afraid it's going to be jolly serious."

The chums of the Shell became grave at once.

"What's the trouble?" asked Manners tersely.

"Somebody spilt a bucket of tar over Mr. Selby in the Head's garden!"

"Great Scott! Not Gussy?"

"No. But Gussy was there, and saw it done. And the Head has ordered him to tell the name of the chap who did it."

"He'll have to, then. Head's orders."

"He won't!"

"Phew!"

"He refused, and he was sent for to the Head's study just before afternoon lessons," explained Blake. "He didn't come into the Form-room, and I haven't seen him since."

"That looks serious. Let's hunt for him."

"Good!"

The juniors looked for D'Arcy. Study No 6 was drawn blank, and so was the common-room. Where was Arthur Augustus?

A dark suspicion crossed Blake's mind.

"He said he wouldn't stand a flogging," he said, in a low tone. "Is it possible that he's hooked it?"

"By George! He wouldn't be such an ass!"

"Well, you know what Gussy is, when it's a question of his dig?" said Blake ruefully. "He might have bolted!"

"Phew!"

"Hallo, here's the sergeant. He may know."

Grimes touched his cap to the juniors. The good sergeant was looking unusually grave. Like everyone else in the school, he liked Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, and was sorry to see him in troubled waters.

"Have you seen D'Arcy, Grimes?" asked Blake.

"Didn't you know, Master Blake?"

"Know—know what?" asked Blake anxiously. "He hasn't been flogged, has he?"

"Not yet, anyway."

"Where is he—do you know?"

"I had to lock him up, Master Blake."

"Lock him up!" exclaimed Tom Meiry, staring.

"Where?"

"In the punishment cell."

"My only hat!"

"Come on!" exclaimed Blake.

"Hold on, Master Blake! You mustn't go there!"

"Eh?"

"The Head ordered that he was to be shut up, and no communication allowed," said Grimes, looking distressed. "I must obey orders."

"Ye-e-es, I suppose so," said Blake reluctantly.

The sergeant's face relaxed a little.

"I shall be going along the corridor in five minutes to see that no one is there," he said, turning away.

The juniors understood.

"Good old Grimes!" said Tom Merry, in a whisper.

"That means we've got five minutes for a jaw with Gussy before he puts the stopper on."

"Good!"

"Let's cut off and make the most of it."

"What-ho!"

The juniors lost no time.

They went upstairs like lightning, and scuttled along the passage leading to the punishment cell.

In about ten seconds after leaving Grimes, they were outside the strong oaken door of the room in which the swell of St. Jim's was a prisoner.

CHAPTER 8. Friends In Need!

ARTHUR AUGUSTUS paced the punishment cell with uneasy strides.

He had been there several hours now, and it was no wonder that he was growing decidedly bored.

There was no book of any sort in the room, and the junior had nothing about him to read, except a letter from his Aunt Adelina, full of good advice; which he had been through dutifully once, and did not feel inclined to go through again.

"Bai Jove!" murmured D'Arcy, more than once. "I weally think I can't stand this, you know! It's absolutely beastly!"

He tried the door, and he tried the window, and he looked up the chimney.

But there was no escape.

He was a prisoner.

Twenty-four hours!

And less than three of them had passed so far!

The very thought of that dreary extent of time struck a chill to the heart of the swell of St. Jim's.

How was he to live through it.

He listened eagerly for the stroke of half-past four from the school clock, which was audible to him in the cell.

Surely his chums would find some means of communicating with him when they were released from classes, and learned where he was.

Half-past four!

The school clock chimed out, but his chums did not come. Were they looking for him? Arthur Augustus climbed on the chair and looked out of the barred window.

He could see only a corner of the quad, and that was mostly obstructed by the branches of the big tree outside, now beginning to be covered with the green of spring.

He stepped down, without seeing a soul, and resumed his monotonous pacing of the cell.

Knock!

The sound at the door sent a thrill through the junior. He hurried towards the door at once.

"Who's there?"

"We're all here!" came Tom Merry's voice through the keyhole.

"Jolly glad to see you, deah boys—I mean to heah you," said D'Arcy, with great relief. "If it hadn't been for heahin' the clock stwike, I should think that I had been here a feahfully long time."

"We've been looking for you, and only just learned from Grimes where you were," said Jack Blake. "How long have you been here?"

"All the afternoon."

"Poor old Gussy!"

"Yaas, it is wathah hard cheese, and no mistake, deah boy! I have been bored almost to teahs, you know."

"What are you here for?"

"Head's ordahs."

"Yes. But for how long—and why?"

"Twenty-four hours!"

"Great Scott!"

"And after that?" asked Monty Lowther.

"Then I am to be flogged, unless I make up my mind to give the name of the silly ass who tarred Mr. Selby."

"Phew!"

"What are you going to do, Gussy?"

"I weally do not know. I would wathah be flogged than give away the chap who tarred the obnoxious person; but, of course, it is imposs. for me to submit to a floggin', as it would be a feahful outwage upon my personal dig."

"To say nothing of the fact that it hurts," said Digby.

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 106.

"Oh, I should not mind the pain so much, deah boy; but a fellow is bound to considah his dig."

"Look here, Gussy, there's only one way out of it—we'll find the chap who did it, and make him own up."

"Nothin' of the sort, Blake."

"But—"

"You see, the Head has declared that the chap will be expelled as soon as found, and I would wathah be flogged than have him expelled."

"Yes. But—"

"I am quite decided upon that point, Blake. You must not take any such step, or I shall wefuse to wegawd you as a fwend any longah."

"But how are you going to get out of the flogging?" demanded Tom Merry.

"If the worst comes to the worst, Tom Mewwy, I pwesume I shall have to bolt."

"Bolt!"

"Yaas. Wm away fwom school, you know."

"You ass!"

"Weally, Tom Mewwy—"

"You sha'n't do anything of the sort. For one thing, you would be brought back and flogged all the same."

"I should wefuse to be bwrought back and flogged all the same."

"Besides, you mightn't be allowed to return to St. Jim's at all."

"I should be vewy sowwy to leave St. Jim's; but anythin' would be pweferable to an outwage upon a fellow's dig."

"Oh, he's hopeless," murmured Tom Merry. "I say, Gussy, what have you got to eat in there?"

"I am goin' to have bwead and watah."

"All the time?"

"Yaas, wathah!"

"You're jolly well not. We'll get you something better than that."

"The door's locked, deah boy."

"Well, there's the window."

"Bai Jove, yaas! I never thought of that. If you could send me up a file I could get the bars filed away, and escape fwom the window."

"You couldn't. You'd break your neck."

"Not at all, deah boy. You wemembah that when Tomsonio's Circus was here, I did severah acrobatic twicks with great success?"

"I remember you biffed into a Form-master. I don't remember anything else."

"There was that clown chap, Joey Pye. I did severah of his twicks, and was vewy successful," said D'Arcy. "As a mattah of fact, it has occurred to me that if I left St. Jim's, it would be a good wheeze for me to get a job in the circus as a widah."

"As a what?"

"As a circus widah."

"Oh, a circus rider. Well, of all the asses—"

"Weally, Tom Mewwy—"

"You can't get out of the window, but we'll send you up some grub by the window," said Tom Merry. "Have you a cord or anything you can let down for it?"

"I am sowwy—no!"

"Well, unpick some of your shirt, or necktie, or something, and make a string," said Tom Merry. "You can let that down from the window, and we'll tie a rope on it—see. And when you have pulled up the rope, you can use the rope to pull anything else up with."

"Bai Jove! That is a weally wippin' ideah, Tom Mewwy, and it is vewy snupwisin' to me that you thought of it."

There was a sound of loud footsteps in the passage.

Tom Merry looked round.

"Hallo! Here comes the sergeant! Cave!"

"We're off, Gussy. See you again."

"Right-ho!" deah boys!"

And the juniors scuttled along as the school sergeant came along the passage with loudly tramping feet, as if he wished to warn them of his approach, as doubtless he did.

Grimes was carrying a tray, upon which reposed a loaf of bread and a jug of water.

Such was to be the diet of the swell of St. Jim's until his obstinacy was subdued, and he was brought to a better sense of discipline.

Grimes looked neither to the right nor to the left. He did not see the feet disappearing round the nearest corner.

He unlocked the door of the punishment cell, and carried in the tray.

He set it upon the little table, and glanced round the room. He had sent in several articles of furniture to make it more comfortable, but it was certainly a dull and dreary place.

Arthur Augustus glanced at the tray.

He was getting a little hungry, but he was not in the least inclined to tackle a diet of bread and water.

"Thank you, Gwimes!" he said.

"I'm sorry it's nothing better, sir," said the sergeant. "Anything I can get you, sir, that's not against orders?"

"Yaas, wathuh, Gwimes! My toothbrush is the most important. But I want a comb and brush, too, and a change of linen, and my pyjamas, you know, as well as a lookin'-glass."

The sergeant grinned.

"Werry well, sir."

He retired, locking the door after him. He returned in ten minutes with the articles D'Arcy required. The diet on the tray had not been touched.

"I'd better leave it, sir," said Grimes.

"Yaas, cewtainly!"

"No good goin' hungry, sir, like them blessed Suffragettes," said Grimes.

Arthur Augustus smiled.

"Oh, that's all wight, Gwimes! I am not thinkin' of twyin' the effect of a hungah stwike."

"Werry well, sir."

And the school sergeant went out and locked the door. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy was left alone once more, with the bread and water, and his reflections, which were not of the happiest.

CHAPTER 9.

D'Arcy Minor is Worried!

WALLY put his head into Study No. 6 in the School House. There was an unusual shade of anxiety upon the face of the inky-fingered, curly-haired scamp of the Third Form at St. Jim's.

There were six juniors in the study, and on the table was a pile of provisions—recent purchases at the tuckshop.

But it was not a feed that was toward.

The half dozen juniors were not thinking of tea. They were discussing the situation with glum looks.

Blake had scouted round under the window of the punishment cell, and found that the spot was overlooked from another window, so that it would not be safe to approach it for the purpose of conveying provisions to D'Arcy till after dark.

The juniors had to mark time, waiting for the last remnant of daylight to disappear.

Wally glanced round at the gloomy faces.

"Where's Gus?" he demanded.

"Hallo, young Hopeful, what do you want?" said Monty Lowther.

Wally came into the study.

"There's a yarn going round that Gussy is in trouble," he said. "The chaps are saying in the Third Form that the Head's got a down on him, and there are going to be fireworks. Gussy's an ass, but he's my major, and I'm bound to look after him a bit. What's the trouble?"

"You are."

D'Arcy minor stared.

"What do you mean?"

"Somebody upset tar over Selby in the Head's garden this afternoon," said Jack Blake.

Wally grinned.

"Yes. He didn't show up in the Form-room this afternoon. Serve him jolly well right!"

"That's why Gussy's in a row."

"Why, it wasn't Gussy!"

"Gussy was on the spot, and saw the chap do it, and won't give his name," said Tom Merry, looking straight at the scamp of the Third.

Wally changed colour.

"Well, I supposed Gussy must have seen it," he said.

"But I never thought of this. It's awfully decent of Gus not to peach; but, of course, he wouldn't."

"You young rascal, you ought to have had more sense!"

"Rats! Don't accuse me! How do you know I know anything about it?" said Wally coolly. "As the Head intends to expel the chap who did it, I don't intend to know anything about it, either. If you chaps know who did it, you needn't mention it to me."

The juniors could only stare at the scamp of the Third, and wonder at his sublime coolness.

"I make it a point to keep clear of matters of this sort," explained Wally. "It's really safer not to know anything about them."

"Well, my hat!"

"But the question is, where is Gussy now? Has he got a thousand lines?"

"He's in the punishment cell."

Wally jumped.

"The punishment cell?"

"Yes; on bread and water."

"My only Aunt Jane!"

"And he's to be there for twenty-four hours, and then he's to be flogged if he doesn't tell," said Blake gloomily.

"Oh, hang it! That's rotten!"

Wally stood still, his usually cheeky and quite self-possessed face pale with dismay.

The news was evidently a great blow to him.

"It can't be helped," said Tom Merry comfortingly.

"Gussy doesn't want you to own up; if it was you, of course. He'd rather be flogged than have another chap expelled."

"I shall own up."

"Better think of it first. You see—"

"I must see Gussy!" said Wally abruptly.

"He's locked in."

"Well, I can speak through the keyhole, I suppose?"

"You can try. But I'm afraid the sergeant will spot you. He's a decent chap, Grimes, but he has to obey his orders, you know."

Wally nodded, and left the study. His heart was heavy. He had acted thoughtlessly in revenging his injuries upon Mr. Selby, and he had had no idea of any consequences falling upon anyone but possibly himself. If the truth came out Wally was prepared to face the music with fortitude. But to have the trouble fall upon Arthur Augustus in this way, that was too bad!

Wally made his way towards the corridor, but the portly form of the school sergeant loomed up ahead.

"You can't come this way, Master D'Arcy."

Wally looked at him with a warlike eye.

"Look here, sergeant, I want to speak to my major—just a word through the keyhole—it won't do any harm."

The sergeant shook his head. He had made one relaxation in favour of Tom Merry & Co., but he could not go further.

"Sorry, Master Wally—against orders."

"Yes. But—"

"Against orders."

Wally grunted, and retired baffled. It was useless to argue with the burly sergeant. He had evidently made up his mind. And it was worse than useless to think of getting to the door of the punishment cell in spite of him.

What was to be done?

Wally was determined to obtain speech with his major. It was necessary, he had decided, and as there was no getting in at the door, Wally had to think of some other method.

He left the house and scuttled round to the place overlooked by the window of the punishment cell.

It was not yet quite dark, and there was no light in the window, but Wally faintly made out the outline of the panes, glimmering with the last rays of the sunset.

He would need a high ladder to get at the window, and the tree was not near enough to the wall to serve his purpose.

But as he scanned the wall, he observed a stone ledge that ran along the wall a few feet below the window.

The ledge passed under other windows, one of them belonging to a small room near the roof which Wally knew was occupied by Binks, the School House page.

It would be a risky business venturing along the narrow ledge from one window to another; but D'Arcy minor was not much given to counting risks.

He re-entered the house, and ran upstairs to Binks's room. He knocked at the door, but there was no reply. Binks was not there. Wally hesitated a moment. Binks was page and boot-boy in the School House, but his private quarters were as sacred in Wally's eyes as the Head's own study.

But the case was urgent, and it was impossible to find Binks, who was probably very busy below stairs at that moment.

Wally opened the door and went in.

He crossed to the little diamond-paned window, and passed out upon the stone ledge, closing the window after him.

The next minute he was tapping at the window of the punishment cell.

CHAPTER 10.

Major and Minor.

ARTHUR AUGUSTUS D'ARCY gave a start.

Tap!

The swell of St. Jim's stepped quickly to the window.

He had been expecting his chums every moment there, and had wondered at the delay, and the tap roused him from a glum reverie.

As he stepped to the window, he dimly made out a form outside the glass, but it was too dark to recognise it.

Tap!

Arthur Augustus pushed up the lower sash of the window.

"Wait a minute, dear boy," he whispered; "I'll light the gas."

"Don't, you ass!" came the reply. "If you have a light I shall show up to anybody who happens to be in the quad."

"Bai Jove! I never thought of that!"

"Lucky I did, then."

"Wally! How on earth did you get here?"

D'Arcy minor chuckled. Arthur Augustus had expected

to see Tom Merry or Blake, and he jammed his eyeglass into his eye and stared at Wally in astonishment.

"Have you a laddah, Wally?" asked Arthur Augustus, looking in vain for a sign of one.

"No."
"Are you alone?"

"Of course!"

"How did you get here, then?"

"Along the ledge from Bink's window. I'm standing on the ledge now, and holding to these blessed bars."

D'Arcy shivered.

"It is feehfully wisky, Wally."

"Not if you've got a good nerve—and I have."

"Yaas, wathah—you have, Wally. What an uttah ass you were to play that twick on Mr. Selby this aftahnoon."

Wally snorted.

"What an utter ass you were to be there to see it done," he retorted. "I warned you to get out of the garden. Why couldn't you?"

"It was my dutay as your oldah bwothah to look aftah you."

"Rats!"

"If you say wats to me, Wally——"

"More rats!" said D'Arcy minor cheerfully. "But I didn't come here to jaw you, Gussy. You're in a fix."

"Yaas, wathah! I wegard it as a doocid awkward posish for any fellow."

"What are you going to do?"

"I weally do not know, Wally."

"You saw me shove the tar over Selby, I suppose?"

"Yaas."

"And they know you saw it?"

"Yaas, wathah!"

"And you've got to own up who did it?"

"Yaas."

"And you won't?"

"No!"

"And if you don't you're going to be kept here for twenty-four hours, and then flogged?" said Wally moodily.

"So the doctah says."

"Do you think he will change his mind?"

D'Arcy shook his head.

"I hardly think so, Wally. You see, it's a question of dig. with him now, as well as with me, and he is hardly likely to give in."

"It's rotten!"

"Yaas, wathah! I wegard it as extwemely wotten. But I suppose it cannot be helped, and it is no use makin' a fuss about it, you know."

"Look here," said Wally abruptly, "you're not going to be flogged. If it comes to that, I shall go to the Head and own up."

"Imposs., deal boy."

"Why?"

"Because the Head has said that he will expel the chap who did it. It is bettah for one of us to be flogged than for the othah to be expelled."

"Yes, but——"

"You see, we must think of the people at home," said D'Arcy earnestly. "It would be an awful blow to the matah for you to be sacked."

Wally nodded gloomily.

"Yes, I suppose so."

"Besides, I shall not be flogged," said Arthur Augustus. "It would be so extwemely dowogatory to my personal dig. that I could not dream of allowin' it."

"But how are you going to prevent it?"

"I shall wotire fwom the scene before I am flogged."

"You don't mean run away from school?" gasped Wally.

"Certainly not. I should wegard wunnin' away fwom school as an extwemely undignified pwoccedin'. I shall simply wotire fwom St. Jim's for a time without informin' anybody of my whereabouts."

"You ass!"

"I wufuse to be called an ass."

"What's the difference between running away from school and retiring from St. Jim's for a time without informing anybody of your whereabouts?" growled Wally.

"Is that a conundwum, deah boy?"

Wally snorted.

"Look here, Gus, it would be better for me to own up."

"Wats! You must not be expelled; it would wowwy the matah. I wufuse to allow you to own up, Wally."

"That wouldn't make much difference if I decided to," growled D'Arcy minor.

"Weally, Wally——"

"But perhaps you're right. It's a serious thing to be sacked. It's better for you to be flogged, if it comes to that, from the point of view of the people at home," remarked D'Arcy minor thoughtfully.

"Yaas, wathah!"

"But if you did run away——"

THE GEN LIBRARY.—No. 106.

"I shall not wun away."

"Well, if you retired from St. Jim's, then, ass, if you prefer it that way—if you did that, the Head would get his rag out, and you might not be allowed to come back."

"Of course, that would be wotten; but it is not certain. And anyway, it would be bettah than one of us being expelled."

"Would you go home?"

"Oh, no! The governah would send me stwaight back, as sure as a gun."

"Where would you go, then?"

"I am not sure. I have wawious wesources," said D'Arcy.

"You wemembah how I wode the circus horse when Tomsonio's Circus was here? I have an ideah of findin' that circus again, and offahin' my services to Signor Tomsonio as a circus widah."

"Well, of all the asses——"

"Weally, Wally——"

"I won't allow any such rot. I——"

"I twust, Wally, that you will not forget our wespictive positions as majah and minah," said Arthur Augustus, with dignity.

"Rats!"

"You are takin' an unfair advantage, Wally, as it is imposs. undah the circs. for me to give you a feahful thwashin'."

"Look here, Gussy——"

Wally was suddenly interrupted.

Something came looming up in the darkness behind him, and gave him a violent push between the shoulders, and his head was driven in at the window, and he would have gone headforemost into the room had not the bars caught on his shoulders and stopped him.

CHAPTER 11.

A Feed for Gussy.

WALLY gave a gasp of surprise and wrath.

Standing there on the stone ledge fifty feet above the ground, he had expected anything rather than an attack in the rear.

He clung to the bars, and glared round him in amazement, with a vague idea that a stray aeroplane had somehow wandered round the walls of St. Jim's, and run into him.

But it was not an aeroplane.

The end of a ladder loomed up in the darkness, and, having biffed Wally in the back, it settled down against the window-sill.

Wally stared at it in surprise.

"Hallo!" he ejaculated. "Were you expecting visitors, Gussy?"

"Bai Jove!"

"There's a ladder here."

"I pwesume it must be Tom Mewwy. He was goin' to send some things up on a wope, but appawently he has obtained possession of Taggles's long laddah."

"Yes, and he's jolly well biffed me in the back with it," growled Wally.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"What are you cackling at?"

"I wegard it as funny."

"Well, I don't," growled Wally, disengaging one hand and rubbing his shoulder. "Hallo, I can hear the silly ass coming up the ladder! Hallo, there!"

"Who on earth's that?" came back Tom Merry's voice, in tones of surprise. "Is that you, young Wally?"

"Yes, ass."

"How did you get there, you young monkey?"

"I came along the ledge; less trouble than dragging a long ladder about," said D'Arcy minor disdainfully. "You chaps want to take lessons from the Third how to do things."

"You cheeky young duffer, you risked breaking your neck."

"Then there's no reason why you couldn't risk yours. It's a jolly sight less valuable."

"Br-r-r!"

Tom Merry came steadily up the ladder. His chums were holding it at the foot. The hero of the Shell had a large bag in his hand, which was crammed with provisions. If Tom Merry had come along the ledge as Wally had done, it would have been difficult to get the bag along there.

Wally stepped aside on the ledge, and gave Tom a hand up with the bag.

D'Arcy looked out between the bars of the window.

"Bai Jove, I'm glad to see you, Tom Mewwy!"

"And I'm glad to see your old chivy again, Gussy. Here's the grub."

"I'm getting wathah peckish."

"Well, there's enough here to last even Fatty Wynn for twenty-four hours," said Tom, with a laugh. "Can you get the bag in, or shall I unpack it?"

"I think it will come in."

The packed bag was forced between the bars, and it just went through.

D'Arcy lifted it down into the cell, and its weight was an assurance that there were plenty of provisions in it for the period of his confinement in the punishment-cell.

"Bai Jove, this is weally good of you, deah boy!"

"Not a bit of it! Do you remember the time I was laid up in the sanatorium, and you brought me in grub?" chuckled Tom Merry. "One good turn deserves another."

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Hallo, what's that?"

Tom Merry glanced downward as the ladder creaked under a new weight.

The plump form and fat face of Fatty Wynn of the New House loomed up below him. The fat Fourth-Former gasped a little as he came up the ladder.

"I've got an idea, Merry."

"Go ahead!"

"Gussy must be feeling awfully lonely in there by himself. Suppose one of us squeezed in at the window and kept him company for a time."

Tom Merry laughed.

"I suppose you'd be willing to do it, Fatty?"

"Well, I was thinking so, you know."

"What put the idea into your mind—the feed we've just shoved in?"

"Oh, really—"

"How do you think you would get in between those bars, Fatty?" grinned Tom Merry.

Fatty Wynn looked at the bars of the window, and gave a grunt, and slid down the ladder again. Even the feed within did not make him feel equal to the effort of attempting to squeeze through that narrow space.

Wally chuckled.

"It's not a bad idea, though," he remarked. "I'm the smallest chap here, and I think I might be able to squeeze in, and I could stay till the bedtime of the Third."

"I should be vewy glad of your company, Wally."

"I should think so."

"Weally—"

"Good egg!" said Tom Merry. "See if you can squeeze in, and when you come out, you can get in by Binks's window as you came."

"Good!"

Wally took off his jacket, to reduce himself to the slimmest possible dimensions, and put his head through the window.

His shoulders caught on the bars; but he turned himself sideways, and began to worm and squirm his way through.

"You give me a shove, Tom Merry."

"Right-ho!"

"You can help me from your side, Gus."

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Ow!"

"What's the mattah?"

"I didn't say twist my head off, you ass!"

"I was only twyin' to pull you in, and I wish it to be distinctly undahstood that I wefuse to be called an ass."

"Ow!"

"What's the mattah now?"

"Tom Merry, don't shove me against the bars in that fat-headed way, you frabjous duffer!"

"Oh, that's all right!"

"If you shove me again, I'll kick out!" grunted Wally.

"Weally, Wally—"

"Leggo my hair, you duffer!"

"What am I to catch hold of, then? Shall I twy pullin' you in by youah eahs!"

"If you do, I'll dot you on the boko."

"I wegar that as a vulgah expession. And, in any case, I should uttably wefuse to be doited on the boko."

"Leggo my legs, Tom Merry."

"I was helping you."

"Well, don't help me, then."

"Bai Jove! he's gettin' thwough."

"Ow!"

D'Arcy minor came through with a rush. He landed on his hands on the floor, and rolled over with a grunt.

"Bai Jove!"

"Gr-r-r! You might give a fellow a hand up."

"Certainly, deah boy."

Arthur Augarus helped his minor to his feet. Tom Merry peered in at the window.

"All serene?"

"Yaas, wathah."

"I'm jolly well hurt!" growled D'Arcy minor. "Phew!"

"What's the mattah, Wally?"

"There's somebody coming."

"Gweat Scott!"

There was a very audible sound of footsteps in the passage. Somebody certainly was coming towards the punishment-cell.

Was it a chance passer, or someone paying a visit to the imprisoned junior? The two lads stared at one another in dismay, and Tom Merry, at the window, was equally dismayed.

NOW ON SALE

THE EMPIRE

LIBRARY,

**THE NEW COMPLETE
STORY BOOK.**

Get
a
Copy
To-day
and read about

**GORDON GAY, THE SCHOOL-
BOY ACTOR.**

("The Empire Library," price One Halfpenny.)

"Tom Merry, however, seldom lost his presence of mind. "Shove that bag out of sight," he muttered quickly. "You nip under the bed, Wally. I'll bunk. Quick!"

"Right you are!"

Wally slid under the little camp bed in the corner. There wasn't much room for Wally there, and he had to squeeze under. But he did it. Arthur Augustus threw the bag of provisions behind the head of the bed, where it could not be seen unless the visitor came up to that side of the room.

"Good!" muttered Tom Merry.

"Buzz off, deaf boy."

"Yes, rather."

"And take the laddah away."

"What-ho!"

Tom Merry slid down the ladder at lightning speed.

There was a grunt at the foot of it as he biffed his feet upon the chest of Monty Lowther, who was holding the ladder.

"Ow! You ass!"

"Never mind. I—I—"

"But I do mind!" howled Lowther. "I'm hurt! You ass! I—"

"Quick, get the ladder away! Cave!"

"Oh!"

The juniors gripped the ladder, and dragged it away from the wall. It came down with a rush, and they narrowly saved it from a resounding crash upon the ground. With a dozen hands grasping it, the ladder was rushed off into the gloom. Meanwhile, Arthur Augustus and Wally waited in suspense in the punishment room.

CHAPTER 12.

Wally in Close Quarters.

A KEY grated in the lock, and the door of the punishment cell opened.

Mr. Railton, the master of the School House, came in.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy faced him with a palpitating heart.

He was painfully conscious of the fact that one of Wally's boots was showing from under the bed, D'Arcy's eyes being so used to the darkness now that he could see quite plainly in the little room.

Mr. Railton, however, had come in from a lighted passage, and all was black to him.

"D'Arcy!"

"Yaas, sir."

"Why have you no light?"

"I—I have not lighted the gas, sir."

"Light it."

"Certainly, sir."

Arthur Augustus fumbled for matches. While he was doing so, he contrived to give Wally's too prominent boot a sly kick, and it was jerked into the cover of the bed.

A match scratched out, and D'Arcy lighted the gas.

Mr. Railton glanced at the junior as he stood blinking in the sudden light.

There was silence for some moments, and D'Arcy's heart beat hard. Did the House-master suspect something?

But there was no suspicion in Mr. Railton's face.

"I have come here to speak seriously to you, D'Arcy," he said, pushing the door shut.

"Yaas, sir."

Mr. Railton crossed to the bed, and sat down upon it.

Wally could hardly avoid a gasp of terror as the little bed creaked over him, and one of Mr. Railton's boots slightly knocked against his under the edge of the bed.

His heart stood still for a moment with the thought that Mr. Railton would look down to discover what it was his foot had knocked against.

But the House-master did not notice it.

He looked earnestly at D'Arcy, who stood with a flushed and worried countenance.

"D'Arcy, you are in a serious position."

"Yaas, sir."

"So am I, by George!" murmured Wally, sotto-voce.

"You have placed yourself in direct opposition to the head-master," said Mr. Railton. "It is an impossible position D'Arcy."

"I know it's a doocid awkward posish.., sir."

"You have refused to obey your head-master."

"Not wefused, sir."

"What do you call it, then?" asked the House-master sternly.

"Well, er—declined, sir."

"I do not see much difference."

"Oh, yaas, sir, it would be extremely diswespectful to wefuse, and I should be vewy sowwy to be guilty of diswespect towards a gentleman I wespect as much as Dr. Holmes."

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 106.

The House-master smiled slightly.

"You take a curious method of showing your respect, D'Arcy. Now, I can understand your feelings in this matter, and enter into them to a great extent. You would consider it dishonourable to betray the foolish lad who played that trick upon Mr. Selby."

"Yaas, sir."

"As a rule, Dr. Holmes would be the last man to require one boy to give information against another," said Mr. Railton. "But the present case is different. You saw the outrage—for it was certainly more an outrage than a joke—and you refused to answer when you were questioned. Now, you must not set your private judgment up against the opinion of your head-master, D'Arcy. If Dr. Holmes considers it right for you to speak, it is your duty to speak."

Arthur Augustus looked very troubled.

"You understand me, D'Arcy?"

"Yaas, sir."

"Then I hope my words will have the effect of changing your resolution," said Mr. Railton. "You have taken up an impossible position. It is no longer a question of the discovery of the perpetrator of that foolish trick. As the matter now stands, you have been guilty of direct disobedience to your head-master, and either you or Dr. Holmes must yield the point. It is inconceivable that Dr. Holmes, the Head of the school, should yield in such a contest. You see that?"

"I suppose so, sir."

"Then I hope you will do the sensible thing, D'Arcy, and speak out, and end this decidedly unpleasant situation."

Arthur Augustus was silent.

"Come, D'Arcy, I am speaking as your friend, and not as your House-master," said Mr. Railton. "I take an interest in you. I am deeply sorry to see you in trouble like this. Will you not be sensible, and take my advice?"

The swell of St. Jim's was still silent.

He felt Mr. Railton's kindness, and was grateful for it; but his tongue was tied. It was not only that he would not "sneak"—there was the fact, which Mr. Railton did not, of course, suspect—that it was his brother who would suffer if he spoke. That made a difference.

"If you persist in this obstinacy," said the House-master, raising his voice a little, "you will suffer for it. You must understand that disobedience from a junior to the Head must be severely punished."

"Yaas, sir."

"You will remain in this cell for twenty-four hours, and then you will be flogged in public in the school hall before the whole college," said Mr. Railton. "I should think that the prospect of such a painful and humiliating punishment would make you reflect."

"I am sowwy, sir, but—"

"Come, D'Arcy!"

"I cannot speak, sir."

"This is mere folly, D'Arcy."

"I am sowwy you should think so, sir, but I feel that I ought to say nothin'," said Arthur Augustus. "If I am flogged, I suppose I can stand it."

Mr. Railton rose.

His brow was very stern, and there was a troubled look in his eyes. It was evident that he was really concerned for the swell of St. Jim's.

"Very well, D'Arcy. I have no more to say."

"I twust you will not consider me diswespectful, sir."

"I believe you do not intend to be so, D'Arcy," said the House-master. "I think you are acting wrongly, however. But—Dear me, what is that?"

The House-master had suddenly caught sight of the bag crammed with provisions lying on the floor at the end of the bed.

Wally trembled; for the moment he thought that the House-master had discovered him. But his presence of mind did not fail him. He lay still, hardly breathing.

D'Arcy gave a start of dismay.

He put up his eyeglass and stared at the bag at which the House-master was looking in great surprise.

In the haste of throwing it there two or three tarts had burst out of a paper bag within, and rolled out on the floor—a sufficient indication of the contents of the crammed bag.

"Bai Jove!"

"What is that, D'Arcy?"

"It—it looks like a bag, sir."

"It certainly is a bag," said Mr. Railton, pushing it with his foot. Several apples rolled out, and a couple of oranges. The House-master smiled involuntarily.

"Bai Jove, sir!"

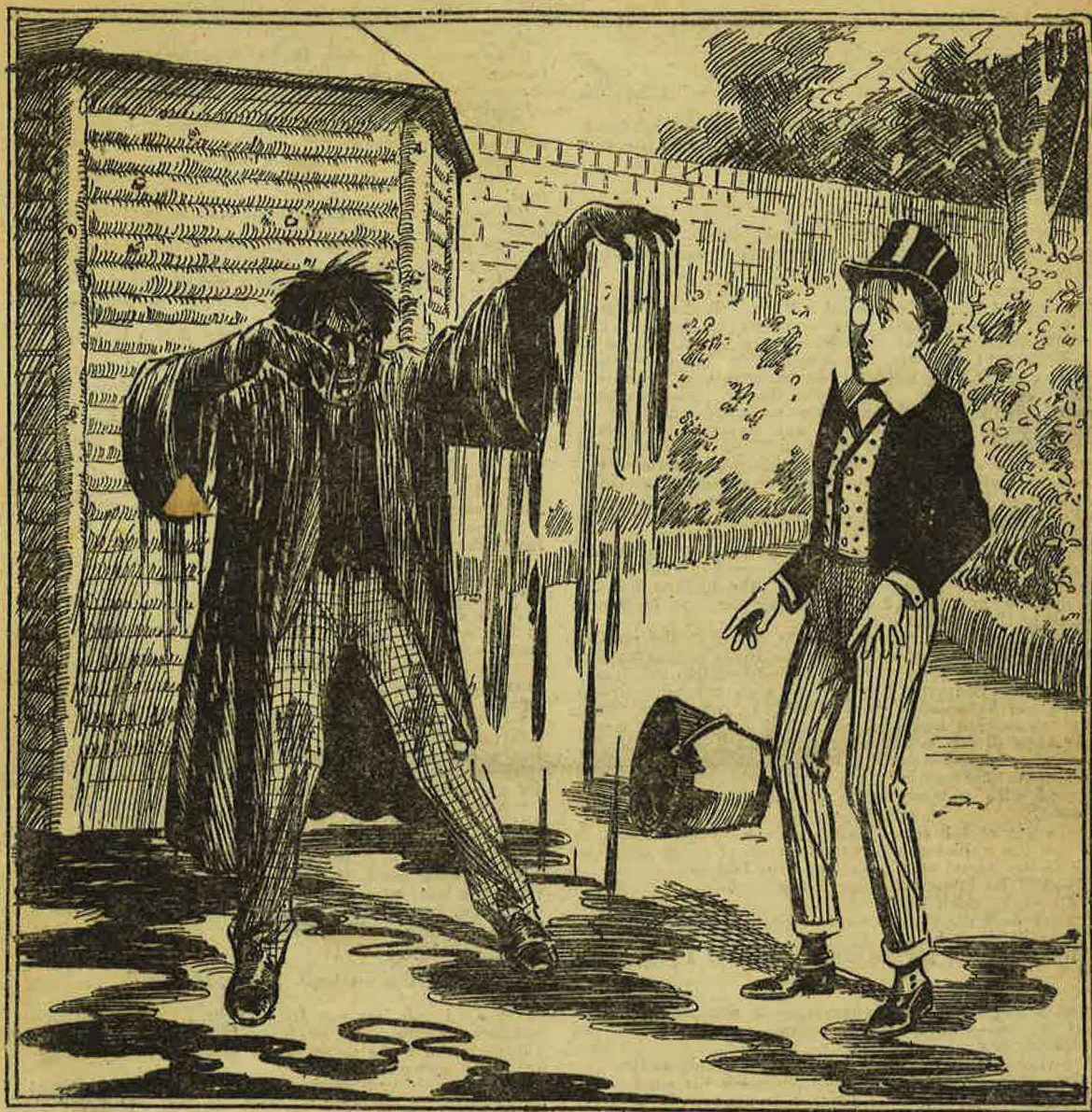
"How did this bag come here? I understood that you were on a diet of bread and water during your confinement in this room."

"So did I, sir."

"But this bag is here."

"Yaas, sir, it appeahs so."

The House-master looked at him curiously. It was pretty



‘Gwent Scott!’ Arthur Augustus D’Arcy murmured these words feebly as he gazed, fascinated, at the dreadful apparition.

clear that he would get no information from D’Arcy as to how the bag came there. He glanced at the window, and saw that it was open, and guessed.

He smiled again.

‘Well, D’Arcy,’ he said, without making any further reference to the bag, ‘you have made up your mind?’

‘I think so, sir.’

‘I hope you will change it by to-morrow,’ said Mr. Railton. ‘I will leave you now. I had hoped to do some good by coming here.’

‘I am sorry, sir.’

Mr. Railton opened the door. He glanced back once at D’Arcy, and did not appear to see the bag or the tell-tale apples on the floor, and apparently had forgotten its existence.

‘Good-night, D’Arcy!’

‘Good-night, sir!’

Mr. Railton locked the door, and stepped out into the dusky corridor. He knocked against someone in the gloom, and uttered an exclamation.

‘Who is that?’

‘Me, sir,’ was the prompt and ungrammatical reply.

‘Oh, it is you, Binks?’

‘Yes, sir.’

Mr. Railton gave the School House page a glance, and passed on. It did not occur to him to ask what Binks was doing in the passage there. The School House page looked after him till he disappeared, and muttered to himself:

‘Ah, they little know!’

Then he tapped softly at D’Arcy’s door.

CHAPTER 13.

Binks Offers Aid.

WALLY was just dragging himself, with a great gasp of relief, from under the narrow bed, when the tap came at the door. Wally popped back again in an instant, and gave a grunt as he knocked his head against the bedstead.

Arthur Augustus turned quickly to the door.

‘Come in!’ he called out, forgetting that the door was locked.

Tap!

"Come 'ere, Master D'Arcy!" said a hoarse voice at the door.

"Bai Jove, it's Binks!"

"The ass!" growled Wally, putting his head out again. "He's made me bump my napper, the silly ass! I'll punch his head!"

He crawled out, and sat on the bed and rubbed his head. Arthur Augustus went to the door and stooped to the key-hole.

"Is that you, Binks?"

"Yes, sir."

"What do you want?"

"Whisper, sir, in case they 'ear," said Binks, in a tragic voice. "Ush! I think I 'ear footprints—I mean foot-steps."

"Bai Jove!"

The swell of St. Jim's grinned a little. Binks, the boot-boy, lived in a constant state of tragic emphasis. His favourite literature was that turned out by the press of New York, and imported into England for the delectation of British youth. He followed the adventures of Dead-Shot Bill and Slippery Sam, the Broncho Buster, with breathless interest, and yearned for the day when he would throw aside apron and knife-machine, and mount a coal-black steed and scour the plains of the Wild West. Why the steed was to be necessarily of a coal-black hue was not clear, nor indeed what effective purpose would be served by scouring the plains of the Wild West. But such was Binks's ambition, and he lived for it and dreamed of it. As in the day-dreams of Maud Muller, when "sometimes her narrow kitchen walls stretched away into stately halls," so in the dreams of Binks, the boot-boy, he exchanged the uniform of many buttons for a suit of buckskin, the kitchen for the wide prairie, and instead of answering the bell, he would start up at the crack of a revolver.

The confinement of the swell of St. Jim's in the punishment-room had appealed strongly to Binks's imagination. In the first place, D'Arcy, being a gentleman to the fingertips, had always treated the boot-boy with as much courtesy as he would have shown to a prince. In the second place, D'Arcy was kind and generous. And in the third place, Binks knew of lots of cases—in American fiction, at least—where schoolboys shut up by cruel head-masters had escaped, and become the terrors of the Rocky Mountains, and had returned with a trusty band to burn the school to the ground.

Binks was at full concert-pitch now, so to speak, and he had left the knife-machine to take care of itself while he came to the rescue of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

"Ush!" he breathed through the keyhole.

"All right, deah boy."

"What does the chump want?" growled Wally.

"I weally don't know."

"Well, you can jaw to him if you like; I'm going to feed."

"Certainly, deah boy!"

And Wally, who was hungry—for it was well past his usual teatime—commenced operations on the contents of the famous bag.

A thrilling whisper came through the keyhole again.

"It's all right, Master D'Arcy; 'twas but the wind."

Master D'Arcy grinned. Binks was apparently unaware that such expressions, although quite in place in fiction, were not generally used in real life.

"Oh, 'twas but the wind, was it?" said Wally, with a grunt.

"Yaas, wathah!"

"At last we are alone," went on Binks thrillingly. "Master D'Arcy, I 'ear you're goin' to be flogged to-morrow."

"Yaas, appawntly so."

"I will 'elp you to escape."

"Escape, deah boy?"

"Wot-ho!" said Binks. "I'll get you a file for the bars at the winder, and at midnight's dark hour I will await thee under the window with two mustangs—ahem! I am afraid we shall 'ave to walk; but I'll 'elp you, Master D'Arcy, and come with you, if you like."

"Come with me!"

"I will!"

"But you'll get the sack, Binks."

"That's nothing! I scorn the position I have been placed in, and disdain the knife-machine. Together we will sail the Spanish Main."

"I am afraid the Spanish Main is wathah a long way off, deah boy, and the railway fare would be a sewious item."

"Oh, you can get there on a mustang or a Deadwood coach," said Wally, with a snort. "I never knew that even Binks was such a frabjous ass before."

"It's through weadin' those wotten American howbles," said D'Arcy. "I burnt all he had once, but I

suppose he has got a fwesh supply, as he seems to have that fealful wot still on the bwain."

"We will go to the Rocky Mountains," said Binks, through the keyhole. "We can join the redskins, and become known as the White Chiefs of the Prairie."

"Bai Jove!"

"Shall I get the files, Master D'Arcy? I could shove them in under the door."

"You're awfully good, Binks, but—"

"You could file through the bars of the winder in about four hours."

"I am afraid it would entail too much exertion, deah boy."

"But think of the life of freedom—think of scouring the prairie on a coal-black steed!"

"Yaas, that would be wathah wippin'—if poss. But I am afraid that I shall have to think of somethin' else, Binks."

"I could get a key to fit this door, if you like, sir."

"Bai Jove, that's bettah!"

"Then you could easily scoot out of one of the winders, sir. But when Dead-Shot Dave, the Black-Browed Terror, escaped from school, he came down a rope from the winder."

"Perhaps there weren't any bars to that window, Binks."

"Yes, there were—wooden bars, and Dead-Shot Dave gnawed them through with his teeth."

"Bai Jove! He must have needed a dentist aftahwards. I would wathah have a key to the door, Binks; and if you could bring me one, I should be awfly obliged."

"Then I'll get it, Master D'Arcy. Will you run away from school?"

"Certainly not!"

"But—"

"I shall wathah from St. Jim's for a time, if the Head persists in bein' so obstinate. Therefore I shall be glad of the key. To-morrow will do, as I shall not think of leavin' the cell to-night."

"But it's ever so much better at dead of night, when the moon is peepin' from behind dark masses of clouds, and—"

"But there's no moon to-night, Binks."

"Um! Well, I'll get the key, Master D'Arcy," said Binks, feeling very disappointed in Arthur Augustus. "I shall 'ave to look for it, but if you wanted to go to-night, I'd go and hunt it up at once."

"Not at all, deah boy."

"Then you will 'ook it to-morrow?"

"Sowwy; I don't quite undahstand."

"You will 'ook it to-morrow?"

"He means hook it—bunk!" explained Wally, between two huge bites at a big rosy apple.

"Thank you, Wally; but I don't want to see you so vewy well acquainted with—"

"Oh, rats!"

"Weally, Wally—"

"Shall I get you a 'orse, Master D'Arcy?"

"A horse?"

"Yes, I can 'ira one for you in Rycombe, though of course it wouldn't be anything like that coal-black steed that Broncho Bill escaped upon."

D'Arcy grinned.

"No, thank you, Binks. I think I will twust to the railway."

Binks granted. The railway was dreadfully unromantic, and he could not recall a single instance in which Dead-Shot Bill or Slippery Sam had condescended to make use of such a mode of travelling.

"Oh, orl right, sir!"

And Binks retired down the passage.

Arthur Augustus gave a little chuckle.

"Silly cuckoo!" said Wally, beginning on a new apple.

"Yaas, he is wathah a duffah, but his heart's in the right place," said D'Arcy. "He's not a bad sort, only his head's full of silly wot. If he bwings me the key it will be awfly useful, you know."

"Tuck in!" said Wally.

"Well, as a mattah of fact I am wathah hungry, and I think I will."

CHAPTER 14.

Wally is Discovered.

ARTHUR AUGUSTUS felt decidedly better after a square meal.

Wally made a considerable inroad into the supplies furnished by Tom Merry & Co., and when he could do no more, he yawned.

"It will be jolly dull for you, stuck up here alone, Gus," he remarked.

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Haven't you anything to read?"

"Nothin'."

"I've got an old number of 'Pluck' in my pocket," said Wally. "You can read that. I'll leave it with you."

"Thanks awfully!"

"What shall we do to pass the evening?" said Wally. "I wish I had thought of bringing some cards—we might have played patience."

"It's all wight. I will wecite you some of the poetwy I have been w'itin' for 'Tom Mewwy's Weekly.'"

Wally glared.

"You jolly well won't!"

"Weally, Wally—"

"I can stand anything almost from a fellow who's in trouble, but there's a limit," said Wally. "I draw the line at amateur poetry."

"You young ass!"

"You can recite 'Casabianca,' or the 'Charge of the Light Brigade,' if you like," said Wally generously.

"I wofuse to do anythin' of the sort."

"Well, let's have a box?"

"We have no gloves here."

"I suppose you're not afraid of a knock or two?" said Wally, disdainfully. "My only Aunt Jane! You'd be too soft for the Third Form!"

"I was thinkin' of you."

"Oh, rats!"

"I am busy upon a vewy fine descriptive poem for the 'Weekly,'" said D'Arcy, taking a crumpled paper out of his pocket. "What do you think of this?"

"Piffle!"

"But you haven't heard it yet."

"That makes no difference."

"Pway listen a moment!"

"Oh, all right!" said Wally resignedly, sitting on the bed. "You're in this fix partly on my account, so I suppose I ought to stand it."

"That is hardly a polite way of puttin' it, Wally."

"Oh, go ahead!"

"It's a descriptive poem of the sea by moonlight."

"Bosh!"

"Listen!"

"Quick—get it over."

Arthur Augustus gave Wally a doubtful look. His minor could not be called an enthusiastic listener. But, after all, at such a time in such a place, any listener was better than none.

Arthur Augustus went ahead.

"When I gaze upon the sea at dead of night,

I feel—"

"You've jolly well never done anything of the sort," said Wally. "You've been in your little bunk at dead of night when you've been on the sea."

"That is beside the point, Wally. It's poet's licence."

"Rats!"

"Besides, as a mattah of fact, I have weally gazed on the sea at dead of night—the othah day when we were goin' to Fwance by the night boat twom Dovah."

Wally grunted.

"Then I'm jolly certain you were too jolly sick to notice what it looked like."

Arthur Augustus coloured. There was certainly something in Wally's remark. He could think of no immediate rejoinder, so he went on with the descriptive poem instead.

"When I gaze upon the sea at dead of night,
I feel my heart yearn for the moonshine bright;
For while the waves invisible I see,
I wish—"

"How on earth do you see the waves if they're invisible?" demanded Wally.

"Of course, that's a poetic figah of speech."

"It seems like rot to me!"

"That's because you have a wotten, unpoetical, unwomantic soul, Wally," said Arthur Augustus severely.

"Oh, is it?" grunted Wally. "Well, get on with the washing."

"For while the waves invisible I see,
I wish the moon them to reveal to me,
I think that the fields of ether will soon light,
With the waptuwous glowious glowy of moonlight."

"My only Aunt Jane!"

Wally rolled over on the bed with a sudden exclamation as though he felt a severe pain. Arthur Augustus stopped his recitation and stepped quickly towards him.

"What is the mattah, Wally?"

"I—I don't know. I feel faint. I think it must be the poetry!"

"Weally, Wally—"

"Is there much more?"

"Only about a hundwed lines."

"I—I think I'd rather read the rest when they come out

in 'Tom Merry's Weekly,'" murmured Wally. "Really good poetry ought to be read, you know, and pondered over."

"But Tom Mewwy pwobably won't print the whole of it," said Arthur Augustus. "He has a wotten way of leavin' out whole verses when there isn't woom in the papah for the whole poem."

"Is he likely to leave out the whole poem, do you think?" asked Wally, with interest.

"It is quite poss."

"Then I'd rather wait, and take my chance with the 'Weekly.'"

Arthur Augustus thrust his crumpled paper into his pocket, with a great deal of dignity.

"I wofuse to wend you anothah word, Wally."

Wally sat upright.

"Thanks. I feel better now."

"You are a beast, Wally!"

"Go hon!"

"You have absolutely no poetic soul."

"No. Ripping, ain't it?" said Wally cheerfully. "Not that I don't like a moonlight night as well as you do."

"Ah, I am glad to see that you are not wholly lost to the beauties of Nature, Wally."

"No—a moonlight night is all right," said Wally. "It's ever so much better for going after the bunnies than pitchy darkness."

"You uttah young wapscaillon!"

"What's the mattah now?"

"I wofuse to discuss poetic mattahs with you any furhah," said Arthur Augustus, witheringly. "I think we had bettah box."

Wally jumped up with alacerty.

"Good!"

And the juniors removed their jackets, and boxed.

Arthur Augustus was a good boxer, and he was, of course, bigger than his minor; so he put one hand behind him, and insisted upon boxing only with his right, to make matters more level.

This placed him, however, at a great disadvantage, and Wally walked all round him, dotting him here and there quite at his ease, and as often as he liked.

"Bring the other fin out, old chap," said Wally. "You can't box me one hand."

"Yaas, I can, deah boy."

"There's one for your boko!"

"Oh!"

"And another for your potato-trap!"

"Ow!"

"Now shove in the other fin."

"I wofuse to do anythin' of the sort."

"Oh, rats!" said Wally. "I shall puncture you all over. Let's chuck this, and have a wrestle, then. I'll sling you all over the room, you know."

"I should uttably wofuse to be flung all ovah the woom."

"Ready?"

"Yaas, wathah."

"Then go it."

And the two juniors wrestled. Wally was very strong and wiry, and as tough as nails. Arthur Augustus, in spite of his age and size, had no easy task with him.

Locked in a tight grip, they staggered to and fro.

Suddenly Wally went over, but he did not let his brother go, and Arthur Augustus went down with him.

Bump!

It was a terrific bump on the floor. The trampling of the juniors' boots on the bare boards had made a considerable noise, but nothing to this. The sound could have been heard over half the School House.

"Bai Jove!" gasped D'Arcy.

"Ow!"

"I twust I have not hurt you, Wally?"

"I don't see how you could sprawl over a chap and squash him on the floor without hurting him!" grunted Wally.

"Weally, I— Oh!"

The door of the punishment room opened, and Kildare, the captain of St. Jim's, looked in, with surprise in his face. The trampling and bumping had reached his ears.

"D'Arcy! What on earth are you making all this noise about? Why—what—who—how did you get here?"

And he stared blankly at the hero of the Third.

CHAPTER 15.

A Night in the Cell.

WALLY staggered to his feet. He gasped for breath, but he looked at the captain of St. Jim's quite unabashed.

"Hallo, Kildare!"

Kildare simply stared.

"I thought D'Arcy was alone here," he exclaimed. "Have you permission to come here, D'Arcy minor?"

"Well, I forgot to ask."

"How did you get here?"

"By the window."

"And what did you come for?"

"Keep Gussy company."

The captain of St. Jim's eyed the fag dubiously.

"I twust you will not weport Wally for this, Kildare," said Arthur Augustus earnestly. "He was weally actuated by the best of motives, you know."

"The young rascal!"

"Weally, Kildare—"

"How did you get to the window, D'Arcy minor?"

"Ledge outside," said D'Arcy minor, with admirable brevity.

"You might have broken your neck."

"Yes. But I didn't, somehow."

"You cheeky young rascal!"

"Pway, Kildare—"

Kildare held the door wide open.

"Get out, D'Arcy minor!"

"All right," said Wally, keeping a wary eye upon the captain of St. Jim's. "But, I say—"

"Get out!"

"Good-night, Gua!"

"Good-night, Wally, deah boy!"

The scamp of the Third edged towards the door. Kildare's face was very grim, and Wally more than half-expected a powerful cuff as he passed the captain of the school. But Kildare did not move.

Wally got safely past, and scuttled away down the passage.

Kildare gave Arthur a severe look.

"You had better make up your mind to obey the Head's orders, D'Arcy," he said. "If you say you will, I'll see about it, and you needn't stay here for the night."

D'Arcy shook his head.

"I'm sowwy, Kildare, but I can't."

"You are a young ass!"

"Powwaps so, but I shall have to stick it out, you know.

I twust the Head will not pwove vevy obstinate."

Kildare smiled grimly.

"You'd better know at once what you have to expect," he said. "The Head will send for you in the morning, and question you once more. If you refuse to obey orders, you will be called up after morning school, and flogged in public."

D'Arcy shivered.

"That will be vevy wuff, Kildare."

"It's your own choice."

"It's a case of honah, deah boy—honah bwight, you know."

I can't give in."

"Well, I'm sorry for you."

And Kildare went out and locked the door.

Arthur Augustus was alone.

His intercourse with Wally had not been exactly amiable, but he missed the cheeky scamp of the Third very much.

The room was in a deserted part of the house, and no sound of life or motion reached it from without.

Arthur Augustus walked up and down with his hands in his pockets, feeling decidedly glum.

The school clock struck the hours, and the sound boomed in deeply at the window of the punishment cell.

Nine o'clock—ten o'clock.

Nothing more had D'Arcy seen or heard of his chums. Doubtless, since Wally had been discovered in the room, measures had been taken to keep them from visiting the prisoner doomed to solitary confinement.

The Shell and the Fourth Form would all be in bed now—most of St. Jim's would be in bed, or going to bed.

Eleven o'clock!

Arthur Augustus did not feel sleepy.

For once in a way he could go to bed at what hour he chose, but while there was nothing to stay up for, on the other hand, it was useless to go to bed when he felt that he would not sleep.

He ate a supper from the contents of the bag, and then paced the room again.

Half-past eleven!

He undressed at last and went to bed.

It was a long time before he slept.

The thought of the interview with the Head in the morning, and the flogging that was to follow, weighed upon the lad's mind.

D'Arcy did justice to the Head. He admitted to himself that the principal could hardly give way, now that the matter had gone so far.

On the other hand, D'Arcy himself was as determined as ever not to give in.

The flogging was inevitable, if he stayed at St. Jim's. There was only one way of escaping it—by leaving St. Jim's!

And that was a terribly serious step to take.

Where should he go?

To go home was useless, as, of course, he would be immediately sent back to St. Jim's. But where else?

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 106.

Upon this point Arthur Augustus had only one clear idea. If he could find Tomsonio's Circus, they would take him in and give him a refuge.

D'Arcy's riding had attracted the notice and admiration of the circus company when Signor Tomsonio's Circus was at St. Jim's, and he had made friends, too, with Jack Talbot and Clotilde, the Queen of the Ring.

The signor, in his jolly way, had told D'Arcy that if he were ever in need of a "job," he had only to apply at the circus; and those careless words, carelessly spoken, were in the junior's mind now.

He would take the signor at his word.

Only a short time before the circus had been in the neighbourhood of the school, and D'Arcy knew the direction in which it had gone.

Once clear of St. Jim's, it ought not to be difficult for him to catch up with the circus, and find a safe refuge there.

As to what would follow, he had no idea.

He could let his people know that he was safe, without telling them where he was, and the rest he could leave to Fortune.

Anything was better than either betraying his brother, or staying at St. Jim's to submit to the humiliation and disgrace of a public flogging.

Arthur Augustus thought over the matter, till it grew dimmer and dimmer in his mind, and at last he fell asleep.

He slept soundly, and dreamed of floggings and expulsion, and of bucking horses and jumping through paper hoops in the ring of Tomsonio's Circus.

He was deep in a dream in which he was riding a dashing circus horse, and jumping over banners held by Joey Pye, the clown, with the doctor after him with a birch in his hand, when he was awakened by the sound of the rising-bell.

Clang, clang, clang!

Arthur Augustus started and awoke.

The morning light was streaming in at the window, casting the shadow of the crossed bars in black upon the floor of the cell.

The swell of St. Jim's sat up in bed.

Clang, clang, clang!

It was the old, familiar sound so often heard in the Fourth Form dormitory, calling the boys up to a new day's work and play.

But under what different circumstances the swell of St. Jim's heard it now.

The thought that this might be his last day at the old school struck him with a kind of chill.

He rose and dressed himself, performing his toilet in the punishment cell with quite as much care as usual.

Then he waited.

About nine o'clock the door opened, and the sergeant appeared, carrying a tray upon which were bacon and eggs and a steaming teapot. It was quite probable that the good old soldier was exceeding his orders in providing a good breakfast for the prisoner of the School House.

"Good-morning, sir!"

"Good-mornin', Gwimes! Thank you vevy much!"

"I'm to take you to the Head after breakfast, sir."

"Vevy well, Gwimes!"

Arthur Augustus ate his breakfast with a fair appetite. If he was to run away that day, he would need a good meal to start on, he knew. The sergeant waited, with a compassionate expression upon his bronzed face. He knew nothing, of course, of D'Arcy's secret plans, and he only thought that the lad was doomed to a flogging, and he was sorry for him.

Arthur Augustus finished his breakfast.

"I'm wendy, Gwimes!"

"Very good, sir!"

And the sergeant led the way from the punishment cell, and Arthur Augustus followed him, his heart beating faster as he took his way to the Head's study.

CHAPTER 16.

The Last Word.

THE boys of St. Jim's were in their class-rooms, and the passages were deserted as the junior followed the burly sergeant to the Head's study.

He caught sight of no one but Binks, but Binks made him a mysterious gesture, to signify that he had obtained a key to fit the door of the punishment cell.

Arthur Augustus gave a slight nod in return.

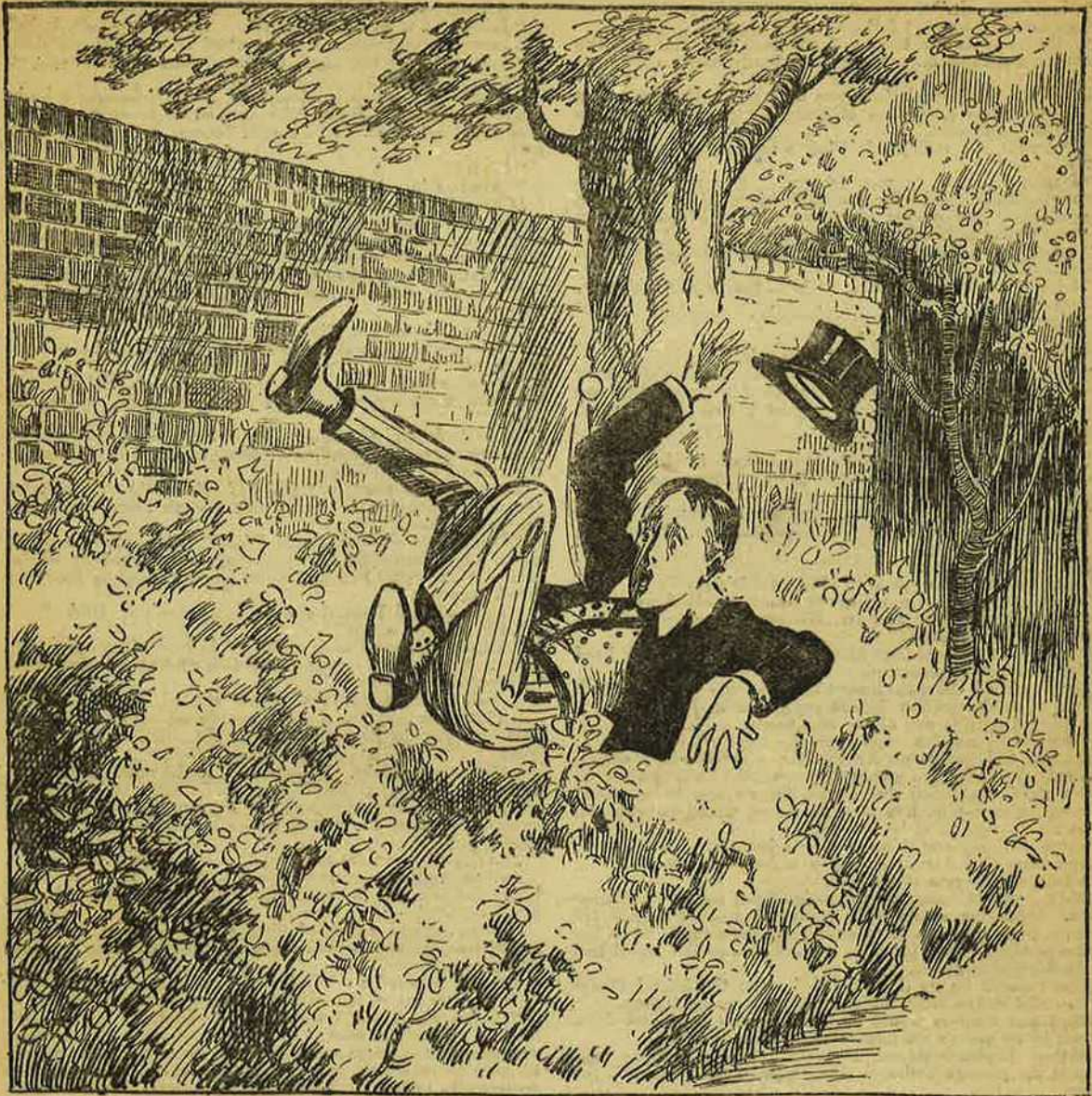
The sergeant arrived at the door of the dreaded apartment and tapped, and the Head's deep voice bade him enter.

D'Arcy followed him in.

Dr. Holmes was alone in the room.

He turned his penetrating glance upon the swell of St. Jim's, and made the sergeant a sign to retire.

Grimes left the study and closed the door.



Arthur Augustus made a clutch at his eyeglass, lost his balance, and rolled down into the garden. He dropped into a mass of shrubs, and gasped, "Ow!"

There was a moment's silence.

Arthur Augustus stood before the Head, with his eyes on the floor.

Dr. Holmes spoke at last.

"D'Arcy!"

"Yass, sir?"

"I have sent for you to give you one last chance."

"Thank you, sir!"

"You have deliberately refused to obey my orders," said the Head, raising his voice a little. "You fully understand, of course, that this cannot be allowed to pass?"

"I—I suppose not, sir."

"It is no longer a question of discovering who was the foolish lad who played that trick upon Mr. Selby. The question now is whether you or I shall yield in a dispute."

"I am sowwy, sir."

"You must see that it is your duty to obey me, D'Arcy," said the Head, his voice softening a little. "I can respect your scruples, but you must not carry them to the length of obstinacy."

D'Arcy was silent.

"Come, D'Arcy, have you decided what to do?"

"I—I am sowwy, sir."

The Head's brow darkened.

"You still refuse to reply?"

"I feel in honah bound to do so, sir."

"You have reflected?"

"Yass, sir."

"Very well; you know the consequences!"

The Head touched a bell, and the sergeant re-entered.

"Grimes, take Master D'Arcy back to the punishment-room!"

"Yes, sir."

"At half-past twelve precisely you will bring him into the school hall, where all the school will then be assembled. You will be prepared to assist in a flogging."

"Yes, sir."

"That is all, Grimes!"

The sergeant left the room, and D'Arcy followed; but he pained in the doorway to look back. All was settled now—St. Jim's was closed to him, but he would not leave the Head without a word.

"I am awf'ly sowwy for this, sir," he said. "I only twust that what I have done, and what I may do, will not be regarded as disrespectful."

"You may go, D'Arcy!"

"Vewy well, sir."

And Arthur Augustus followed the sergeant.

As they passed the Fourth Form-room Mr. Lathom, the Form-master, came out. He had evidently been waiting for them.

The little gentleman's face was very much distressed, and his short-sighted eyes were blinking away at a great rate behind his spectacles.

"D'Arcy! Ah, it is you! Wait a moment, sergeant!"

"Yes, sir."

"I wish to speak to you, D'Arcy. You are in a most serious position," said Mr. Lathom, his whole manner and tone showing how deeply distressed he was at the unlucky position of one of his favourite pupils.

"Yaas, sir, I am perfectly aware that it is a doocid awkward posish, sir."

"I trust you have decided to yield to the Head's authority, D'Arcy."

"I am sowvy, sir."

"Then you have refused?"

"I have been compelled to decline, sir."

"This is very wrong, D'Arcy," said little Mr. Lathom, very much agitated. "It will be a real blow to me if you are flogged. It will be a disgrace to the Fourth Form. And think of your people, too."

"I know it is vewy howwid, sir."

"Think over it again, my boy, and—and, in short, make up your mind to do the sensible thing," urged the Form-master.

"I wish I could please you, sir, but I wegard it as my bounden duty to keep silent on this mattah, sir. It is a case of bonah bwright, sir."

Mr. Lathom sighed.

"I am sorry to see you thus obstinate, D'Arcy."

"I am vewy sowvy, too, sir, but I have no othah resource. I only trust that you and Dr. Holmes will not wegard my conduct as impertinent."

Mr. Lathom retired into the class-room, shaking his head sadly, and D'Arcy passed on with the sergeant.

They reached the punishment cell, and the sergeant, with a look of commiseration, locked the junior in.

Arthur Augustus was alone once more.

He paced to and fro uneasily in the cell.

He had fully made up his mind now. He would not be flogged. The disgrace would be too much; and, besides, he had a secret conviction that at the last moment Wally would own up to save him, and then his minor would be expelled. That at any cost must be prevented.

There was only one thing to do—leave St. Jim's.

And upon that Arthur Augustus D'Arcy had resolved.

All depended upon Binks now.

D'Arcy waited anxiously for a sign from the School House page. How long would it be before his rescuer came? He had until half-past twelve to make good his escape. Then the sergeant would come for him, to take him to the school hall to be flogged in public.

There would be no difficulty in leaving the School House if he could escape from the cell during morning lessons.

Boys and masters would be in the class-rooms, and there would be no one to see him or to interfere with him.

Arthur Augustus started at the sound of a cautious footstep in the passage without. He stepped quickly towards the door.

A key grated in the lock.

The door opened, and Binks appeared, with a flush of excitement in his face, and his eyes gleaming as brightly as the buttons on his uniform.

"I'm 'ore, Master D'Arcy," he said, in a hoarse whisper.

"You're awf'ly good, Binks."

"Ere's the key. Come hon."

Arthur Augustus left the punishment cell.

He took the key from Binks, and locked the door on the outside, and then handed the key back to the page.

"Jollay good," he remarked. "No one will know until half-past twelve that I am not there. Thank you vewy much, Binks."

"The coast's clear, sir," said Binks, in a stage whisper. "I wish I could have got you a coal-black steed like Dead-Shot, 'aye!"

D'Arcy smiled.

His heart was beating fast with suppressed excitement, but his head was perfectly cool.

"That's all wight, Binks. I pwefer a railway."

"They'll telegraph, sir, when they find out you're gone."

"I shall be out of weach by that time."

"What are you going to do, sir?" asked Binks anxiously.

"Go to America, I suppose, and become a road-agent?"

"A—a what? Do you mean a house-agent?" asked D'Arcy.

Binks sniffed.

"No, sir, a road-agent."

"I am hardly old enough to go into business, Binks, especially as a denlah in land."

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 106.

"A road-agent is a highwayman, Master D'Arcy."

"Bai Jove! what a curious term. Upon the whole, I shall not become a highwayman, or anythin' of that sort, my deah boy. If you had not come to the wescue in the way you have, I should call you an ass, Binks."

"You might 'ook it to Horstralia, sir, and become a bush-ranger," suggested Binks, who seemed to be quite anxious that the swell of St. Jim's should become a robber of some sort.

"Wats!"

"'Arkt! I 'ear footsteps," muttered Binks.

D'Arcy listened intently.

But the footsteps did not approach, and probably they existed only in the lively imagination of the School House page, who was determined to be mysterious.

"I wathah think I had bettah be goin'," D'Arcy remarked.

"Yes, sir. Shall I lower you from the window with a rope?"

"Oh, no, thank you, Binks."

"You could climb down the drain-pipe from the passage window."

"I am afwaid that would soil my hands, Binks, and pewwaps wuin my clothes. I think the stairs will be all wight."

Binks looked disappointed. Stairs were an extremely unromantic way of descending to the ground: D'Arcy seemed determined to be untragic.

The coast was clear, as Binks had said. D'Arcy descended the first staircase, and reached the Fourth Form dormitory. He paused there.

"Come hon, sir," muttered Binks. "The alarm may be given any minute, sir, and you may be attacked by fearful hoddas, as Broncho Bill was when he was escaping from the Black Ranch."

"I am afwaid I could not go without a hat, Binks."

"I'll get you a cap."

"Yaas, but I must have a silk-hat in case of necessity, you know. I might find myself in a posish where a silk-hat would be absolutely necessary."

A bell tinkled downstairs. Binks started.

"That's for me, sir. I shall 'ave to go, or somebody will come looking for me, and then all the fat would be in the fire."

"Vewy well, Binks. I shall be all wight now. Thank you vewy much for what you have done. I shall not forget it."

And Arthur Augustus held out his hand, and grasped the grubby fingers of the School House boots, and gave Binks a hearty grip.

The page's eyes were moistened a little as he hurried away.

Arthur Augustus entered the dormitory, and went to his box. He selected things he thought he might need with great care.

Having formed a pile of them on his bed, he selected a travelling-bag, and packed them in, with his usual neatness and precision.

Then he selected a silk-hat, and donned it with great satisfaction, after giving it a careful brushing with a velvet pad.

"That's about all, I think," murmured the swell of St. Jim's. "I have a change of linen, and a couple of extwa neckties, half a dozen collahs, and a spare eyeglass. I shall be able to take only one hat, unfortunately. It would be pweactically imposa. to wun away fwom school and cawwy a hat-box. It would be bound to get in the way, especially if I have to do any wunnin' and dodgin'. Fortunately, I have plenty of cash just now."

He took up the travelling-bag, and descended to the Fourth Form passage, and entered Study No. 6.

There he took a banknote and a couple of loose sovereigns from his desk, and carefully placed them in his pocket.

The swell of St. Jim's was usually pretty well provided with cash, and just at this time he had recently received a tip from his "governah," and another from his Aunt Adelina.

D'Arcy took a last glance round the study before he left it. He felt something like a lump in his throat.

He had spent a good deal of time there, and it had been upon the whole a very happy time. He felt a dimness come for a moment over his eyes, as he glanced at the cracked glass over the mantelpiece, the battered clock, a pair of boxing-gloves belonging to Blake lying on the table, beside a half-written imposition in the handwriting of Herries.

Would he ever enter that study again?

He sighed as he turned to the door, and went quietly down the passage, leaving Study No. 6 behind him.

The house seemed deserted; from some of the class-rooms came a faint hum of voices, and that was all.

There was no one to question the junior's movements.

He left the School House, and crossed the quad quietly and quickly to the gates. From the porter's lodge he could hear the voice of Taggles in argument with Mrs. Taggles, and he quickened his pace a little.

He passed the gates, and stood in the road.

There he paused.

He took a long, backward look at the school—at the old, ivy-clad School House, which had been his dwelling-place for so long—at the New House, the home of his old rivals and friendly enemies, Figgins & Co. After all, what times he had had at St. Jim's. Would he ever know the like again?

Then, with a sigh, the swell of St. Jim's turned his face towards Rylcombe, and strode away.

The die was cast.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy had shaken the dust of St. Jim's from his feet.

CHAPTER 17.

No Flogging.

MORNING school was over at St. Jim's.

But the boys did not, as usual, pour out of the Form-rooms in high spirits, to disperse in happy shouting crowds in the quadrangle.

The order had gone forth that the school was to be assembled in Hall for a public flogging.

All knew, of course, who the victim was to be.

It was to be Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, the swell of St. Jim's, the most popular fellow in the school, in spite of his many curious manners and customs.

The boys marched into the great hall with glum faces.

Blake, Herrics, and Digby were looking about as miserable as it was possible to look.

The Terrible Three were almost as gloomy. Tom Merry's usually sunny face was darkly clouded, and Manners and Lowther looked sympathetically glum.

All the boys were very grave and quiet.

The Forms assembled in their places, and Tom Merry exchanged looks of dismay and discomfort with Blake and his chums.

"It's all up with Gussy now!" muttered Tom.

"I suppose so," said Blake gloomily. "It's rotten!"

"Benstly!"

"Poor old Gussy!" said Kangaroo, of the Shell. "I really wish it were myself instead; I could stand it better!"

Wally was looking the picture of misery.

In spite of the fact that he seldom met his major without chipping him, and that the two were constantly on terms of wordy warfare, few brothers had really a deeper regard for each other than the two D'Arcys.

And Wally, too, felt that he was the cause of this terrible scrape for his major.

But for the clear wish of Arthur Augustus on the subject, Wally would have owned up before this—at any cost to himself.

But now Wally was determined upon one thing.

If it really came to a flogging for his brother, he meant to step out and frankly admit that he was the fellow who had thrown the tar over Mr. Selby.

The Head would understand then D'Arcy's powerful reasons for keeping silent, and would hardly proceed with the flogging.

And there was no doubt now that the Head meant business. Wally nerved himself for the coming ordeal.

The school was assembled, and as the clock struck half-past twelve the Head entered.

His face was very grave, and there were signs of distress in it that were visible to the dulllest glance.

The Head felt the situation as keenly as anyone else.

Public floggings were very rare at St. Jim's, and very unpleasant to the Head, as well as to the recipient thereof.

But the Head felt that he had no alternative in this case.

He glanced over the assembly.

"Boys," he said, in his deep voice, "you have been called together on a very painful and disagreeable occasion. It is necessary for a severe punishment to be inflicted upon a junior of the Fourth Form for direct disobedience to my orders. The junior in question is D'Arcy, of the Fourth. He is about to be flogged in public."

There was a faint hum in the hall.

The crowded boys waited expectantly.

The Head glanced in surprise at the clock.

He had directed the sergeant to bring D'Arcy there at precisely half-past twelve. It was now five minutes past that time, and the sergeant had not appeared. The old soldier was generally punctuality itself.

The doctor was about to send for him, when Sergeant Grimes entered the hall.

He came alone!

His face expressed surprise, dismay, and great disquietude. He came up the hall towards the Head, and there was a buzz of voices as he passed. A gesture of the Head restored silence.

"Grimes!"

"Yes, sir? I—"

"Where is Master D'Arcy?"

"I—I don't know, sir!"

"What!"

"I—I don't know where he is, sir!" faltered the sergeant. "I directed you to bring him here at half-past twelve!" said the Head, frowning. "Why have you not done so, Grimes?"

"I—I went to the room for him, sir," said the sergeant, "but he wasn't there!"

"What!"

Again a buzz in the hall, silenced by a frown from the Head.

"The room was empty, sir!" said the sergeant. "The door was locked, just as I left it, sir, and the bars on the windows was just the same! He couldn't have got out that way! He couldn't have gone up the chimney, sir! But he's gone!"

"You mean to say that Master D'Arcy had left the punishment cell?"

"Yes, sir."

"Then he must have had a key to the door?"

"I—I suppose so, sir."

"This is very annoying! But I suppose he must be in the school somewhere? Have you looked for him?"

"Yes, sir. He can't be found!"

"He must be found!" said the Head, frowning. "Go and look again! Kildare, you and some of the prefects, had better go and look, too!"

The boys stood in silence while the sergeant and the prefects left the hall. They waited in breathless suspense.

Tom Merry & Co. guessed what had happened. They remembered D'Arcy's determination to leave St. Jim's rather than submit to a flogging. It was pretty clear that the swell of St. Jim's had carried out his resolution—that he was gone!

For ten long minutes the whole school waited in silence, or with hushed whispers.

The searchers returned at last.

They came without D'Arcy.

The Head fixed an inquiring glance upon Kildare.

"Well?"

"He can't be found, sir!"

"Do you mean that he is no longer in the school?"

"Yes, sir. He has taken his hat, and a travelling-bag belonging to him is gone, and his box in the Fourth Form dormitory shows signs of having been ransacked. He has taken some of his things with him."

The Head bit his lip.

"Then he has run away from school?"

"I think so, sir."

"Very well." The Head's brows were deeply contracted. "The school is dismissed!"

And he left the hall.

The assembly broke up.

The boys poured out into the quadrangle, discussing the startling happening with bated breath.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy had run away from school.

Would St. Jim's ever see him again?

That was an anxious question for Tom Merry & Co. to answer. Their chum had gone out into the wide world alone. Where was he, and what would happen to him?

Only the future could tell.

THE END.

NEXT WEEK.

"THE SWELL OF THE CIRCUS."

A Splendid, Extra-long Complete Tale of the Boys of St. Jim's.

BY MARTIN CLIFFORD.

Order in Advance.

Price One Penny.

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 106.

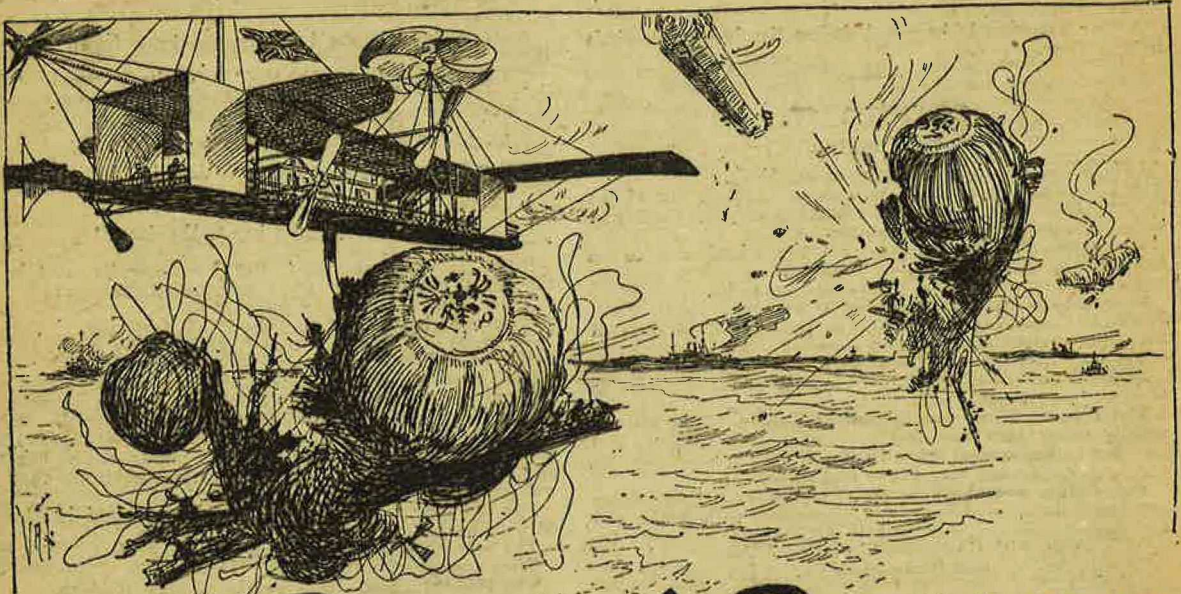
NEXT THURSDAY:

"TOM MERRY & CO."

By MARTIN CLIFFORD.

Please tell your Friends about this Story.

A Powerful War Story—By JOHN TREGELLIS



BRITAIN'S REVENGE

THE PRINCIPAL CHARACTERS ARE:

AUBREY VILLIERS, nicknamed Sam Slick. A lad who has performed wondrous service for his country in her time of need, during the terrible invasion by the Germans.

STEPHEN VILLIERS, his brother. He is Sam's companion in all his exploits.

The two boys form part of the crew of the Condor, a wonderful airship invented by John Carfax. The Condor is dispatched to Germany, where the allied French and British forces are engaged in a last desperate struggle with the German army. Her mission is to aid, if possible, a British brigade under Colonel Sherstone which is in a very tight place. After a rapid journey, the airship is brought to earth near a wood where one of Colonel Sherstone's pickets is placed. Carfax inquires the whereabouts of the colonel from the lieutenant of the picket.

"Five hundred yards to the front with his corps, near the end of the wood, sir," is the reply.

(Now go on with the story.)

The Man-Carrying Kites.

Sam and Carfax sprang down from the platform, leaving the Condor in charge of the others by the picket, and marched ahead briskly through the wood.

Bullets were already cutting and smacking through the branches all around, and the steady drumming of field-guns never stopped. Two more pickets were passed, guarding the rear, and then Colonel Sherstone's forces came into view.

They were lying in cover not far within the limit of the wood, blazing away steadily and coolly. The forest ceased here, and a wide plain, dotted with clumps of pines, reaching up to the slightly higher ground, lay outside.

Across this, at no great distance, the Prussians could be seen in great force. They had two batteries, which were pounding away viciously, and in riflemen and mounted infantry they outnumbered the British greatly. A tremendous fire was pouring in.

"My word, this is a hot shop!" said Sam. "Yonder will THE GEN LIBRARY.—No. 106.

be the commanding officer, sir, on the little mound next the guns."

A tall, khaki-clad man, his face showing keen anxiety but dogged courage, was directing the fight from an exposed position, an adjutant and staff-officer standing beside him. He turned and looked in surprise at the two new-comers, who were not in the uniforms of any that his brigade wore.

"Is Colonel Sherstone here?" called Carfax.

"I am Colonel Sherstone," said the tall man abruptly. "Who are you?"

"My name is Carfax," said the aeronaut, as a bullet sang past his ear. "Your messenger has reached General Blake."

"Ah! Are you from him?" said the colonel, in a low, earnest voice, stepping down to meet Carfax. "Is he sending me the reinforcements?"

"He is unable to spare any, and is marching to the southward. He has sent me instead."

The colonel's face fell.

"Then it's all up with me and my brigade," he muttered to himself. "Blake has sacrificed us."

"Not at all!" said Carfax, for he had caught the remark. "I have given my word to see you and your corps safely out of it."

"You! Where are your men?"

"I command the airship Condor, and have left her by your rearmost picket."

"By Jove!" exclaimed the colonel. "I beg your pardon; your name did not reach me at first. You are Mr. Carfax, the aeronaut, of course. It's a big relief to have you here, sir, and at the worst you'll be able to carry back the news that we were wiped out while fighting hard, for I shall not surrender. But I don't see what more you can do."

"I will show you very soon," said Carfax. "First, let us go to the front and see exactly how you are placed."

Colonel Sherstone accompanied him to the post of observation near the battery. The guns were placed just inside the wood, and were firing away with great rapidity between the trees.

The line regiments were all in cover in the wood itself, able thus to keep up a heavy rifle-fire, aiming between the tree-trunks. Other battalions were outside the wood in whatever cover they could find. There was another battery on the further flank.

The crash of the German shells and the whistling of the bullets was tremendous. They made all the more noise since the shells burst chiefly among the tree-tops, and the pine-branches all around seemed alive with the lead that tore through them and ripped them to pieces, while the smacking of bullets against the tree-trunks was like a devil's tattoo. Yet there was more noise than damage for that reason.

The British had lost heavily, but not so badly as might be expected, considering the odds against them. The wood gave a certain amount of shelter.

"You see how it is," said Colonel Sherstone. "The Prussians could mop us up if only they advanced. They can get at us from three sides; but they can't make us out."

"Yes, I see that," said Carfax, sweeping the enemy's position with his glasses. "It's surprising they haven't charged up and finished you off. It would cost them dear, but they could do it. But still they hold back."

"It's because they don't know how weak we are," said Sherstone. "We are slightly higher than they, and there are no heights near them from which they can get a good view of us. The wood screens us. We've plenty of ammunition, and have been using it at double speed to make them suppose we're more numerous, so that we could hold off the assault till help came."

"Yes," said Carfax, "it's taken them in. I should have thought myself, coming up through the forest, that you'd double as many men as you really have. And your retreat's cut off to the eastward."

"By light cavalry, who could hold up my brigade and harry them till the Prussians had time to come up and annihilate us in the open."

"You're right, sir. Two full squadrons are waiting for you a mile on your left flank," said Carfax.

"You've seen them, then?"

"Certainly!"

"They block our road, and to get through them in time is impossible."

"I shall clear the road of them for you," said Carfax. "Give yourself no concern, colonel. Keep the Prussians off for an hour or less, and—"

"That will be impossible now," said Colonel Sherstone, breaking in. "Look yonder!"

He pointed to the Prussian lines, and Carfax, following his gaze, saw two strange-looking objects mounting slowly straight up into the air. They were of no great size, and at that distance the naked eye could not distinguish easily what they were.

"What on earth's that?" said Carfax, focussing his glasses.

"The man-carrying kites, with which the German Engineers are equipped," answered Sherstone.

"By Jove, so they are!" exclaimed Sam, watching through his binoculars. "It's the first I've ever seen of them. What a dodge!"

He saw two large, skilfully-constructed box-kites, evidently immensely powerful, each carrying a man slung underneath it. They looked as if they were sitting on nothing in mid-air, for it was too far off for the framework which supported them to be made out.

"They went up over an hour ago," said Colonel Sherstone; "but there was so little wind that they could not rise to any height, and so were useless. But there's a good breeze now."

"By Jove, how interesting!" said Carfax eagerly. "The first time I've seen a war-kite used. They are held by a strong wire cord, I believe, which unwinds from a roller. The man acts as the tail of the kite, and keeps it balanced. Much handier than a captive balloon."

"Confoundedly interesting, as you say!" growled Colonel Sherstone, pulling his moustache. "But in the meantime those two fellows aloft are reconnoitring our position and spying out our weakness, which they can easily do from that height. Directly they report we shall have the Prussians down on us at once."

"Quite true!" said Carfax, thrusting his binoculars into their case with a snap. "But make your mind easy; they shall never report. I will deal with those fellows before you can say knife."

He turned, and darted back through the wood.

"Come on, my lad!" he cried to Sam. "There's no time to waste; we must show those kites a new trick."

They ran at full speed back towards the Condor, the pickets letting them through.

"Are you going to try and capture them, sir?" exclaimed Sam, as they sprinted along.

"From over the very noses of their corps. They must never touch the ground again."

"Can we get them in time?"

"Yes, for we're quick and they're slow. That is, unless they've already spotted the Condor from aloft. No!" he

added, as he reached the clearing and looked up hastily.

"We're too shut up by the trees here. Kenneth!"

"Ay, ay, sir!"

"Get to your engines!" exclaimed Carfax, as he ran up and sprang aboard. "Set them to give us the utmost speed for a short rush that we've got to get out of her. You must knock out eighty per hour at least."

"It can be done for five miles only, sir."

"That will be enough. Up with her!"

The Condor rose, and before she was even clear of the tops of the trees the two kites could be seen clearly enough. They were now at a considerable height, and still rising.

"What are they?" cried Stephen.

"Man-kites, up for spying out the position," said Sam.

"We've got to capture 'em."

"Great Caesar! I wouldn't like to be the fellows in 'em when they spot us."

The Condor mounted to about 500 feet, and then, with one mighty rush, she hurled herself through the air towards the Prussian brigade and the kites, that now were well up in the sky. Neither of the boys quite realised what Carfax meant to do, and it was all so swift that there was no time for thought.

"The shears!" cried Carfax to Kenneth. "Get the wire-shears, and stand by!"

Kenneth armed himself instantly with a huge, powerful pair of double-handed wire-cutters, like champagne-nippers on a very large scale.

The Prussian brigades seemed to be rushing towards the airship, so fast was she going. The two kites, from the size of match-boxes, appeared to grow rapidly as large as packing-cases, and then, as the aeroplane bore down upon them, they were seen to be huge box-kites, each with a framework underneath, in which sat, perfectly comfortable and at ease, a German officer in service kit, carrying a binocular and sketch-block, and at his belt a revolver for weapon.

These details, however, were not seen till the Condor was close up. She was not more than half-way when Stephen raised the cry:

"They're winding them down! They've seen us!"

"Of course they have," said Carfax coolly; "but they will be far too late. The westward one first, Kenneth."

A great shouting could be heard from the Prussian position far below, and shells from the field batteries were screaming through the air, directed at the Condor. She was going far too fast to be hit, save by accident.

Right ahead were the kites. Those in charge of them down on the ground were frantically winding them in, and the nearest was already lowered a couple of hundred feet.

But the Condor could have made the journey from the woods three times over before they could have been wound to the ground. One rush, and she was upon them.

The first kite was some way above her, perhaps eight or twelve feet, when she came right up against the twisted wire-cord. Kenneth grasped it with the shears, and drawing the handles together with all his might, cut the wire right through.

At the same moment Hugh seized the wire just above the shears, and as the Condor upset the balance of the kite and relieved the strain on the cord, Hugh gave it a quick turn round the steel rail of the deck-platform the moment the wire was severed.

The kite, being swung right round edge on to the wind, came toppling down past the Condor, the man in the framework clinging in the midst of it. He went down like a flash, and a cry of horror broke from Stephen's lips till he saw that the wire-cord was now fast to the rail, and the kite was hanging underneath.

"Look out for the next!" cried Carfax.

Straight for the second kite raced the airship, and this time she came up level with the framework of it, and struck it sharply. There was the glimpse of a panicstricken, white-faced man clinging in the frame, his hand darting, as if by instinct, to the useless revolver at his belt, as the aeroplane collided with him in mid-air, and the next moment Kenneth had him by the collar of his tunic.

"In with him! Get him aboard!" cried Carfax.

Sam reached out, hardly knowing what he did, and helped to pull the hapless foeman out of his airy perch. They hauled him bodily out of it, and yanked him over the rail on to the deck-platform.

Sam stooped, and as a measure of precaution jerked the prisoner's revolver from its place and sent it flying into space. The Condor, which had stopped, made a quick curving descent of some fifty feet meanwhile, and Kenneth cut the wire of the kite and let it go circling down on to the heads of the Prussians below. Then, with a mighty swoop, the airship went whirring right up into the clouds, and left foes and friends a couple of miles below her.

"Good heavens!" cried Stephen. "The other poor beggar's dropped, hasn't he?"

"I rather think," said Carfax calmly, "you will find our friend still beneath us."

They looked over the side, and saw he spoke the truth. The kite still dangled from the rail by its cord, and in its framework hung the German officer, his eyes closed, for his senses had evidently left him.

"Haul him up as quickly as you can," said Carfax. "Gently with the rope, and mind you don't shake him loose. The fellow's fairly earned his life, and I shouldn't like to drop him now."

Yard by yard they drew the kite up. It was no great weight, save for the man in it. His position looked so perilous, that Stephen's flesh crept as he saw how little would send the German hurtling to the earth, a fall of nearly a mile.

Had the man been a friend instead of a foe, they could not have been more anxious about him. They drew the kite up level, and Hugh passed the cord through a sheave in the edge of the Condor's roof-plane, so that they could have the kite's attachment up to the platform. Then, getting hold of the man, they lifted him aboard quickly and gently.

"What about the kite, sir?" asked Kenneth.

"Let it go," said Carfax. "I have seen all I want of it."

The wire was cut loose, and the man-kite, relieved of its burden, went whizzing down to the earth, revolving like a winged seed from a sycamore-tree.

They attended to the man, but he was quite unconscious from shock, though not in any way hurt. Kenneth and Hugh laid him in one of the deck-house berths, and passed some brandy between his teeth. It brought a little colour to his face, but he did not open his eyes.

"Don't overdo it. Let him rest a bit; he'll come to presently," said Sam. "Let's see to the other fellow."

The first of the two Germans was leaning against the deck-house, his eyes blinking helplessly as he gazed round him, and his fingers scraping nervously at the thin wall as if he were trying to get a hold. He seemed to imagine himself still clinging to the framework of the kite, and unable to realise what had happened to him.

Kenneth handed him a silver flask-cup full of spirits, and he raised it to his lips with a hand that trembled so that he spilt half of it. The rest brought the blood back to his face, however, and he pulled himself together.

"Donnerwetter!" he muttered, in his own tongue. "That was fearful!" He looked round and his eyes rested on Carfax.

"You are the British herr who commands the airship, then?"

"You are in the Condor," said Carfax. "And as safe as if you were in a railway carriage. Give yourself no further alarm. I regret being obliged to give you and your comrade rather a severe shock, but it was necessary."

"I am your prisoner," said the German, with a shrug.

"I'm not going to shoot you, or anything of that sort," said Carfax, after a survey of the troops below through his glasses. "We are not Uhlans on the Condor. You belong to the Prussian Engineers, don't you?"

"Yes. So does my comrade."

"Has your corps any more kites of that kind down below?"

"No, sir, none. I do not think they would send them up if they had any, while you are in the field," said the German, with a grim smile. "I have to thank you, mein herr, for pulling me out of the kite when you might as well let me go to my death. I perceive I have to deal with a gentleman."

"Thanks," said Carfax drily. "And, by the way—about the report you were preparing on Colonel Sherstone's position?"

The Prussian drew himself up.

"Ah!" he remarked. "If you captured me merely to get information out of me about my own side you will be disappointed. You may throw me over the rail, or send me north as a prisoner of war, which you please."

"I intend doing neither," said Carfax; "you are plucky fellows, you and your companion, and it takes some nerve to sit at the end of a string a thousand feet in the air. Your performance interested me very much. It strikes me as very out of date and primitive, though well enough in its way."

"I shall give you complete liberty as soon as I have finished my affair here. Till then I must detain you. Stephen, take the gentleman into the deck-house, close the door, and remain there with him and his companion as prisoners' guard. Kenneth, make ready for the descent, and give her full power. Stand to your guns, Sam and Hugh."

Stephen was no means too well pleased at the task given him, and he felt rather out of it. It was necessary, however, and as he was conscious that the Condor was beginning to drop swiftly down to the earth again, he guessed what was going to happen.

"Have I your parole?" asked Stephen.

The German looked at him rather gloomily, and then round the deck-house.

"What if I do not give it?" he said shortly.

THE GEN LIBRARY.—No. 106.

The boy's hand dropped on to the butt of the revolver at his belt.

"I shall have to take the more care of you," said Stephen; "but after the way the chief pulled you out of the mess, I should think you might do it."

"You are right," said the German, with a nod. "I give you my parole."

"Perhaps you'll ask your friend if he will do the same?" said Stephen.

The other German had come to himself, and as soon as his comrade made him understand, he gave his parole also. Meanwhile, the Condor was vibrating from end to end with the speed at which she was travelling.

The noise of firing was heard, and some stray bullets rang on her underplating. Then came a heavy burst of continuous firing from the Condor herself, and Stephen knew that the bomb-guns were at work.

"What is happening?" cried the Germans.

"We are in action, that's all," returned Stephen, without moving. "I think," he added, "that our forward guns are wiping out the two Prussian batteries."

The prisoners bit their lips, but they said nothing. Doubtless they thought the more. There was a sudden shock that made the Condor quiver, a last shot from the bomb-guns, and they felt the airship going up like a rocket again and driving ahead through the air at a slightly reduced speed.

"Are you all right in there, kid?" said Sam, stepping into the deck-house. "Sorry you were kept out of the fun." He spoke in English, so that the prisoners might not understand.

"We've mopped up the two Prussian field-batteries, so that they won't be able to shoot Sherstone's brigade to bits when he marches out. We're just going to join him now and give him warning."

Sam stepped out on deck again. The roar of the fight had lessened, for the Condor's swift and terrible attack, in which the field-guns were demolished, had given the Prussians a severe shock.

Till the airship's arrival they had believed the British brigade was at their mercy, and could be destroyed with little risk. Now it looked as if Colonel Sherstone were going to slip through their fingers after all.

The Condor swooped over the wood, and alighted inside it, not going far back this time, for there was now nothing to fear from the German guns. Colonel Sherstone came hurrying forward to greet the airship's commander.

"I want to take back what I said, sir," he exclaimed. "I've seen more than ever I'd believed. I consider my brigade as good as saved at your hands!"

"Well, you'd better not do that yet, colonel," said Carfax; "you're in a very tight place still, but I hope to open the door for you. We've wiped out the guns and settled the kites. It now remains to break up the cavalry squadron on your left, and then you can march out. Are you ready?"

"Whenever I get the signal."

"All right. Then look out for the Condor when she rises high in the air a mile on your left. After slipping down out of sight, you can bring your brigade away at once."

Up went the Condor, arching over the tree-tops, and sped away to the left over the forest. The Prussians were still firing away half-heartedly at the British troops, but the airship's business was not with them. She was seeking the cavalry.

A short run brought her clear of the woods and over the more open ground beyond. Sam was rapidly getting one of the little Maxims ready for action, while Hugh stood to the centre bomb-guns.

Almost at once the first of the German cavalry patrols was seen. They reined up on sighting the Condor, and then galloped off furiously, raising their lances high as a signal to their comrades beyond.

The main body of the cavalry came suddenly into view. They had left the hollow where they had first been sighted, and had split up into two large forces, which scattered out across the plain in troops, their lances glittering in the sun.

The Rout of the Cavalry.

When the first wave of surprise had swept over the German cavalry, they made ready with frantic haste to do battle with their overhead enemy.

Lances were slung, and sabres left in their scabbards. They were no use against a foe in the air. In a twinkling the handy cavalry carbines were unslung, and the troops took order.

"Give it them with the Maxims, there!" cried Carfax. "Look out for their carbines, or we shall be riddled!"

A quick, snapping volley came from the centre troop of Hussars, and the bullets rang and rattled about the Condor, and filled the air around her with shrill whistlings.

She swept down in long, ringing curves, just like a cock

pheasant coming over the top of a larch-wood, and Sam's Maxim instantly swept the troop that was firing, and cut the valley short; for at close range the little machine-gun did terrific execution.

The rest of the cavalry began to fire from all sides, and the whole plain was spluttering with the rattle of the carbines. But for the Condor's bullet-proof floor and under-plating, she would have fared ill enough. But these caught the upward-flying bullets, and not one in fifty even struck her at all.

Her tremendous dashing swoops from one end of the battleground to the other made it impossible to hit her, except by chance. No sportsman is a good enough shot to hit a swooping hawk. And so it was with the Hussars and Uhlans, as they tried to stop the Condor by rifle fire. A good many bullets got home on her every time she slowed in order to use her guns, but the deadly reply of the Maxims and the bomb-gun, delivered at the thickest part of the foe, did terrible havoc.

Hugh fired two bombs into a Uhlan troop just as it was forming up to shoot, and demolished it. Sam's Maxim cut down thirty or forty Hussars, and filled the plain with riderless horses, galloping to and fro.

Yet throughout it there was the constant risk of a lucky volley sweeping the Condor's decks when she turned, and laying low half her crew, or all of them. She was so well handled by Carfax that it did not happen; but an instant's blunder would have laid her open to it.

"Look out on your left!" cried Stephen. "You'll get it bet in a second!"

A full squadron of Hussars had swung suddenly round the corner of a wood, and were about to pour in a concentrated volley from 150 carbines at the airship as she swerved.

Had the volley arrived it might well have brought the Condor to the ground, for she was exposing herself. Sam was rapidly attaching fresh belts of cartridges to his Maxim, and Hugh's gun could hardly be brought to bear in time, but Carfax was equal to the task.

Instead of turning away or rising, he drove the Condor right at the German squadron with the speed of an express train. Before they could fire he was among them, the sharp steel front of the airship's platform cutting through the squadron like an icebreaker. Horses and men went down right and left, and in a flash the Condor, quivering from the shock, was through their ranks, and skimming round the corner of the wood out of sight.

"Stand to it again!" cried Carfax. "We'll break them now!"

Three seconds later the airship was back again, dashing round the wood and plunging afresh into the broken ranks of the squadron. It was more than the German cavalry could stand. Trained though the horses were to all the shocks of war, such an assailant as the huge airship was too much for their education, and the first troop stampeded frantically at this second attack.

The next troop, after a few scattered and frantic shots, plunged into the wood itself, only too glad to escape. Away went the Condor again, rushing across the open, and slap into the other big squadron on the far side. Thirty seconds of time, and two sharp charges were enough to scatter this one like autumn leaves, and drive it into cover like the other.

"They're hooking it!" cried Kenneth. "They're bolting out at the other end of the wood!"

The Maxim opened its fatal rattle again, and the bomb-gun hurled its shells at all within range. The Germans had blundered in bringing their squadrons together to concentrate their fire, and now they had paid the penalty.

The airship's movements were too rapid and bewildering for any effective attack to be made upon her, and now she swept with her machine-gun fire every scattered Hussar troop around. In less than two minutes they were broken and flying, leaving innumerable dead and wounded behind.

"The beggars! I'm almost sorry for them!" said Stephen. "They can't stand against us!"

"Sorry he hanged!" said his brother, reloading the Maxim. "They've been lying in wait here all day to cut Sherstone's little brigade to pieces if it tried to escape the butchery yonder, and now they've met their match unexpectedly."

"One last dose at the Uhlan squad in front there," said Carfax, twisting the Condor round.

And the Maxim spouted its rain of lead with vicious precision.

Shrill rang the bugles far and near—the squadron commander of the German cavalry had had enough. He gave the signal for a general retreat, and throughout the force every troop was already obeying.

It was "save himself who can." For the cavalry to stay meant complete destruction to it, and all the leader cared for now was to save what he could of his command. As fast as their horses could go, all who were sound galloped

away pell-mell across the open or dived through the coppices and plantations.

"Up with her!" was Carfax's order. "All's clear for Sherstone now, and we'll give him the signal!"

The Condor left the plain, for she had been manoeuvring within fifty to a hundred feet of the ground, and soared high into the air. The Prussians in the heights beyond were visible now, and so were the outposts of Colonel Sherstone's brigade. From the edge of the forest a signaller raised a flag high that the Condor's crew might know that her sign was seen and understood.

"Here they come!" shouted Stephen, who was forward by the guns.

Not a moment of time did the British brigade lose. They had been hammering away to keep off the overwhelming force of Prussians to the last minute, and had done so with success, for the enemy was still ignorant of how easily they could have wiped out the little force if they advanced upon the wood. But now the way was cleared of the cavalry, Colonel Sherstone struck out at once on his march.

The scouts appeared first, and the advance guard came quickly out of the woods. The rest of the column then followed at a forced pace, with the guns.

Colonel Sherstone led his men out in capital order.

"How well they move!" said Stephen. "I bet it's galling the old boy to retreat. He'd rather go out the other way, and cut slap through the Prussians!"

"Very likely; but no man can do the impossible," said Sam. "He's glad enough to be able to retreat. That little force is coming out of the very jaws of death, and if it hadn't been for us they'd never have got out of it at all!"

"They'll have trouble with the cavalry yet!" exclaimed Hugh. "Look yonder!"

The brigade was now well clear of the forest, and passing over the more open ground. Suddenly, from a large grove of trees away on the left of them, a strong troop of Uhlans dashed out at full gallop, lances in rest.

They were part of the squadron that the Condor had scattered, and they had ridden a good way back and gone into cover. They still had hopes of making things hot for Colonel Sherstone by a quick dash down upon his rearguard.

Sam was at his Maxim in a moment, and the two young gunners looked expectantly at Carfax, expecting him to fly to the rescue. But the aeronaut shook his head.

"We needn't dry-nurse them!" he said. "Let Colonel Sherstone have some of the credit! Now we've broken up the main body, he can easily deal with a little rush like that."

And so it proved. The Uhlans came down like a pack of wolves, racing across the open, their lance-heads glittering as they rode. But the rearguard was ready for them in a twinkling.

A company of the Cheshire Regiment, halting and forming instantly into a solid square, met the Germans with a blaze of rifle-fire that emptied thirty saddles before the riders had covered the distance, and a dozen more went down before they reached their goal. The rest broke helplessly over the compact little wall of men, bristling with bayonets, just as a wave breaks over a rock, and when the remnant of the Uhlans reined off and rode for their lives before the pursuing bullets, two-thirds of their troop was laid low.

"Well done!" said Carfax coolly. "Up and on, boys—follow the flag!"

He glanced at his watch, as Sherstone's men passed onwards again.

"Five o'clock I told General Blake. We shall have made our promise good, if the brigade are sound on their feet. They ought to be quick marchers."

"Doesn't look as if they're quite clear yet," murmured Hugh. "There go the Prussians at 'em again. They can see now that they're about four to one to the British."

Colonel Sherstone's brigade, pushing on rapidly till clear of the belts of woodland and coppice which sprinkled the plain where the cavalry had been camped, now came in full view of the Prussians on the heights. The latter were shifting their position to attack the retreating brigade, and a sharp musketry fire commenced.

"Don't worry yourself, Hugh," said Carfax grimly. "Those gentry have had too much of a shake up to stop Sherstone now. Their nerves are shattered, and we'll just keep them on the jump. Half speed ahead!"

The Summons from the Fleet.

The mistress of the skies sailed easily over the Prussian regiments across the valley, at a considerable height, and her crew could see the effect her approach had on the enemy.

They were shaken, as Carfax said. They could not fix their attention on the escaping British brigade—their eyes were all for the formidable monster in the sky. What would she do next? What fresh surprise had she got for them?

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 105.

They could not reach her—their field-guns were already destroyed. The steadiest shots in the Prussian ranks were unable to make good practice at Sherstone's men when at any moment that hovering terror overhead might rush down and deal death among them. Consternation ran through the Prussians like a wave, and was plain enough to see.

Carfax chuckled grimly. He did nothing save to sweep to and fro like a great hawk quartering the sky. The bomb-guns and the Maxims did not speak once, though a few useless bullets rattled round the Condor, and knocked at her bullet-proof plating.

And, meanwhile, Colonel Sherstone's brigade was drawing away fast. His business was not to fight by the wayside if it could be helped, but to push on with his men and join his superior, who led the main army. And Colonel Sherstone was doing it.

The British soon passed up a narrow defile out of the range of the Prussians, who hesitated to follow, for the great watchdog was still hovering overhead. Had they gone into the narrow space, packed together and without guns, the airship would have had them at her mercy.

Colonel Sherstone's force appeared again beyond, passing rapidly over the neck of the hills. A long-range fire was sent after them by the Prussians, but it did little harm, and soon the British were lost to sight behind the hills.

The Prussian leader, with many a muttered curse, had to realise that his prey had slipped through his fingers, after all.

The Condor's crew, far up in the air, laughed as they turned their vessel's head southward and joined Colonel Sherstone on the other side of the hills. They brought the Condor down level with him, and his gratitude knew no bounds.

"I consider, sir," he called to Carfax, "that I owe the life of every man in my command to your wonderful vessel and her crew; for, hang me, if we'd have surrendered! We're spared to do the Empire a service yet!"

Onward went the brigade, and never a halt did they need to make, for the Condor relieved them of all anxiety by scouting for them all through the march, and a great blessing it was to the wearied men and officers, who had been fighting for twenty hours on end. By virtue of the Condor's vigilance, not as much as a German sniper troubled them on the way.

By four in the afternoon, after many cuts across the country, the main British army, under General Blake, came in full view four miles ahead, as the brigade came over the hills between, the tired troops raised a cheer.

It was nothing to the cheering that rang from end to end of the whole army corps, from regiment to regiment, when the Condor escorted the rescued brigade in an hour later.

General Blake, more delighted than any of them, came riding out to greet the brigade commander, and Carfax brought the Condor quietly to the ground.

"Two minutes to five, general," he said, pulling out his watch. "Have I made my word good?"

"You have!" exclaimed General Blake, wringing his hand. "It's a miracle, but I knew you'd do it. Egad, Carfax, if you told me you could haul the sun out of the sky, I'd believe you!"

"You owe him the brigade, sir," said Sherstone to the general. "We'd never have got here without him."

"I know that. And I know you did your best, too, brigadier. But now you must all come and mess with me. We've made our passage good, and we bivouac here till morning, when we push on towards Berlin. Have you heard the news?"

"We've heard none since we left you to join Colonel Sherstone."

"Of course not. Stupid of me to ask. I only had it two hours ago by field telegraph from our base at Husum; it came there by cable. Glorious news! Marechal Sainte Croix, with the main French army and the British forces in the south, has won a crushing victory over the Germans at Metz. Sainte Croix is marching north against Berlin."

The boys gave a shout of delight.

"By gum, sir, that's great!" exclaimed Sam. "They've done as finely there as you have here, then. When did it happen?"

"Early yesterday. One more sharp victory, and the Allies will be at the gates of Berlin. With luck, it should not take more than two or three days."

They discussed the news eagerly, and great news it was. Even Carfax had hardly realised that events were moving so rapidly towards the climax of the great struggle.

"Germany was held to be as invincible on land as Britain was by sea," said Blake; "but we are clipping the Eagle's wings in spite of it. Yet we shall have to strain every nerve if we are to bring the great campaign to a successful end. My men have done splendidly. But following on a big

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 106.

victory and a forced march to-day, I can only give them a few hours' rest. We strike camp here, and push on at day-break."

"In the meantime, let's get all the rest we can," said Carfax, "for my crew have had none since they slept in watches last night on the way from Tournay."

The Condor was well guarded, and there was little fear for her while she lay in the heart of that great bivouac, next to General Blake's tent. Her crew were glad to get their meal, and before six o'clock they were sleeping like the dead.

A full hour before dawn the army was stirring, and all were making ready for the day's march. Carfax's intention had been to accompany the general in the southward journey.

But as they were preparing the airship, Kenneth and Hugh tending the engines, and taking in a reserve of petrol from the transport waggons, they saw General Blake coming towards them through the darkness.

"Have you any special plans for the day, Carfax?" he said.

"No, not yet," returned the aeronaut. "I intended coming with you."

"I needn't tell you how welcome you'd be, or how badly we shall miss you if you're prevented from coming, but it seems the fleet has great need of your help."

"The fleet?"

"Yes; the North Sea Squadron, as you know, is blockading Hamburg, not very far to the westward of us. The admiral has sent a wireless message to Husum, and they've forwarded it on to me by the field telegraph. Here's what he says."

The general read out from a "flimsy" in his hand:

"Understand Condor is with you. If she can be spared, shall be grateful if Carfax can bring her here at once. Urgent need.—FROBISHER."

"That's Sir Francis Frobisher, you know, the admiral," said Blake; "and he must be pretty badly in want of you to wire to me. What do you say, Carfax? I needn't tell you how important it is that nothing should interfere with our fleet's blockade of Hamburg just now. Especially while the armies are advancing on Berlin."

"Of course," said Carfax. "We'll go like a shot. I wonder what on earth he wants?"

"I know Frankie Frobisher," said Sam. "We saw a lot of service under his flag in the last campaign, and he's not the man to shout out before he's hurt."

"What about you, general? You won't need me?" asked Carfax, one foot on the Condor's gangway.



The New Complete Story-Book. Price ONE HALFPENNY.

No. 1 of THE EMPIRE LIBRARY is Now on Sale.

"Well, you're always a tower of strength to have by one," said Blake; "but I've no immediate need that I know of, and I shouldn't dream of standing in Frobisher's way."

"Then off we go," said the aeronaut, springing aboard. "I dare say we shan't be long over the job, whatever it is. We'll come down southwards to Berlin as soon as it's over. Au revoir, general! Let her go, boys!"

Swiftly the airship left the ground and mounted into the dark sky. The vast army she had left behind was out of sight almost at once, and Carfax steered due north-west at his fastest travelling pace.

"It'll be quite like old times, seeing Frankie," said Stephen.

"Do you call him that?" Carfax asked.

"Not to his face—by gum, no! But he's known as Frankie all through the fleet. I think the old boy's rather fond of us."

"Wonder where Bobby Cavendish is now?" added Sam. "Rippin' times we had with him on the Furst Moltke—eh?—when the Germans were in England. But what Frankie can want of the Condor beats me."

"We shall know very soon," Carfax replied. "It won't take long to reach the open sea off the Elbe's mouth. The blockading fleet will be between there and Heligoland, I believe. There's the dawn breaking."

"It's precious thick away to the westward," observed Hugh. "It was thick, certainly. The earth seemed shrouded in patches of mist, with clear tracks here and there. When Hamburg came in sight, the towers and spires of the great German city were rising dimly above a regular sea-fog that had drifted up the Elbe."

The Condor passed over at a great height, and all that could be seen of the vast Elbe estuary, from Hamburg to the sea, was an occasional glimpse when the mists drifted away. Then they closed in again like a blanket, and the world was blotted out from the Condor altogether. She herself was speeding along through clear air in bright sunshine, her crew looking down on the pall of fog far below.

"Hope it's clearer towards Heligoland, or we shall have a job finding the admiral at all," said Carfax.

"Why doesn't he sail right up the river and bombard Hamburg?" asked Kenneth.

"You evidently don't know much about the Navy, old chap," answered Sam. "You can't take ironclads up narrow waters like that in time of war. The river's mined from end to end, and the Germans would only need to press a few buttons and smash up the fleet. You couldn't row a dinghy up without their blowing you out of the water."

"Frankie's blockading the port," said Stephen. "keepin' what men-of-war are there bottled up, capturing all German ships bound to Hamburg, and keeping all the oversea trade away from Germany's biggest seaport. He's making 'em cough, I can tell you!"

"It's a bit slow for him, after the fighting he's done," said Sam; "but I've seen Frankie whip three times his weight in ships, and I'm a bit curious to know what it is that can make him nervous here. Ho—hallo! the fog's clearer yonder! See, there's a flotilla of destroyers!"

Out to sea, beyond the great Newwerk Lighthouse on the outer sands, the mist was less thick. Six British destroyers could be seen abreast, moving very slowly in towards the Elbe. They disappeared into the fog that hung over the estuary's mouth.

"Scouting," said Stephen. "Look, you can see the first of the main fleet away out."

Dotted over the grey sea was the whole of the blockading fleet, scattered and spreading over miles of water, and all visible to the Condor from her great height. The larger ships were far out, but nearer the shoal-encumbered coast, only a few miles off, were several small, fast cruisers, steaming to and fro like watchdogs.

Suddenly, as the boys looked, one of these was seen to envelope herself in a cloud of spray and steam. Then she staggered, wallowed, and began to disappear.

The Mine-Ship.

A dull, muffled boom came echoing up towards the Condor, sounding scarcely louder than a clap of the hands at that height. Two other small cruisers and a swift destroyer sped towards the sinking ship to rescue her crew.

"What on earth's happened?" exclaimed Carfax.

"She's struck a mine, that's what it is," cried Sam; "and it's blown her nearly in halves!"

"That's it. Those destroyers we saw were sweeping for mines," said Stephen excitedly. "The Germans must have got floating ones out to sea somehow—perhaps in the fog. That must be what's troubling Frankie. Wasn't it awful the way the cruiser went down? I'll bet she's lost half her crew in the explosion."

"The quicker we consult the better," said Carfax, bringing the Condor down towards the sea at a whizzing pace. "Do you know the flagship?"

"The big cruiser yonder—the Orion," said Sam, pointing her out.

The airship came racing up to the mighty ironclad, one of the most powerful vessels afloat, the white ensign at her poop-staff, and the admiral's pennon flying aloft. A cheer rose from her crew, for they knew the boys well of old, and all were aware they were now on the Condor.

Admiral Sir Francis Frobisher was on the bridge, and the bronzed old seadog welcomed the aeronauts heartily, as the Condor threw out her swinging gangway, and came smartly alongside the Orion's upper deck.

"It's confoundedly good of you to come!" he said. "You're Mr. Carfax, of course? You got the message I sent to General Blake, then? What! the two Villiers' youngsters, too? Very glad indeed to see you again. Quite a distinguished crew you've got, Mr. Carfax. But to business. I want a word with you at once."

Carfax dismissed the Condor aloft, in charge of Hugh, Kenneth, and Dudley, while he and the two brothers remained on the Orion. He always preferred not to leave them behind, for Sam's knowledge of military and naval details was greater than his own.

The admiral took them down to his cabin at once. He was looking decidedly worried, and he wasted no time in getting to the root of matters.

"You saw that cruiser blow up as you came over?" he said.

"We did," said Carfax.

"That is the third vessel I have lost within the week, though we have drawn further and further off shore," the admiral replied. "It is a gruesome business. The Germans have simply sown the sea with floating mines, and with all the vigilance in the world we are unable to make sure of avoiding them, especially at night."

"Just so," said Carfax; "invisible enemies, that you cannot fight."

"They are far worse than submarines. We can deal with these. But you have seen mines used before, Lieutenant Villiers?"

"I was wondering how the Germans manage to get them out here, sir, considering they aren't able to bring their ships outside for fear of your fleet."

"They do not need to," said Sir Francis; "the tides in the Elbe are immensely strong, as you know, and the currents run far out to sea among the sand-banks. The Germans set these mines adrift in the river on the ebb-tide, and they are quickly carried out to sea, and spread far and wide. It's like putting them in at the narrow end of a funnel, and letting them disperse through the broad end."

Carfax nodded, and Sam looked grave.

"It's worse than any battle," said Sir Francis bitterly. "There's no honour or glory for one in it, and I lose good ships and better men. They have no real right to use these drifting mines at all, but what do they care for that? Next, I'll tell you the latest news I have."

"It has come to my knowledge—never mind how at present—that the Germans are going to send a huge load of mines down the Elbe to-day in a steamer. They will be lost two-thirds of the way down the river as soon as the ebb begins."

"Ah, then you can torpedo her, sir?" said Sam eagerly.

"No, I cannot. No destroyer can get up so far, on account of anchored mines in the river, which can be exploded by electricity from hidden mine-stations on the banks. They've protected the Elbe just as well as we've protected the lower Thames. If those mines are set afloat, the loss to the Fleet may be terrible. There are double the quantity ever lost before—all the Hamburg engineers have got. They might do little harm—true!—but they may well rob Britain of some of her greatest ships, with all their men, if luck favoured them. You know what such a loss would mean to our country. That's why I hoped you, with your powerful machine, would spare a morning to do Britain this service. I want you—"

"To destroy this steamer and her cargo of mines," put in Carfax.

"Exactly! Now the mines, though so powerful, are not very large. She is likely to carry them in one of her holds. They would be winched out by a derrick and lowered into the water one by one when she halts."

"I see," said Carfax. "How shall I know her?"

"She will be a large, heavy steamship, iron-built, with low sides, and a squat funnel with a red band. She will start from the Hamburg Eastern Docks at about nine."

"It is nine now," said Carfax, rising, as he looked at his watch. "Very good, Sir Francis. You will hear of her," he added grimly, "before 9.45. So many mines as that she carries should make a considerable report."

"You can make sure of the affair, then?" asked the admiral anxiously. "The bombs should not be very hard to explode, but I know you are debarred from dropping explosives from overboard now—"

"I have some weapons aboard which will meet the case," said Carfax. "I think we shall succeed in the matter. I don't deny it will mean some danger to the Condor, and it will not be so easy as I see my two young sub-officers here think it. However, your ears will tell you whether we are successful, admiral, even though you are fifteen miles away. And now it's time we started."

"I knew I could rely on you," said the admiral, rising, "and I wish you luck, sir. Ships, men, or guns I can fight, but these fiendish inventions—mines, I mean—are more in the Condor's line to do battle with."

They went on deck, and the airship came down, and in another minute she was speeding away with her full crew aboard.

"No wonder Frankie was glad of our help. I hope we cook those beggars who're spreading the mines!" said Stephen savagely; for the sight of the foundered cruiser was fresh in his mind.

"Pity the Germans can't fight like white men!"

"I say, the fog's as thick as ever yonder," said Dudley, as they came towards the Elbe's mouth above Cuxhaven. "That's bad, isn't it?"

"On the contrary, it's in our favour," Carfax replied. "We shall have to make our attack at close quarters, anyhow, and it's not likely to be too thick for us to find the steamer. I have both the bomb-guns there. You won't want the Maxim."

Sam and Hugh put their weapons in thorough order, and waited expectantly as the Condor sailed along high over the fog, which spread below her like a carpet, and blotted out the land.

Carfax, at the wheel, was thinking swiftly as he steered. He knew the distances on the Elbe, and was calculating where he would be most likely to find the steamer at that time, assuming she would probably travel at about four knots or less in such thick weather. Then the Condor dived down into the fog.

It enveloped her round like a veil, but presently a dim glimpse of the broad grey estuary became visible, with anchored-barges and small craft along its shores. There was no sign of any vessel moving along the channel—not so much as a skiff was to be seen. On the bank a low fort, with masked batteries of heavy guns, came into view, and vanished like a ghostly shadow again as the Condor glided by.

The fog thickened.

The beat of a screw was then heard, and suddenly, without any warning, a steamer loomed through the mist below, no great distance away.

"There she is!" exclaimed Stephen.

A glance was enough to make sure the ship was the one they sought. She was large, low, and her short, black funnel bore a red band. Besides her crew, there was a strong corps of German riflemen on her decks.

The alarm was given at once, for the steamer's men caught sight of the airship at the same moment. There was a hoarsely-shouted order, and a rattle of rifle-butts on board, but before anybody could shoulder a weapon below, the Condor had darted up again, and was out of sight.

She came to a halt, the thick mist driving past her, and Carfax looked unusually grave as he turned to his crew.

"Now, look here," he said, "this business will be a ticklish one for us. That's the steamer we saw. She carries no guns, probably on account of her dangerous cargo, but she's got a strong escort of riflemen."

"We've got to go down at short range and slap our shells into her. If they blow her up at once, well and good, but if they don't, the German riflemen will have a good chance of wiping every one of us out in a few seconds. We can't dash on and off here. We've got to stand steady and bombard her low down until our shells reach her mines in her hold."

The boys nodded, understanding at once.

"The concussion may fire the mines—if it doesn't, they won't explode till our bombs are right among them. Let her have it all along just above the waterline, for there's no saying where the mines may be stowed. Ready?"

"Ay, ay, sir!"

"Down she goes!"

The Condor plunged once more through the fog, quite low above the river, and once more the steamer loomed into view.

As the airship swung towards her every rifle on the steamer was presented, and a rattling volley poured forth. At the same moment the Condor's bomb-guns opened fire, and great breaches were blown in the steamer's side.

There was no answering explosion aboard the ship, nor did she heel or fill rapidly, though shell after shell was hurled into her. But a fierce rifle-fire spat back from her decks.

The first volley was erratic, and did no harm, but at the second the flying lead raked the Condor, and ran over her from end to end.

Hugh fell forward over his gun, and hung there limply, a bullet through his brain, and Stephen, back near the bridge, gave a gasp and dropped heavily. Carfax himself staggered and lurched at the wheel.

The next instant, as one of Sam's shells went home into the steamer's vitals, there was an awful sky-rending explosion. The fog was lit by a sheet of red flame, and the mino-ship flew into a thousand fragments.

The Last Honours.

So awful was the explosion that it seemed as if the Condor herself was also wrecked, far away as she was. She lurched like a ship at sea, and was driven bodily backwards through the air.

One of her fans ceased to revolve, and Kenneth felt himself flung heavily across the engine-room. The echoes of the explosion rolled far and wide through the fog like muttering thunder. The airship began to zig-zag rapidly towards the river. A flying mass of debris from the steamer had struck the fore-top corner of her framework, tearing away a large section of plating.

"She's done for!" gasped Sam.

All aboard her were stunned by the shock, and seemed like men struck by lightning. Carfax was the first to recover himself, and sprang to the engine-room. Kenneth scrambled to his feet, however, and set both motors aback, and the chief jumped for the bridge again, and put the levers hard over.

The Condor stopped, steadied herself, and began to mount slowly. A rain of small wreckage from the demolished ship was falling all around, pattering on the water close below. The fog was thinning; doubtless the great explosion had helped to disperse it.

Then came a loud boom from the river-bank, and a German gun in an earthworks a few hundred yards away hurled a shell hurriedly at the Condor. It missed her by no more than a short foot.

Had she stayed long enough for a second shot, she must have been utterly destroyed. It was all she could do to lift herself. But Kenneth did his utmost, and away she went at half-speed, swerving upwards at a bare thirty miles an hour.

It was enough to drive her clear of the guns in time, for the lifting fog now lay higher above the river, and the Condor soared right through it into the sunlight above. Up and up she went, with increasing speed, to a height of some ten thousand feet, when Carfax stopped her and held her motionless.

Then, for the first time, her crew were able to look round them. The Condor was in a sorry plight. Hugh hung across his gun in a way that left small doubt as to his fate, and Stephen lay, silent and bleeding, on the deck by the bridge.

(Another long instalment of this thrilling serial next week.)

How Do You Do?

WHOM TO WRITE TO—The Editor, "GEM" LIBRARY, 23-9, Boulevard Street, Fleet Street, London, who will be pleased to hear from you.

"THE SWELL OF THE CIRCUS."

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy gets an idea into his head, and with his usual habit of carrying out a fixed resolve he goes for the achievement of his desires, regardless of the consequences. St. Jim's is thrown into a pretty state of excitement.

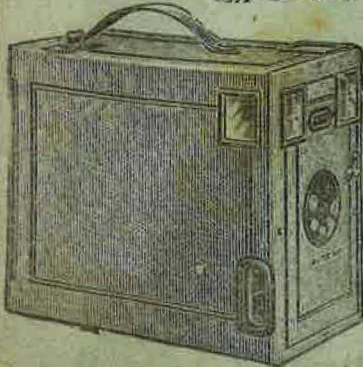
The Editor.

FREE FOR SELLING 12 PACKETS OF KEW SEEDS at 1d. per Packet

SEND NO MONEY. WE TRUST YOU.



WHY NOT WRITE NOW?



To further advertise our FAMOUS KEW SEEDS, which we have reduced to 1d. per packet, we give every reader of this paper a handsome present simply for selling or using twelve packets of KEW SEEDS at 1d. each. Our special 1910 Prize List contains hundreds of new Free gifts to choose from, including Ladies' and Gents' Hall-marked Gold and Silver Watches, Chains, Rings, Purses, Dolls, Cinematographs, Brooches and Pins, Air Guns, Phonographs, Accordians, Cameras, Steam Engines, Skates, &c., &c.

All you need do is to send us your name and full address (a postcard will do), and we will send you a selection of KEW SEEDS in Pictorial Packets to sell or use at 1d. each. When sold we send us the money obtained, and we will immediately forward Gift chosen, according to the GRAND LIST WE SEND YOU. The Collection contains Sweet Peas in all the latest variety, Mignonette, Sweet Williams, Asters, Stocks, Nasturtiums, &c.; or Radishes, Onions, Mustard and Cress, Lettuce, and numerous other popular saleable seeds.

Every packet fully guaranteed.

DON'T DELAY! START EARLY. Send a postcard with your name and address to—



THE **KFW SEED CO., LTD.**,
(Dept. A), Kew Gardens, London, W.

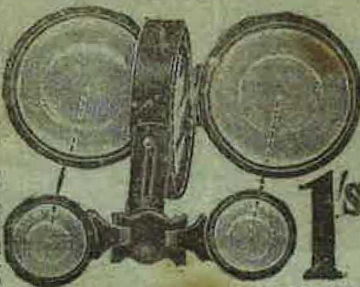


SIMPLY SEND YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS



This is NOT A MOTOR CAR

But nevertheless a new and clever invention. A useful and amusing companion, indoors and out. Folds flat for pocket; extends to five by five. Field, Opera, Reading, and Magnifying Glasses; also Mirror, Telescope, and Compass all combined. Offered at 1s. and 2d. for packing and postage to introduce "BARGAINS BY POST" Catalogue "Full satisfaction or full 1s. 2d. refunded." Bargain Novelty List sent gratis.—PAIN BROS. (Dept. V99), The Presents House, Hastings (Eng.)



POPULAR BOOKS. "Comparing," 4d.; "Boxing," 4d.; "Thought-Reading," 4d.; "Hand-out and Good-Breaking Mystery," 4d.; "Book of Magic," 4d.; "Book of Spells," 4d.; 1s. 1d. post free. "Neurism," 1/2.—G. WILKES & CO. (Printers, etc.), Stockton, Rugby.



2/6 MONTHLY

MASTERS' 27/6 "VERACITY" L

WILL LAST 20 YEARS
We place this year reach the greatest heights in the country. Master's Watch, built by experts, guaranteed by a reputation extending back 30 years. The mechanism is covered by a dust and damp and solid Silver Case; the time keeping is exacter than any other in a month—less than 20 years. This watch is 27/6 each; or send us 2/6 with 2/6 per 2/6 on delivery monthly. Gold Keyless 40/-, or 5/- monthly. CATALOGUE—Watches, Clocks, &c.—FREE



MASTERS, Ltd., 7, Hope Street, RYE.



FREE FOR SELLING 24 POSTCARDS SEND NO MONEY. WE TRUST YOU.

As an advertisement for our special new series of Lovely Post-cards we give every reader of this paper **ABSOLUTELY FREE** a REAL DIAMOND Ring, Lady's or Gents', a Lady's Brilliant 5 Stone Orient DIAMOND Ring, both exactly as illustrated, a beautiful Necklace with Pendant, a Bracelet or Long Chain, for selling 24 Cards each, Addresses, Views, &c., at 1d. each.

Our Special Free Prize List also comprises Ladies' and Gents' Watches, Roller Skates, Cinematographs, Sewing Machines, Dolls, Boy Scout Orbits, Phonographs, Clocks, Cutlery, Musical Instruments, etc., etc.

Need not cost you a penny of your own money.

All you need do is to send us your name and address, and we will send you per return an assortment of postcards to sell or use at 1d. each. When sold, send us the money obtained, and we will immediately forward you the gift chosen according to the list we send you.

SEND NOW
(a postcard will do) to
ROYAL CARD CO.
(Dept. 70), Royal Parade, Kew, London.



CURE PIMPLES

the unsightly, blotchy, sore, eruptions, spots, &c. which make you ashamed of your face & hinder your prospects in life. Dr. ROSE'S FACE PERLES do this. Send 6d. for Health Guide & Trial Gift Box FREE



OUT THIS WEEK!
A NEW Story Paper.

"THE EMPIRE"

Library.

Price $\frac{1d.}{2}$

IT WILL BE WELCOMED—



IN EVERY HOME!

Get
To-day

“THE EMPIRE LIBRARY,”

The NEW Story-Book.

Containing a Long Complete Tale of _____

GORDON GAY, The Schoolboy Actor.

Price One Halfpenny.

NOW ON SALE!