

READ ABOUT TOM MERRY & CO. OF ST. JIM'S, INSIDE!

The **GEM** LIBRARY **1** 10 PAGES

No. 666 Vol. XXVIII. Nov. 27th, 1900.



"BENTON OF THE ROVERS!"
A Tale of the Foster Field.

"THE ST. JIM'S HUNGER-STRIKER!"
A Story of Tom Merry & Co.

"SLAVE ISLAND!"
A Thrilling Adventure Story.



FORGING THE HUNGER-STRIKER TO EAT!

(A Humorous Incident from the Long Complete School Tale Inside.)



NOTE.—Half-a-crown will be awarded to the reader of every paragraph published on this page.

UNANSWERABLE.

When the foreigner attempts to master the intricacies of English grammar, he soon is met with many surprises. A French lad, however, conquered the language so well that he wrote the following lines to give expression to his feelings:

"When the English tongue we speak,
Why is loquax not rhymed with speak?
Why you tell me why it's true
We say are but license for.
And the makout of a verse
Cannot stop his house with verse?
Should words not the same as heard?
Card is different from word;
Car is cow, but low is low;
Shoe is never rhymed with foe.
Think of hose and dose and lose,
And of goose and yet of cheese.
Think of comb and tomb and tomb,
Doll and roll and home and some.
And since pay is rhymed with say,
Why not paid with said, I pray?
We've loved and loved and good,
Mould is not pronounced like wood.
Wherefore does and goes and low?
Is there any reason known?
And, in short, it seems to me
Sounds and letters disagree."
—A. G. Keefe, c/o. P.O. Box 238, Port
Blizabeth, Cape Colony, South Africa.

TROUT TRAPS.

On the picture you can see the idea of an ingenious trout trap. This can be attached to the hook and line. It is composed of a wire frame and a net, and the baited hook is inside with a worm on it. It is floated at the top, and balanced at the bottom with a lead. It will stand about three feet below the water-line, and when the trout takes for the bait, they get caught by the gills in the net. This trap can be thrown by an ordinary trout-rod, pole, and, I believe, could be used better from the side of a boat. It can be made to any size.—Arthur Wheeler, 24, Derkwith Street, St. John's, Newfoundland.

SIGN!

"Sir, one word!" said a soldier one day to Frederick the Great, when presenting to the Prussian monarch a request for the leave of a lieutenant. "If you say so," answered the king, "I will have you signed." "Sign!" said the soldier. The king started, looked harder, whistled, and signed.—J. James, 70, Wern Road, Beckenham, near New-park.

OVERLOOKED.

Farmer Jones was on his way home from town when he thought he had forgotten something. Twice on the way he stopped and looked over the packages in the wagon, and searched his pocket-book, but decided he had everything with him. When he reached home, his daughter came running out, and with a surprised look on her face, said: "Why, father, where's mother?"—David Lewis Griffiths, Osborne House, Bessons Street, Newcastle, near Swansea.

GEMS!

Not many people are able to distinguish valuable stones at sight. Here is a summary description of some of the stones seen every day. Diamonds: The best diamonds are the absolutely transparent ones. Coloured diamonds are blue, yellow, green, rose red. Topaz: Greenish blue, or blue opaque. Emeralds: Next to the diamond in value, are emeralds. Ruby: Very valuable. Different shades of red. Amethyst: Bluish violet or purple. Topaz: Transparent, of various light shades. Opal: Valuable, changeable reflections of green, yellow, blue, red. Garnet: The most valuable garnet is the Precious Garnet, of a beautiful transparent red colour. The common ones are of dull red, or blackish brown. The black garnet is a mineral found in volcanic rocks. Sapphire: Valuable. Of a rich blue. Pearl: Smooth, lustre, which colour. The best pearls come from the Indian Seas.—Rayleigh Best, 88, St. George's Park Avenue, Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex.

HAPPY LUNDY!

There are no taxes in Lundy Island, which lies in the English Channel. It is one of the best known of the island associations that surround Great Britain. It is a delightful little place, once the haunt of pirates, and in older days the scene of many a fight, for it has been occupied by French and Turkish invaders. Now it is the property of the Hooper family, a descendant of that name riding over the little kingdom with its twelve hundred acres, and five hundred inhabitants. The island is declared to be free from Irish taxation.—C. Hutchinson, 20, Costa Street, Middlesex, Yorks.

KEEPING RABBITS.

During the spring and summer it is easy enough to keep rabbits in the country without paying a penny for food, but in the autumn and winter it is a different thing. I feed mine on bran and crushed oats during those seasons; but it costs me 2d. a pound for each, and, therefore, it is rather expensive. In previous days, when corn and cereals were cheap, rabbits were often extravagantly fed, with the result that much food was squandered and wasted. But a rabbit-keeper cannot afford to waste much these days. A rabbit will eat almost anything given that grows. I am thinking of selling my rabbits in the winter for the London market. London people are reputed to prefer tame rabbit to wild, whereas in the country the wild variety has first place. A rabbit-pie with fat bacon is its makes a delicious dish.—G. Bulter, Corner House, Bucks St. Mary, near Tamworth, Somersetshire.

THE DIFFICULT TASK.

It had been a very hard job, and Mr. Baber had taken the whole morning to it. Moreover, he had with a pot of paint, crushed his thumb with the hammer, and suffered other troubles; but the clothes-prop in the backyard was up and looked proud. Ten minutes later he returned from dressing up. The post was lying flat. "You pushed it down?" he said the boy. "A square patch on it, and over it went. I saw him do it."—F. L. James, 32, Buxley Street, South, Cardiff.

AT THE BARBER'S.

"Will you have anything on your face, sir?" asked the barber. "You might leave my nose, if you don't mind," said the victim, who had been badly cut about.—Stephen Downing, Henry Street, Keenare, Co. Kerry, Ireland.

UNDISTURBED.

First Church Mouse: "I'm lying just between the pulpit and the organ, and I cannot get a wink of sleep, what with the organ playing, the clergyman preaching, and the choir singing. There's absolutely no peace!"

Second Mouse: "You should lodge with me in the parson box. It's quiet enough there!"—F. Satchell, 1, Pesham Road, South Harlow, E. 9.

Contributions are invited from readers of the "GEM" for publication on this page. Anything will do, so long as it is interesting, short, and concise—a good joke, a description of a holiday, a bright idea for increasing the popularity of the "Gem," a good anecdote. "Puns" should not be more than three hundred words long—the shorter the better. They can be sent in on a postcard. Address all contributions to the Editor, The "Gem" Library, Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4, and mark them "Readers' Own Corner."

RENTON OF THE ROVERS!



A Magnificent Football Serial. By PAUL MASTERS.

Synopsis of First Chapter.

JIMMY RENTON, a footballer with a talent, seeks an engagement as a professional in one of the big League teams. Arresting him in his quest is his chum,

BILLY DESMOND, a gay, good-hearted young fellow of about Jimmy's own age, who is shortly to become a reporter on the staff of the "Daily Sportsman."

Jimmy and Billy have their headquarters at an old-fashioned inn situated in the King's Forest. They are instrumental in rescuing Madge Taylor, the charming daughter of one of the directors of Belmont Rovers Football Club, from the hands of gosses, by whom the girl has been kidnaped. This leads, of course, to an introduction to Madge's father, who offers to give Jimmy Renton a trial with the Rovers. Jimmy makes a very favourable impression, and he is selected to play in the next League match, to the astonishment of

LUKE BAYNER, an outsider, whom Jimmy has already met. The two chums set off for Belmont in the afternoon, but owing to a puncture, they get stranded in the King's Forest. They accept a lift from a passing car, and are lured into a lonely house and made prisoners.

"This means," says Jimmy, "that Bayner will play in my place."

(Now read on.)

The Escape!

"**F**OOL that I was!" exclaimed Billy Desmond, in tones of self-reproach. "I might have known those notes were up to some shady game or other. I laughed at your suspicions, Jimmy, but you were right after all."

The two chums writhed and chafed in their captivity.

On one occasion they hurled their united weight against the door. But it refused to budge. Then they examined their prison carefully, in the faint hope of finding some secret outlet. But their search proved futile.

"Nothing doing, dear boy," said Billy Desmond, at length. "Ain't we most awfully ourselves in our lyle."

Jimmy Renton clenched his hands fiercely.

"Somebody's going to sit up for this!" he declared. "And to think that I was going to play in my first League match this afternoon! It's awful!"

"Beatsy!" agreed Billy. "It's all my fault, too. I walked blindly into the trap."

"That old Bayner will be playing for Belmont Rovers this afternoon," said Jimmy Renton. "And if he ceases off he may get a permanent place in the team."

"But your wiled at rest, dear boy. Bayner's bound to make a lunk of it. He doesn't take the trouble to keep himself fit."

"Old Trevor will be furious with me for not turning up. And so will Madge!"

"We must explain when we get out of this place."

"Then?"

"Why, you don't suppose we shall be here for ever, do you?"

"I don't see any prospect of an immediate release. This house is miles away from anywhere. Besides, nobody knows where we are."

"I suppose they'll bring us food?"

"I suppose so."

After this conversation languished.

Jimmy Renton was furious at the thought that he would be unable to turn out for the Rovers. He glanced at his watch, and saw that it was nearly two o'clock. Even if a miracle happened, and he were set at liberty, he would be unable to get to Belmont in time for the match.

As for Billy Desmond, his cheerful spirits seemed to have deserted him. For himself he cared nothing. But he could understand his chum's feelings, and he could have kicked himself for having trusted two such smart scoundrels as Bayner and Him.

Shortly afterwards there came the sound of footsteps.

The door was unlocked and opened, and Bayner came in. In one hand he carried a lighted lantern, while his other hand rested on his hip-pocket. He would have been in a hurry to get out. He would have been in a hurry to get out.

The Girl Lovers—No. 368.

not have tempted to use his revolver had his prisoners attempted to escape.

"You answered!" cried Jimmy Reston passionately. "It was Rayner who put you up to this, I suppose?"

Rayburn did not reply to that question. He set the lantern down on the sidewalk, and drew a written document from his pocket.

"I've no desire to keep you here indefinitely," he said.

"Because you know jolly well that the police will soon be on your track!" said Billy Desmond.

Rayburn laughed scornfully.

"What do I care for the police?" he said. "They are a dog, incompetent set of rascals! Do you imagine for one moment that they could detect your whereabouts? If so, perish the thought!"

"How long are we to remain here?" demanded Jimmy Reston.

"That rests with you. You're only to sign this little document, and the pair of you will be released right away."

The two chums glanced at the sheet of paper, on which the following statement was written in bold, clear handwriting:

"I, James Reston, hereby declare that I will sever my connection with the Belmont Racers Football Club from this date and that I will never, under any circumstances, become a playing member of the said club."

"Just add your signature to that," said Rayburn, "and I'll get Rini to come and witness it. Here's a pen."

Jimmy Reston put his hands in his pockets.

"There's nothing doing," he said.

"You refuse to sign?"

"Absolutely."

Rayburn scowled.

"Think it all, it isn't much that I'm asking you," he said.

"You want me to sign a written undertaking that I'll have nothing further to do with Belmont Racers?"

"That's it."

"That is another of Rayner's dodges, I suppose. He wants me to leave him a clear field."

"Look here," said Rayburn, "I'll speak plainly. It will be no hardship for you to sever your connection with the Racers. You're a fine player—a real kick free player—and there are many clubs that would gladly jump at the chance of getting you."

"Whether that's the case or not, I'm sticking to the Racers," said Jimmy Reston firmly.

Billy Desmond cursed close, and whispered in his chum's ear:

"Sign it, man—sign it. It won't be binding."

Rayburn happened to overhear the remark.

"Oh, you, it will!" he said. "If Reston signs this declaration, steps will be taken to make him abide by it."

"I haven't the slightest intention of signing it!" said Jimmy.

"In that case, you and your friend will remain here as prisoners. Don't be a fool! You ought to know which side your bread's buttered. If I give you five minutes to make up your mind."

"My mind's already made up," said Jimmy.

And at the end of the specified time the document was still unsigned. Rayburn picked it up, and returned it to his pocket.

"Very well!" he said grimly. "You've had your chance, and you won't get another!"

"You'll be clipped into prison for this!"

"Kidnaping isn't a light offense."

But Rayburn merely laughed. The next moment he was gone, and again the door was locked and bolted.

"Pissness sort of merchant, isn't he?" said Billy Desmond, turning to his chum.

"It was old man Rayner who put me up to this, you bet. And you can safely wager that young Rayner was in the know. It's a black business, Jimmy."

All the same, I wish you'd sign that document. We should have had our freedom then. And they could never have prevented you from playing for the Racers."

"Look here, Billy. I don't want to pose as being a fellow of high morals; but when I was at St. Clair's it was part of our code of honor never to break a promise, and never to go back on a solemn undertaking. If I'd signed that document, I should have had to stick to it. So it's as well that I left it alone."

"But you know what it means? We shall be here for days—perhaps weeks!"

"I'll try and persuade Rayburn to let you go. After all, there's no earthly reason why you should be kept a prisoner."

"If you talk like that, Jimmy, we shall quarrel. You ought to know me better than to think I should ever agree to desert you."

After this, silence fell between them.

Jimmy Reston was thinking of the match between Belmont Racers and Winona City, and his thoughts were black and bitter. He had never really hated anybody in his life until now, but at this moment he hated Luke Rayner and his rascally father with all the intensity of his being. If he could have seen young Rayner face to face just then, he would have dashed him within an inch of his life.

The hours dragged slowly by. They seemed like years to the two prisoners. Eventually Rayburn came in, carrying a laden tray. This he set down on the sidewalk, and then went out without a word.

"By Jove!" ejaculated Billy Desmond, glancing at the pile of sandwiches and cakes. "They don't mean us to starve, Jimmy? Pile in!"

The two chums were hungry, and they ate voraciously.

It was not until the last cake had disappeared that Billy Desmond spoke again.

"I've got an idea, Conrade James," he said.

Jimmy granted.

"It's a desperate scheme," Billy went on; "but then we're in a desperate situation. What I suggest is this. In a few hours' time the man Rayburn will pay us another visit. What we've got to do is to hold him over and make a dash for freedom."

"Sounds all right," said Jimmy Reston. "But you've forgotten two things."

"Well?"

"In the first place, Rayburn's armed. Secondly, even supposing we manage to dash past him, we should have Rini to deal with."

"I'd take both these facts into consideration," said Billy Desmond. "That's why I called your scheme a desperate one. What do you think about it?"

Jimmy reflected.

"It's worth trying," he said, at length. "The sooner we get out of this swindling hole the better."

"But you don't want to stop a bullet in the process—eh?"

"No, jolly fear!"

"Well, we'll see if we can outprove Rayburn before he has a chance to produce his revolver."

The two chums continued to discuss

their plan of campaign, and they were grimly looking forward to the time when Rayburn should get in his appearance.

He came rather sooner than they expected. They could hear his footsteps without, mingled with the rattle of crockeryware.

The next moment the door was unlocked, and Rayburn came in. Before he had advanced a couple of steps into the room, Billy Desmond sprang forward like a tiger, and knocked the tray up into the man's face.

There was a series of crashes as cups and plates descended to the floor. And Rayburn, whose face had been almost bludgeoned by the tray, revolved it as crockeryware was happening.

"Quick, Jimmy!" pointed Billy Desmond.

The two chums dashed past Rayburn and through the doorway.

"Quick!"

A bullet slipped past Jimmy Reston's ear, and embedded itself in the wall of the passage. Rayburn had evidently recovered the power of action.

It was not of nothing now, and Jimmy and Billy went up the stairs four at a time.

Before they reached the top of the staircase they succeeded in hitting the man Rini, who, having heard the crockery fall below, was on his way to investigate.

Billy Desmond sprang past the man, then, turning sharply, he gave him a nose too much ready in the back, with the result that Rini went rolling down the stairs. On reaching the bottom he collided heavily with Rayburn, who was about to ascend.

Leaving the two scoundrels to sort themselves out, the two chums dashed through the hall, and made their exit by the front door.

"Free!" pointed Billy Desmond.

"Those passed out much better than I dared to expect."

"We shall be followed in the car!" gasped Jimmy Reston, pointing to the automobile which stood outside.

"No, we shan't," answered Billy, with a chuckle. "It's not a well-stopper, and if I take away the wheels inside they'd be done—see!"

He made the motion to the wheel, and they sped on again, intending to put as much distance as possible between themselves and the lonely house in which they had been imprisoned.

Dark was descending over the bleak forest.

It would be a difficult matter for Rayburn and Rini to track down the two chums, especially as they would not be able to use the car.

"Smile, man!" urged Billy Desmond, slapping his chum on the back. "You don't seem to be a bit worried at being free!"

"I was thinking of the match," said Jimmy Reston. "It's over by now. Wonder how the Racers got on?"

"We shall soon know. We must trudge to Bentley Station, and take the train to Belmont. You'll have to explain your absence to Mr. Trevor and Madsen."

"I think we ought to put the police on the track of Rayburn and Rini," said Jimmy.

Billy Desmond shook his head.

"Alford! It wouldn't be any use," he said. "By the time they got to the house the birds would have flown."

"You don't think the rascals live down?"

"No. Who'd live in a filthy, creaky place of that sort? They hit upon it as a convenient prison for you and me—that's all."

"They ought to be brought to justice!"

"They'll get their deserts before long, I've no doubt," said Billy Desmond. It was a long and noisy tramp to the railway-station. But fortune favored the two chums when they arrived there, for the Belmont train had just steamed in. They hastily boarded it, and half an hour later they arrived at their destination.

As they stepped out into the High Street of Belmont they could not fail to be struck by the atmosphere of depression which seemed to prevail.

The passers-by were thronged with people, and the majority of the menfolk were wearing red noses in their buttonholes, and looking decidedly crest-fallen.

"Great pip!" ejaculated Billy Desmond. "Surely the Ravens haven't been lifted!"

Jimmy Rayton hailed a small boy who was dispensing evening papers. He took hurriedly to the football results, and uttered an exclamation of dismay.

"Look it pretty, Jimmy!" exclaimed Billy Desmond. "What's happened?"

Jimmy Rayton handed over the paper, and his chum gave vent to a low whistle. For the following staggering announcement greeted his gaze:

"At Belmont.	
Winton City	4
Belmont Ravens	1"

"It's—a fair knock-out!" gasped Jimmy Rayton.

It certainly was. The Ravens had not been defeated, on their own ground, by Winton City for eight years. And now the ice had been broken—on the very day Jimmy Rayton was to have taken part in his first League match!

"Come along, Jimmy!" said Billy Desmond. "Let's go and see Mr. Trevor. I don't suppose we shall find him in a merry mood. But we must explain why you didn't turn out this afternoon."

And the two chums hurried away in the direction of Mr. Trevor's private house.

Explanation:

It was Midge Trevor who opened the door to Jimmy Rayton and his chum.

The girl started back in surprise when she saw them, and noticed their maddened clothing and dishevelled condition.

"Jimmy Rayton!" she gasped. "Where have you been? Why didn't you turn out for the Ravens this afternoon?"

"It's a long story, Miss Trevor," said Jimmy. "May we see your father?"

"Certainly! Father is in the drawing-room. This way, please."

When the two chums entered the room they found Mr. Trevor staring at and looking like a caged bear. That he was in a bad humor was only too obvious. He spun round sharply when Midge announced Jimmy Rayton and Billy Desmond.

"Why, Rayton," he exclaimed, "what is the meaning of this? We were counting on you this afternoon, and you let us down. Where have you been? What has happened?"

"We were kidnapped, sir," answered Jimmy quietly.

Mr. Trevor started violently.

"Kidnapped?" he echoed.

Jimmy nodded.

"By whom?"

"By a couple of rascals around here named Rayburn and Riall."

Mr. Trevor noticed the two chums to be seated.

"Tell me the circumstances," he said.

"We were on our way to Belmont this morning—Desmond was bringing me in

his satchel—when the front tyre of the motor-bike was punctured."

"And we were stranded in the heart of the King's Forest— miles away from anywhere," said Billy Desmond, taking up the tale. "Then these men came along in a car, and offered to give us a lift as far as Belmont. Of course, we were awfully backed, and we didn't suspect foul play—at least, I didn't. Presently the car drove up at a lonely house, where Rayburn said he lived. He suggested that we should all go inside and partake of hot chocolate."

"And you went?"

"Of course! It didn't occur to me that we were walking into a trap."

"What happened when you got inside the place?"

"We were lured down to a nasty room in the basement, and Rayburn told us we were his prisoners."

Mr. Trevor looked thunderstruck.

"But—but I quite fail to understand the motives of these men," he exclaimed.

"Yes, unless you'll sit," said Jimmy Rayton. "Before we'd been in the place very long I was asked to sign an undertaking that I would sever my connection with Belmont Ravens. Rayburn said that if I signed it we should be allowed to go free."

"And so you signed it?"

"No jolly fear, sir!"

"Then how did you manage to secure your freedom?"

Jimmy Rayton explained how Rayburn and Riall had been overpowered in turn; and Mr. Trevor participated Jimmy's narrative with nods of approval, while Midge stood near with sparkling eyes.

"Young Rayton and his father are at the back of this business, sir," added Jimmy. "I'm convinced of that. They bribed those two men to kidnap us."

Mr. Trevor looked grave.

"That is a very serious accusation to make, Rayton."

"But I feel sure that it's true, sir, and I mean to tackle the Raytons right away!"

"No, no!" The director placed a restraining hand on Jimmy Rayton's arm. "That would be a very unwise step to take, my boy. Your accusation that the Raytons are at the bottom of this may be quite correct; at the same time, you have nothing in the nature of proof. The chain of evidence is far from complete; in fact, there is very little evidence at all. Mr. Rayner is a fellow-director of mine, and he is scarcely the sort of man to engineer such a base and villainous plot."

"He hates Jimmy like poison," interposed Billy Desmond. "And so does his son. They'd go to any lengths to keep him out of the Ravens' eleven."

Mr. Trevor was silent. He remembered that Mr. Rayner had been vigorously opposed to Jimmy Rayton from the start, and he could not doubt the truth of Billy Desmond's words.

"There is certainly some ground for thinking that the Raytons had something to do with this affair," he said, at length. "But we have nothing tangible to go on."

"Then what do you advise, sir?" asked Jimmy Rayton.

"That no action be taken; at any rate, for the present. But we will keep our eyes and ears open, and the moment we obtain any direct evidence against the Raytons they shall be brought to book."

Jimmy Rayton was all for tackling the Raytons outright. But he studied the wisdom of Mr. Trevor's words. Nothing could be gained by bringing a charge against Luke Rayner and his father unless that charge could be fully substantiated. And at present there was not an atom of proof.

"We missed you sorely this afternoon, Rayton," said Mr. Trevor. "You have heard, of course, the result of the match?"

"Yes, sir. How did Winton City manage to trounce the Ravens like that?"

"I will tell you. In the first half of the game the Ravens soon had hold their own. The score at the interval was 1-1. Early in the second half our goals, Richmond, was so badly injured that he had to retire. And another of our men was sent off the field for foul play, and for insulting the referee."

"What?" cried Jimmy Rayton. "A Belmont Raven's man sent off the field?"

Such an occurrence was unique in the history of the club. For the Ravens had always enjoyed the reputation of being perfectly clean and sportsmanlike players.

"Yes," said Mr. Trevor. "I regret to say that Rayner was the offender. In the first half he had been repeatedly fouled up by the opposing right-back; in fact, he could make no headway at all. And as the game went on he lost his temper. He was cautioned for a deliberate trip, and a few moments later he was again guilty of a foul. The referee ordered him from the field, and he went, very reluctantly and with a very bad grace."

"That means that he'll be suspended, sir!" said Billy Desmond.

"Most emphatically! At the next meeting of directors I shall move that Rayner be suspended for a month. I am assured and empowered beyond measure to think that six men wearing the colours of Belmont Ravens should behave in such an unparliamentary manner."

"And as an I!" chimed in Midge Trevor. "I think Rayner is a hothead and! He has acted abominably."

"Of course, in the closing stages of the game we were somewhat hampered," said Mr. Trevor. "And Winton City piled on three goals without response. Had you played, Rayton, I cannot help thinking that the result would have been different."

"You better me, sir," said Jimmy.

"Not at all. I recognize that you are a player of exceptional talent—a player with a future. And I shall always take a personal interest in your welfare."

"So shall I," said Midge coolly.

Jimmy Rayton's face glowed with satisfaction. He felt that he had gained two very real friends in Mr. Trevor and his daughter.

"I trust there will be no further intrigues against you, my boy," said the director, "for we can ill afford to be without a good outside-left. Bob Hedges, who usually fills that position, is still on the injured list; and Rayner, of course, has injured his right to a place in the team."

"Is the next match a home engagement, sir?" asked Jimmy.

"I cannot say, it all depends on our luck in the draw for the English Cup."

"My hat! I'd clean forgotten that the draw comes off on Monday!" exclaimed Jimmy. "Wonder who we shall find ourselves up against in the first round?"

"Aston Villa, at Villa Park, most likely!" chuckled Billy Desmond.

"Oh, help!"

"Let us hope that the Ravens are drawn at home, against some fifth-rate club," said Midge fervently.

But Mr. Trevor shook his head.

(Another good installment of this magnificent football serial next week.)

A HIGHLY AMUSING SCHOOL STORY!



"Pony takes that away, Tubey!" said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy firmly. "It's ably wiser to take any food!"

CHAPTER I. Gassy Chaps in!

"SOUNDS like Wally," said Jack Blake.
"More trouble!" gazed George Herries.
"The kid's catching it!" remarked Robert Arthur Digby.
And Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, the swell of St. Jim's, ejaculated:
"Bei Jove!"

The chums of the Fourth had just strolled up the passage in which the Third Form-room was situated, and had stopped in astonishment when they heard words of turmoil and strife proceeding from that room. The voice of Mr. Selby could be heard, shouting at somebody. That "somebody" was talking as though in pain, and Jack Blake & Co. recognized the dearest voice of Walker Adolphus D'Arcy.

D'Arcy's misdeed was evidently in trouble with his Form-master again. D'Arcy's misdeed was very often in trouble with Mr. Selby. Indeed, it seemed as though Wally were born to trouble, tribulation, and strife.

It was time that pup was over in the Third Form-room, and the chums of the Fourth had come along to invite Wally to a "spread" in Stady No. 6. They did not see what critical invitations Mr. D'Arcy raised, but as the Third-Formers were playing the Fourth a boxer match on the following Saturday, Jack Blake & Co. had behooved themselves to have Wally in to tea, and discuss arrangements for the match over the festive board.

"Teeny, teeny, teeny!"
"My!" exclaimed Blake. "Selby must be chasing Wally round the Form-room. I wonder what the little beggar's boss is to?"
"They're going it, and no mistake!" said Digby.
"Cosh!"

The door of the Form-room was suddenly dragged open, and the form of Wally D'Arcy dashed forth. Wally's hair was dishevelled, his face was flushed and excited. He begged a shaggy mongrel dog beneath his arm.
"Good! Good!" ejaculated Arthur
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Augustus D'Arcy. "Wally, dear boy

"Stand back, Gas!" peered Wally. "Selby's after me and Pongo! Oh, my hat! Here comes the old bird!"
Mr. Selby pounced out of the Form-room, waving a cane aloft.

The master of the Third Form seemed in a tearing rage. He saw Wally in the passage, and made a dash for him. Wally promptly dodged the cane and scurried in the passage, still clutching Pongo, his shaggy pet.

"D'Arcy miser! Stop! Come back!" shrieked Mr. Selby. "I command you to surrender yourself and that dog to me!"

"Rats!" responded Wally recklessly. "You're not going to touch Pongo! He's going back to his kennel!"

"You trouble young scound!"
Mr. Selby fairly flew after Wally, who was making towards the stairs at the end of the passage.

Jack Blake & Co. followed, considerably surprised, and wondering mightily.

"Bei Jove!" ejaculated Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "Wally, you wicked young ass—"

"Stop, D'Arcy miser!" cried Mr. Selby, his eyes flashing in the manner of a cat behind him. "If you don't stop, it will be all the worse for you!"

"You ain't touch Pongo!" retorted Wally, looking back defiantly at the master. "He's a defenceless animal, and I'm not going to see him sniped with your rotten cane! Oh, crumbs!"

Pongo had taken matters in his own hands, so to speak. Seeing his opportunity to escape from his master's arms he gave a wriggle and a jump and landed on the floor of the passage.

"Oh, crumbs!" gasped Wally, halting.

"Pongo! Pongo, old chappie—"

"Boy-over-me-too-rough!" barked Pongo excitedly, and he turned to greet Mr. Selby as that honored gentleman dashed up.

Mr. Selby came to a sudden full-stop as Wally's shaggy pet turned upon him. Pongo eyed Mr. Selby viciously.

"Give-over!" he growled.
Mr. Selby backed hastily away.
"Good heavens!" he exclaimed.

THE ST. JIM'S HUNGER-STRIKER!

A SPLENDID LONG, COMPLETE
SCHOOL TALE OF TOM MERRY
& CO. & ARTHUR AUGUSTUS
D'ARCY AT ST. JIM'S.

By Martin Clifford.

"That animal's going to make an attack upon me! D'Arcy miser—"

"Good old Pongo!" said Wally, chuckling. "Take the cane, old man!"

Jack Blake & Co. gasped.

"Wally, you fearless little dhist!" exclaimed D'Arcy sniggering at his own words. "You can't allow that howled dog to go for Mr. Selby?"

"Mr. Selby went for Pongo first!" growled Wally. "Heard if I thought he'd make such a fuss about bringing a dog into the Form-room for pup! Poor old Pongo couldn't see in his kennel, all through the growling of that snipe-barking of yours, Herries—"

"Look here—began Herries, bristling with wrath at Wally's disgusting reference to Tomar.

"Keep that dog off!" shrieked Mr. Selby, as Pongo advanced towards him, growling. "D'Arcy miser, I command you!"

"He's got his mad up, sir!" growled Wally. "He's a cute little beggar, and I suppose he's going to have some of his own back on you, sir, for sniping him with the cane when you discovered him in the Form-room cupboard!"

"Give-over!" growled Pongo.

"Good heavens! Help!" cried Mr. Selby, slipping away.

Jack Blake strode forward quickly and grasped Pongo before that shaggy animal rushed Mr. Selby. Pongo snarped and growled, but was held firmly by Blake and Herries.

Wally D'Arcy glowered.

"You an, Blake—!" he began.

"Wally, Wally, it is impossible to allow that dog to attack Mr. Selby, whatever the provocation," said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy severely. "I couldn't—"

"D'Arcy miser! You shall now be punished most severely!" exclaimed Mr. Selby, recovering his self-possession and striding towards Wally, his cane upraised.

Wally eyed the cane apprehensively and backed away.

"Look here, sir—!" he began. "I'm not— You-ow! Oh, crumbs! Yaki Yawooough!"

Wally uttered these cries of pain as

Mr. Selby's cane descended upon his shoulders with stinging force.

"I'll teach you not to bring dangerous animals into the Forenoon, and place my personal safety in jeopardy, D'Arcy major!" exclaimed Mr. Selby, between his teeth. "Take that—and that—and that!"

And at each repetition of the word "that," Mr. Selby brought the cane down heavily on the person of Wally D'Arcy.

Wally fell back, gasping with pain. "Thwack, thwack, thwack!"

"Yawwoah! Yes—yes—yes!" wailed Wally involuntarily. "I waddy, he was as tough as nails, but those stinging cuts inflicted upon him were more than he could bear. He ceased."

Mr. Selby, thoroughly enraged, followed Wally up as the flag retreated down the passage, lashing him unmercifully with the cane.

Wally's heels resounded down the passage.

Jack Blake & Co. looked meaningfully at each other.

"'Bai Jove!" gasped Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, his nose glimmering in his eye.

"Thwack, thwack, thwack!"

"Yawwoah! Oh crumbs! Help! Ooo-or!"

"My hat!" exclaimed Blake. "The knave isn't half laying into the poor kid!"

"'Bai Jove!" gasped D'Arcy, pushing back his cuffs, and advancing upon Mr. Selby. "This is beyond a joke, dash boys! I'm not made!"

"Hold on, Gussy!" exclaimed Blake, in horror.

But Gussy did not "hold on"—at least, not as Blake meant it. He grabbed Mr. Selby's arm as it was raised to deliver another blow of the cane upon Wally's back, and he held it firmly.

"Stop, you wretch!" he exclaimed.

Mr. Selby's face went quite pink, and he wrenched his arm free.

"D'Arcy major! How dare you!"

"Leave my tailor alone, Mr. Selby!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus, whose noble blood was boiling in his veins. "I consider youth treatment of his as quite brutal, and quite without reason! You are exceeding youth duty as a snitch!"

"What?" stammered Mr. Selby.

"I repeat that you are exceeding youth duty as a snitch, Mr. Selby!" said D'Arcy firmly. "I regard you as a brutal wretch, but Jove!"

Mr. Selby stood rooted in the floor, gasping incoherently. Blake, Herriss, and Digby looked haughtily at their chum.

"Gussy, old son!" breathed Blake. "I am fully aware of what I am doing, Blake!" said D'Arcy haughtily. "I am giving Mr. Selby to understand that I protest against his brutal treatment of Wally, and that it must stop immediately."

"Great pip!"

Mr. Selby's face worked spasmodically, and stern clouds settled on his brow. He set his teeth, and, grasping the cane firmly in his hand, whirled round on D'Arcy.

"D'Arcy major, you—you insolent rascal!" he exclaimed. "How dare you address me in that manner?"

"D'Arcy did not reply. He stood like a Paladin of old, his cygnetic gleaming in his eye.

"You are, Gus!" exclaimed Wally, under his breath. "He'll go for you!"

D'Arcy major smiled. Mr. Selby's eyes glared.

"Hold out your hand, D'Arcy major!" he growled. "I shall raze you severely for your impudence!"

"It's done!" said Arthur Augustus.

"What's at it?"

"I consider that I am quite justified in protesting our youth misconception of duty, Mr. Selby!" said the noble soul of the Fourth. "I refuse to be cured by you, anyway! I refuse to see my name brutally ill-treated!"

"D'Arcy!" gasped Mr. Selby. "Your insolence is unprecedented! Boy! Obey me at once, and hold out your hand!"

"I refuse!"

"Gussy!" said Blake appealingly. "Gussy, old man, you can't kick against the traces!"

Gussy did not even hear.

"For the last time!" said Mr. Selby furiously. "Will you hold out your hand, D'Arcy major?"

"I repeat that I refuse, Mr. Selby!"

Thwack!

Mr. Selby brought the cane down heavily across the shoulder of the Hon. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, and the soul of St. Jim's uttered a gasping yell of pain.

"You—w! Oh crumbs! Oo!"

Thwack! Thwack! Thwack!

Mr. Selby's ire was roused, and he lashed Arthur Augustus in a manner that suggested the beating of a carpet.

"Yawwoah! Yaw! Oh, you beastly wretch!" roared Arthur Augustus.

"How dare you cane me! Yoo!"

The noble Gussy's blood was fairly up. He whirled round upon the Third Form master, grasped the cane, and executed a series of evolutions.

Mr. Selby here on to the subplot, and closed with D'Arcy.

The master and the Fourth-Former then proceeded to perform a species of Tango along the passage, locked in each other's embrace.

"My only Aunt Jane!" gasped Wally, who had now recovered Paago from Jack Blake. "Go it, Gus! Ha, ha, ha!"

Jack Blake, Herriss, and Dig did not laugh. They realized that this was a very serious affair for Gussy. Wrestling with a master would be regarded by the Head as a heinous offense.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy and Mr. Selby hugged each other with quite brotherly affection, and walked down the passage towards the stairs.

"Look out!" roared Blake, in alarm, as the two stragglers neared the top of the stairs. "You'll fall down, and—Oh, my hat!"

Crash!

Mr. Selby and Gussy had reached the top of the stairs, still wrestling furiously. They toppled on the brink, hovered a while, and then, with two wild yells, they went sailing down the stairs together.

CHAPTER 2.

On the High Seas!

BUMP, bump, bump!

"Yawwoah!" roared Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

"Yak! Ooop!" shrieked Mr. Selby.

They both went down the stairs like sacks of coal, keeping most horribly awkwardly.

Jack Blake, Herriss, Digby, and Wally D'Arcy stood on the top landing, open-mouthed with horror.

"My giddy side!" ejaculated Blake.

"Gussy will catch it now! He— Oh! Great Scott! Look out, Taggles!"

Taggles, the school porter, carrying a pail of whitewash, had appeared at the bottom of the stairs, evidently intending to mount them.

"Look out!" shrieked Wally D'Arcy.

"Clear out of the way, you chump—Oh crumbs! That's done it!"

Crash!

Mr. Selby and D'Arcy reached the bottom of the stairs, and cannoned

heavily into Taggles. The St. Jim's porter fell, bowed over like a sieve, and his pail of whitewash went up in the air, to fall upon the three stragglers on the floor.

"Yawwoah!" gasped Mr. Selby, as a torrent of whitewash enveloped his head.

"Yoooh! Oh, dash!" gasped Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, as the whitewash surged over his beautiful clothes.

"Ow, ow, ow!" moaned Taggles, sitting up in a puddle of whitewash, and blinking dazedly round him. "Wat the deuce— My 'at! Mr. Selby, sir!"

Mr. Selby dashed to his feet, and dragged Arthur Augustus D'Arcy up beneath Gussy's nose.

"You little rascal!" roared the Third Form master. "You are responsible for this—this affair! Taggles, cease these ridiculous moans, and clear this mess up! Crawl with me to the Head, D'Arcy!"

Gussy groped for his nose, dashed the whitewash from it, and jammed it into his eye. He looked severely at Jack Blake & Co., who had come downstairs grunting. Then he regarded Mr. Selby with a lofty air.

"Very well, sir," he said. "I am quite prepared to explain mistakes to Dr. Hejases. I need hardly point out that this would not have happened if you had not made that brutal attack upon me at the top of the stairs!"

"Nonsense, D'Arcy!" gasped Mr. Selby.

"Follow me to the Head's study at once!"

And, scattering whitewash as he went, Mr. Selby stalked off. And Arthur Augustus D'Arcy followed him, his noble nose high in the air.

A shriek of laughter from the boys who had assembled followed them.

Wally of the Third looked round him, and whistled.

"My only Aunt Jane!" he exclaimed. "Gussy's going to be beaten before the book! What's going to happen now? My only beloved Aunt Jane! I'm going to be in it!"

And Wally followed in the whitewash footprints of his major and Mr. Selby.

Oh, the way to the Head's study, the Terrible Three met Mr. Selby and Gussy.

Tom Merry, Manners, and Leather stopped and stared. They could hardly believe their eyes.

Mr. Selby passed them without a look on a word. Arthur Augustus nodded calmly to them.

"Gussy!" murmured Tom Merry.

"What the merry thunder has happened?"

"Lads!" replied Arthur Augustus. "I had to interfere in Mr. Selby's treatment of my minor. Mr. Selby went far, and while we were wretch's we fell down the stairs, and collided with Taggles, who was at the bottom with a pail of whitewash. I'm 'gin' to see the Head now, dash boys!"

"Great pip!" gasped Tom Merry.

"Oh, well, I'm 'gapped!" murmured Leather, quite faintly.

"You're in for it, Gussy!" said Manners.

D'Arcy sniffed.

"The Head is sure to see the full of my argument when I explain affairs to him," he said. "Don't worry, dash boys; it will be all right!"

Mr. Selby wheeled round.

"D'Arcy, do stop talking to these juniors! Follow me!"

"Very well, sir."

Mr. Selby approached so, Arthur Augustus D'Arcy followed in quite a dignified manner, oblivious to the fact that his clothes were plastered with whitewash.

"Dear old Gassy!" said Tom Merry. "Hallo, here's Wally, with that magnificent hair! Since you come up to anything, Wally!"

"Only had Pongo in the Form-room cupboard!" grinned Wally. "I'm going to the Head, and explain what a beast old Selby is. Gassy's not going to stand a chance!"

"He, ho, he!"

"There's going to be squalls!" said Mervyn Lotheridge. "Wally, if I had a mirror like you, I'd drown him!"

"Rats!" said Wally, and he passed on as they saw.

Babe and Herries and Digby joined the Terrible Three in the passage. They were not looking happy. They realised that Gassy was in for it. The noble Arthur Augustus, however, was quite calm and collected as he followed Mr. Selby into the Head's study.

Dr. Holmes was seated at his table, writing, when Mr. Selby swooshed in. He gave a violent jump as he saw the state the Third Form master was in.

"Good heavens!" exclaimed the Head, rising. "What ever has happened, Mr. Selby? How come you to be in such a disgraceful condition?"

Mr. Selby seemed to choke.

"This junior is the primary cause of the affair, sir," he stammered. "I have brought him to you for the severe punishment he deserves! I am incapable of dealing with him."

"Bless my soul!"

"His key obstructed me whilst I was writing under the name of D'Arcy major," said Mr. Selby, in trembling tones. "He actually tried to wrest the key from my grasp—struggled with me, sir, I, of course, resisted his violence, and he dragged me downstairs."

"Wally, Mr. Selby," began D'Arcy loudly.

"I repeat, sir, he dragged me down the stairs," said Mr. Selby furiously. "Taggler was at the bottom with a pair of whiskers. There was a collision, and—yes—yes—the result!"

"Yes, I see the result, Mr. Selby," said the Head coldly. "Then he turned to Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. 'D'Arcy, is it possible that you—'"

"I did not drag Mr. Selby down the stairs, sir," said Gassy respectfully, but firmly. "He and I were struggling for the key, and we both fell down together!"

"Good heavens!" exclaimed Dr. Holmes, his face hard and stern. "How dare you, D'Arcy, meddle with a matter in order to prevent him doing his duty!"

"Wally, sir, I consider that Mr. Selby was exceedingly his duty," said D'Arcy. "He was brutally ill-treated by my minor—"

"It's a lie!" boomed Mr. Selby. "D'Arcy minor had the effrontery to introduce a dog—a ferocious dog—into the Form-room, and when I entered to chastise the brute, he was growling at me. D'Arcy minor seized the dog and ran away with it. I followed—"

"You caught my minor, and lashed him like a brute!" said D'Arcy cuttingly.

"Rubbish!" panted Mr. Selby. "I was severely castigating him—"

"Tut!"

"The person who tapped at the Head's study door did not ask for an invitation to enter. He came in, very humbly. It was Wally D'Arcy, still clashing Pongo."

"D'Arcy minor?" exclaimed the Head.

"What is the meaning of this intrusion?"

"I've come to stick up for old Gass!" said Wally cheerfully. "Selby's not

going to have it all his own way. Don't look so scared, Gassy. I'm here to stand by you."

"Wally, Wally—"

"This is the junior I was punishing, sir!" said Mr. Selby violently. "See, he still has the ferocious brute with him—"

"O-m-m-m-m!" growled Pongo, looking languidly at Mr. Selby.

"The Third Form master backed hastily away."

"I'm here to stick up for my major, sir," said Wally, addressing the Head respectfully. "Mr. Selby was picking into me—"

"Boy!"

"Alone!" cried Wally. "I—I mean, he was hitting me with a brute with the case, when Gassy—I mean, my major—interfered. Then Selby went for him, and then Gassy—I mean, my major—got his back up—I mean, went for Selby—I mean—"

"The faintest semblance of a smile twitched at the corners of Dr. Holmes' mouth, but quickly faded. His face was hard and stern as he regarded Wally.

"You committed a very serious breach of the school rules by bringing an animal into the school premises, D'Arcy minor," said the Head severely. "When Mr. Selby discovered the animal, it was only right and proper for you to surrender it—"

"Mr. Selby whacked Pongo with the case, sir," said Wally steadily. "I'm not going to have old Pongo whacked; I'd rather be whacked myself."

"I struck the innocuous creature in self-defence," gasped Mr. Selby. "The brute was about to spring at me—"

"I have no doubt you acted in a proper manner, Mr. Selby," said Dr. Holmes. "D'Arcy minor, you deserved to be caned most severely. D'Arcy major, your offence by obstructing a teacher in his duty is even more serious."

"Wally, sir, I consider—"

"I can barely credit you with such conduct, D'Arcy major," said Dr. Holmes severely. "You have acted in an insolent manner towards Mr. Selby, thus causing him this unseemly violation of his person. You will kindly apologise to him, D'Arcy."

Arthur Augustus set his teeth hard, and his eyelids glittered.

"I'm sorry, sir," he said. "But, surely the vice, I feel bound not to apologise to Mr. Selby."

"What?"

"I consider that his treatment of my minor and myself has been brutal," said Arthur Augustus. "Therefore, I cannot apologise to Mr. Selby, until he has first apologised to my minor!"

"Bless my soul!"

Mr. Selby stoode forward, trembling with rage.

"The insolent young puppy!" he stammered. "He has no right to criticise me—a Form-master—and to demand that I should apologise to his minor! I shall certainly do nothing of the kind!"

"Very well, Mr. Selby," said D'Arcy quietly. "I refuse to apologise to you until you have atoned yourself!"

The Head compressed his lips tightly, and reached for a cane.

"Hold on your head, D'Arcy!" he said quietly.

Arthur Augustus obediently extended his palm.

"Selby!"

D'Arcy gasped, but quickly recovered himself. That wretch was a stings, but to show signs of pain over a mere scolding before Mr. Selby was certainly, to Gassy's idea, quite dignified. So he nervously himself for the next wretch.

"The other hand, D'Arcy!"

"Selby!"

Gassy's hands were aching and aching, for the Head had laid on the canings with all the force he could muster.

"Swish! Swish!"

The operation was repeated, and then Dr. Holmes laid down the cane.

"Now, D'Arcy," he said very quietly. "You have been punished for your impertinence. You will now have the goodness to apologise to Mr. Selby, and we shall then consider the matter ended."

"I am sorry, sir—"

"D'Arcy, will you obey me?"

"I regret that, under the circumstances, I must refuse to obey you, sir," replied Arthur Augustus unsmilingly. "I consider that Mr. Selby—"

Dr. Holmes' face was hard and stern.

"Do you realise, D'Arcy major, that you are deliberately disobeying your headmaster?" he said.

Arthur Augustus looked deeply distressed.

"But Jove! I'm awfully sorry, sir, that you should think me better, in respect to respect for my headmaster. However, I consider that this is a matter between Mr. Selby and myself. I am not aware I intruded with him, and I should regard it as my painful duty to intercede again if he bullied my minor—"

"D'Arcy!"

"I mean it, sir!" said D'Arcy firmly.

"Alas! how!" roared my minor so brutally, I consider it right and proper for Mr. Selby to apologise to Wally. Until he does, it is impossible for me to say I am sorry for the way he has been treated."

Mr. Selby's face had turned quite green.

"D'Arcy, how dare you take it upon yourself to dictate to your master!" exclaimed Dr. Holmes. "I shall never so much time in words. Unless you apologise to Mr. Selby immediately, I shall have you removed to the punishment-room, and you will remain there until you decide to render Mr. Selby the apology that is due."

Arthur Augustus drew himself up to his full height. Usually, he was the most serene of fellows, and very easy-going. But the Honourable Arthur Augustus D'Arcy had a very strong will of his own, which could be like adamant when D'Arcy desisted. He decided that this was an occasion upon which he must be as firm as a rock.

"Well, D'Arcy!" said the Head, after a pause.

"Very well, sir," said Gassy evenly. "I am quite willing to go to the punishment-room, so long as I can see Mr. Selby as apology. I repeat that it is impossible for me to do so, unless he first apologises to my minor!"

"Gassy, old chap," exclaimed Wally, in pleading tones, "don't get on the high horse, you know! Mr. Selby doesn't apologise to me—I don't want his rotten apologies!"

"An apology is due to you, dear boy," said D'Arcy major gently. "I am going to take the course which I think is right, and uphold the traditions of our family. Let it never be said that a D'Arcy gave in to the will of the oppressor!"

Dr. Holmes made an angry gesture, and rang the page's bell.

"I will take you to your ward, D'Arcy," he said. "You will probably come to your senses after a night of



Mr. Selby saves to a full-stop as Wally D'Arcy's shaggy pet barked upon him. "Gr-err-err-err!" growled Pease. "Good heavens!" exclaimed Mr. Selby, looking sooty hastily. "That dog is going to make an attack upon me!" (See page 6.)

confession in the punishment-room. Ah, Toby! Fetch Mr. Railton, will you!"

Toby, the page, fetched Mr. Railton. The Housemaster looked in amazement at Mr. Selby's whitewashed condition, and at the D'Arcy brothers. His face became troubled when the facts of the matter were laid before him.

"Will you kindly remove this boy to the punishment-room, Mr. Railton?" said the Head, on contention. "No chance must be afforded for his escape."

"Very well, sir," said Mr. Railton. "I suppose there is nothing in D'Arcy's allegation that Mr. Selby was treating his misdeed in an excessively harsh manner?"

"None whatever, sir!" exclaimed Mr. Selby, with asperity. "The two un-suspected young boogymen—"

"Kindly moderate your expressions, Mr. Selby!" said the Head coldly. "Mr. Railton, D'Arcy major may go at once. D'Arcy minor, you will surrender that dog of yours to Teggie, who will have instructions to place it in the kennel, and see that it is kept clean. Mr. Selby, that is all, I think."

Arthur Augustus, his eye gleaming, followed Mr. Railton from the room. He went with his nose held high in the air. Mr. Selby's eyes were gleaming. He was quite satisfied that he would baffle D'Arcy.

Wally D'Arcy was dismissed from the Head's presence, and later, after conversing with Dr. Holmes, Mr. Selby went in quite a good humor.

CHAPTER 3. ON HANG-UPS!

L Jack Blake asked that question anxiously as Arthur Augustus walked into the passage. His cheeks were awaiting him there. Mr. Railton glanced at them, and walked on.

"Yes, wotiah!" said D'Arcy, rubbing his hands. "The Head can't do, so I don't mind so much. But I've not got'to knock wotiah to Mr. Selby. No jash!"

"Where are you going with Railton?" asked Blake. "Is he going to lick you, too?"

"No, dear boy. He's takin' me to the punishment-room. The Head says I'm to be kept there until I apologise to Mr. Selby."

"My hat!" exclaimed Tom Moore.

"I am afraid I shall have to spend the rest of the term in Nobody's Study, dear boys," said D'Arcy. "For I certainly have not the slightest intention of apologising to Mr. Selby."

"Gooey, you frajles an—"

"I wish to be called a frajles an, Blake!"

"Look here, you burbling fainhead, you can't!"

"D'Arcy!" exclaimed Mr. Railton, from the end of the passage. "Are you scolding?"

Arthur Augustus hurried after the Housemaster, and his cheeks looked at one another despondently.

"Gooey's in another scrape!" roared Blake. "When the cheap pets on the high horse there's no restoring with

him, let's come and see him that up!"

And the chorus of the School House followed in the footsteps of Arthur Augustus and Mr. Railton.

Before going to the punishment-room Gooey suggested that he might be allowed to change his address, a request that Mr. Railton good-naturedly conceded.

Then, having changed his white-wash garments, the noble soul of the Fourth followed Mr. Railton to Nobody's Study.

Jack Blake & Co. followed at a distance. Mr. Railton turned the great rusty key in the lock, and threw the door open.

"You must go inside, D'Arcy," he said quietly.

"Very well, sir," said Arthur Augustus; and he stepped into Nobody's Study. The room was cold and bare. He could not repress a shudder as he looked round it.

"D'Arcy!" said the Housemaster gently. "I trust that you will soon think the matter over, and do as Dr. Holmes suggests you. I am sure that he does not desire, as I do not desire, that you should be confined here."

"Thank you very much, Mr. Railton!" said D'Arcy gratefully. "But I assure you, it is quite impossible for me to apologise to Mr. Selby, and under the circumstances I must remain here until that decree is rescinded. If, however, Mr. Selby apologises to my misdeed, I shall regard that as sufficient, and shall then wander like an apology."

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Mr. Wallace looked curiously at the seal of St. Jim's, and when he departed, after locking the door of the punishment-room, there was a troubled look on the Heensmaster's handsome face. Perhaps he could see deeper than Mr. Helms, and realized that D'Arcy, though acting upon an exalted sense of duty, was not wrong in the main.

Arthur Augustus looked round his prison, and shivered.

"Grossness!" he said. "This is jolly rotten! But I'll search this in."

He looked out the grating window, which was guarded by an iron bar. The only view was a door entrance of brick walls.

"Oh dear!" said D'Arcy.

He sat down on the hard bed, and, clasping his hands between his knees, slipped into deep thought.

He did not feel cheerful. Mr. Selby was probably gloating over him, and that thought spurred D'Arcy's determination again. He had let himself called upon to chip in when the Thry-Fern master had been ill-treating his sister, and he was not sorry. He could not apologise to Mr. Selby, unless the master first apologised to Wally.

And, so that did not appear at all likely, Arthur Augustus gloomily realized that his outlook was by no means gay. He would not for a moment think of warping. When the noble Gussy was on his dignity, wild horses would not draw him down.

But he felt that it was incumbent upon him, in some manner, to remedy his position so far as possible.

"Hi! Jove!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus suddenly.

The light of inspiration had entered his eyes, and he gave a chuckle.

"Hi! Jove! What a wipers' ideal!" he murmured. "I'll go on hangar-stroke, as a protest against the unjust imprisonment. The Head will then send me to the 'Stud' in the 'Yan,' which I'll go on hangar-stroke, hi! Jove!"

Arthur Augustus seemed quite elated at the idea. He could rely upon his determination and will-power. D'Arcy paid himself upon his resources. It was his opinion that he could be as firm as a rock; but Helms said he was as obstinate as a mule.

"Hi!"

Arthur Augustus jumped from the bed and approached the door.

"I say, Gussy!"

It was Wally's voice.

"Yess, Wally!"

"You burbling cuckoo!"

"What?"

"Why the thump-don't you get yourself out of this now?" said Wally's voice, in ringing tones. "I don't need Selby's notion apologies! He's an old Tartar, you know! Take my tip, Gussy, and forget all about things. You've been lark!"

"We'll, Wally, I cannot forget Mr. Selby's wipers' behavior! I must stay here—"

"Oh, yes, you do!"

"We'll, Wally—"

"Better give Selby some soft answer, old chap. Don't play the giddy one, you know!" said Wally through the keyhole.

"Wats!" responded his major. "I'm not gone here and scrape to Selby! I would like to see a woman! The Head will have to witness me scotch or lark. I've made up my mind to go on hangar-stroke!"

"Oh, my minded Aunt Jane!" chuckled Wally.

"I mean it, dear boy!" said Arthur Augustus. "I'm gone to witness all my wipers, as a protest! It's the only way to make the Head see wipers!"

"Gussy, you larkheaded mule—"

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Then another voice interposed. It was the voice of Kildare, the captain of St. Jim's.

"Cut off, D'Arcy sailor, you young rascal! Don't let me catch you hanging about here again!"

There was a scuffle outside, and the footstep of D'Arcy's misgiver were heard receding down the passage.

"D'Arcy!" exclaimed Kildare, rapping at the door.

"The Head wishes to know whether you've decided to apologise to Mr. Selby. He told me to inform you that he is very sorry to have to keep you here, and he hopes you have come to your senses. You can be released at once, if you tell Mr. Selby you are sorry."

"We'll, Kildare, it's impos-ible for me to tell Mr. Selby I'm sorry, for I should be telling him 'wipers,' as my Arthur Augustus through the keyhole. "Thank Dr. Helms very much for his consideration, but tell him my mind is made up—and I cannot think of wipers!"

"Better think it over, young 'un," said Kildare, in tones of concern. "Dr. Selby had been to doctery the Head, you know."

"I have no desire to disobey the Head, but, under the circumstances, I am bound to do so," said Arthur Augustus distastefully.

"I swear Dr. Helms will not misrepresent my conduct. I can't back out, Kildare, dear boy."

"You'll wait differently in the morning, you promise me!" said Kildare.

"Well, if you wish to come out, you must step down. I'll bring you in some tea."

"You need not, Kildare," said D'Arcy through the keyhole. "I wish to have my tea!"

"Why, you young idiot!"

"You on hangar-stroke, you see."

"I mean it, Kildare. I'm gone to witness all my wipers until I am unconditionally witness from this wipers. It's the only way to protest, you know."

"You reckless young 'un!" bawled Kildare. "Do you think you'll frighten the Head by refusing your food?"

"I hope to make Dr. Helms witness that I'm 'wipers' under a sense of justice and misanthropism!" Kildare replied the prisoner in Nobody's Study.

"You'll make yourself ill if you don't eat your grub."

"Probably, dear boy. That waste with the Head and Mr. Selby."

"But—but it will be your own fault."

"I shall regard myself as a martyr in the cause of justice and humanity," replied Arthur Augustus, with dignity.

"Pshaw! Don't try and persuade me to stich my mind, Kildare. I'm as firm as a rock, you know."

Kildare looked helplessly at the door and then walked away. It was no use arguing with the seal of St. Jim's. The stalwart Scotch-Ferrier was of the opinion that D'Arcy's views would change after a night spent in solitary confinement in the punishment-room.

He went straight to the Head's study and acquainted Dr. Helms of D'Arcy's determination. Dr. Helms leited his brows with anger when he heard.

"The impertinent young rascal!" Kildare, without Toby's take D'Arcy's sense of justice and broad-and-better. I will see D'Arcy in the morning."

Toby, the page, was despatched to the punishment-room with a tray upon which was a plate of bread-and-butter and a cup of cocoa. Kildare opened the door, and the tray sat set down on the table.

Kildare did not utter a word. He looked hard at the prisoner of St. Jim's, and then followed Toby from the room and locked the door.

As the captain of St. Jim's went down the passage with the key in his hand, Tom Helms & Co. came along. They stopped when they saw Kildare blocking their path.

"You kids must keep away from the punishment-room," said Kildare curtly. "It's against rules to speak to a boy detained there. Mind, I shall report any boy I find speaking to D'Arcy. I must go my wily."

Tom Helms & Co. looked at one another dubiously and turned back.

"I say, Kildare," said Binks crossly. "I hear from young Wally that Gussy has gone on hangar-stroke. Is that right?"

"The young idiot says so," replied Kildare gruffly. "He's just had some grub taken in to him. If he doesn't take it, he'll be in trouble in the morning."

Tom Helms & Co. went into Study No. 10 in the Shell passage to discuss the state of affairs. They were really concerned with Arthur Augustus.

"Poor old Gussy!" said Morry Lowther. "He's got his back up, and no mistake! I wonder if he really means to go on hangar-stroke!"

Binks grunted.

"He's as obstinate as a mule," he said. "The man would carve himself rather than give in, if he's made his mind up! He's a burbling cheap, of course, but—"

But Selby was really in the wrong, you know!"

He's got his temper when he's picked into Wally. Selby's a brute!"

"Binks, hear!" exclaimed the others heartily.

"And Gussy's on the high horse," said Binks gloomily. "He won't apologise to Selby, and if he's on hangar-stroke, that means that he won't touch grub until the Head lets him out of the punishment-room. Goodness knows how long it's all going to end!"

And the chance of the School House studied down to a gloomy one. Tom Helms & Co. could not be happy under the circumstances. They wondered vaguely what would come of Gussy's hangar-stroke.

CHAPTER 4.

No Surrender!

M R. HAILTON imposed the door of the punishment-room next morning and entered.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy was sitting on the edge of his bed, arranging his tie by means of a pocket mirror. The seal of St. Jim's was fully dressed, and immaculate as usual.

Mr. Hailton glanced hard at D'Arcy's face, and saw that it was a little pale. Observe, he was as placid and serene as ever.

"Good-morning, Mr. Wallace!" said Arthur Augustus, placing the mirror in his pocket and rising.

"Good-morning, D'Arcy! Ah, I see you have not had the food sent up to you yesterday evening."

"No, without not!"

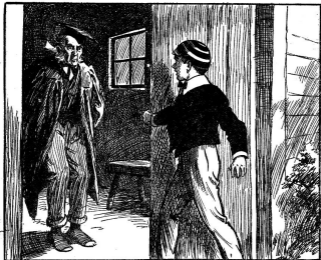
The tray stood where Toby had placed it on the table the evening before. The cocoa was cold, the bread-and-butter hard and dry.

"My dear boy," said the Heensmaster, in deep divines, "do you not anticipate the fruits of your folly? If you refuse to partake of food, you will become ill, and you will have nobody to blame but yourself. Surely an apology to Mr. Selby is far preferable to—"

"I prefer to go hungry, sir, rather than bow down to Mr. Selby," said Arthur Augustus respectfully, but firmly.

"I have been used, and I regard that punishment as quite wipers."

"But, dear D'Arcy, you do not imagine you can intimidate the Head into releasing you—"



Wally soon opened the door. He gave an inward chuckle when he saw Mr. Selby standing in his shoes, his hands tied behind him. "D'Arcy miser, will you untie me and get my boots from the school?" he asked. "Yes, sir; but on one condition, sir!" said the scamp of the Third. (See page 10.)

"Pray allow me to smash you, Mr. Bailton, that I have no intention of indulging the Head. I trust he will not think me lacking in respect for my headmaster. But I feel bound to protest against my imprisonment here, and I am glad to hear of a way to let Dr. Holmes see that I am in earnest, and that I regard myself as being in the right, and Mr. Selby is the wrong!"

Mr. Bailton laid a hand upon the Fourth-Fourth's arm, and looked him steadily in the face.

"D'Arcy, I beseech you, do not act in so reckless a manner. You do harm to yourself by refusing food. It is now time for breakfast, and I will instruct the page to bring you some food—"

"Thank you, sir," said D'Arcy very quietly, but in determined tones. "But I cannot eat any food until I am released from here. It will be hardly necessary, therefore, to instruct Toby to bring up my breakfast. I am as firm as a rock!"

"My dear boy—"

"Pray do not try to persuade me, sir. I repeat that I am as firm as a rock!"

Mr. Bailton looked despairingly at the wail of the Fourth, and retired.

A little later he returned with Toby, who was bearing another tray. Upon this rested a dish of fried bacon and eggs, which looked very appetizing indeed, some bread-and-butter, some-

lace, and a pot of coffee, with cup and saucer, milk, and sugar.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy looked hungrily at the tray, and then turned his face away.

"Here is your breakfast, D'Arcy," said Mr. Bailton sternly. "Make a hearty meal, and thank matters out afterwards. I am sure you will then realize how foolish you are to resist the Head's orders. He has no desire to punish you."

"Yes are very kind, sir," said D'Arcy quietly. "But I feel bound to refuse this food, Toby, dash boy, please take it away."

"Leave it here, Toby, and take the other tray away!" said Mr. Bailton softly. "D'Arcy, I will leave you here with this food. As you have had nothing since yesterday dinner-time, no doubt the passage of hunger will help you to overcome your obstinacy. You are, in my opinion, a very foolish boy, D'Arcy!"

"Woolly, sir—"

But Mr. Bailton was gone. The key grated in the lock, and the wail of St. Jim's was left alone in his prison.

The smell of the eggs and bacon and coffee filled the dreary room with a warm, appetizing glow.

Arthur Augustus cast longing looks at the food before him, but his iron will would not waver.

"Oh, it's wretched!" murmured the wail of St. Jim's, going out of the

dirty window. "Woolly here's wretched! I'm foolishly hungry, but it is my duty not to touch any grub. I am as firm as a rock!"

The lonely prisoner turned away from the window, and, in order to pass the breakfast as much out of temptation's way as possible, he picked up the tray and placed it under the bed.

Then he sat down on the bed, and relaxed into reverie.

He was awakened from his reverie by the entrance of Toby, who had come to make the bed. Knock of the South was careful to see that the prisoner did not escape. But D'Arcy was not thinking of bolting. He knew the passage was guarded.

Toby made the bed, and, of course, discovered the tray underneath.

"Take it away, Toby," said Arthur Augustus firmly. "I have no intention of eating it!"

"Oh, Master D'Arcy!" murmured Toby.

Then the school page slipped his pocket, and drew forth an envelope. This he handed to D'Arcy—only just in time, for Knock's sour face appeared at the doorway.

"Back up, young layabouts!" he rapped. "Don't you take that tray away! Leave it on the table!"

Toby hesitated, then he laid the tray down on the table.

THE GEM LIBRARY—No. 662.

Knorr leaped exultingly at Arthur Augustus.

"In a peevy froo pickle—what!" he chuckled. "You'll have your back bent yet, you little creep!"

"Goody, Knorr, I wogged yeech woschky as doodidly impovvment!" said the woad of St. Jim's, his eyes glancing. "I may woschky yeech froo from vier—d'woschky me!"

Knorr pushed back his cuffs, and advanced into the room; but when he saw Arthur Augustus also push back his cuffs, and stand his ground fearlessly, he turned back.

"You'll suffer for your cheek!" he snapped. "If I had my way, I'd have you scolded!"

"Knorr slammed the door after Toby had departed, and locked it.

"The woad!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus.

Then he remembered the letter Toby had secretly conveyed to him. He took it from his pocket, and opened it.

The enclosed message was in Jack Blake's handwriting, and read thus:

"Dear Gussy,—We haven't had a chance to get near the door to speak to you—Sally and Knorr hang about like mice. You're a silly duffer to go on hangings—no all my say. For goodness' sake eat your grub, or you'll hole away to a shadow. Selby's not worth all that trouble. Cheers.—Your pal, JACK BLAKE."

"Bei Jove!" said Gussy. "It's very good of Blake, but I woggedidly his remark that I'm a silly duffer. I'm perfectly in the right, but Jove!"

The bell for dinner went, and Arthur Augustus snatched hastily when he realized that all his chums were going into the Form-rooms for lessons, which he was harranging in solitude in the parish-room.

The pangs of hunger gnawed at him, but the Fourth Form junior studiously resisted the temptation to eat.

Arthur Augustus went over to the window again, and stared moodily forth. He gave a start of surprise when he caught sight of Wally. The Third-Former waved his hand cheerfully, and grinned.

"Good heavens!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus. "The young woad! ought to be in his Form-rooms. I wonder what he intends doing!"

Wally had snuffed away, and Arthur Augustus was left to his own wondering thoughts. Certainly Knorr ought then to have been at lessons with Mr. Selby. The bell had rung ten minutes ago. Surely Wally was not playing truant!

A shrill whistle from below caused Arthur Augustus to look down again. Wally had a tall ladder with him, evidently borrowed from Tagger's lodge, and a bundle.

Wally placed the ladder against the wall until the top reached just below the eaves-end of the parish-room. Then Wally began to mount, carrying the parcel with him.

"Bei Jove!" gasped Arthur Augustus. "The woad's young bossard!"

"Coming, Gussy!" called Wally, from the ladder.

Arthur Augustus dragged his bed towards the window, stood upon it, and crossed the window. The iron bar across the outside prevented him slipping through.

"Wally, you young ass!" he exclaimed.

"Why aren't you in the Form-rooms?"

"Selby locked me for checking looked pellets at Curly Gibson," said Wally.

"After the fourth check, I proceeded to Dave, and, when Selby brought me round, he was as frightened that he

Tot Gets Linnar.—No. 583.

crossed me. Properly took in the old round-dick!"

"Has Jove! You'll get into a fearful row, you little bossard, if he catches you!"

Wally chuckled.

"I don't care for Selby!" he said.

"He can go and eat coke! I've brought you some grub, Gussy!"

"I'm afraid I cannot eat it, dash boy."

"Now, look here, Gus—" began Wally, glowering up at his major.

"My principles won't allow me to take any grub, dash boy," said Arthur Augustus severely. "I'm on keepish-stroke, you know."

"Oh, you bilthaveer! You've had no grub since dinner yesterday, have you?"

"No, dash boy."

"Then for goodness' sake eat some of this, Gussy!" implored Wally. "There's a rabbit-ear, a cake, some ham and wichen, a bag of tart, some chocolate, and—"

"Don't tell me, dash boy!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus hastily. "I woadly cannot accept them, Wally. It would be contrary to my resolutions, you know."

"But, Gussy, you'll be ill!" gasped Wally, in great concern. "How the blazes can you exist without grub?"

"I'll have to give it sooner or later!"

"Wathch out, dash boy!" said Arthur Augustus, with spirit. "I should wogged it as my duty to hold out to the last!"

"You can't stay here for ever, Gussy!" grieved Wally.

"I should prefer to stay here for ever, wathch that apologise to Selby, when I wogged with atch contempt. I woudidly that he woudidly (I-woud) you, Wally, and that an apology is due from him to you first."

"Oh, I'm woady you've got into this average, Gus, and you can rely on me to stand by you. But you're as obstinate as a mule, you know!"

"Woadly, Wally—"

"Don't jaw, Gussy. Here's the grub. Can you reach it?"

"Yes, dash boy," said Arthur Augustus calmly. "But I'm not gone!"

"Gussy, old man, don't be a chump and—"

"I wofere to be a chump—I woad—"

"Good heavens!"

The sharp, epistolical voice of Mr. Selby broke upon their ears. Wally almost fell off the ladder when, looking down, he beheld his Form-master glaring up at him.

CHAPTER 5.

Mr. Selby Goes "Up in the Air!"

"Oh crumbs!" ejaculated Wally.

Arthur Augustus gave vent to an exclamation of dismay.

"Wally, dash boy, you'll get into a fearful row!"

Wally of the Third set his teeth hard.

"D'Arry intrer," cried Mr. Selby, "come down this instant! You have graded lessons this morning by means of falsehood and subterfuge! You depraved little rascal, come down here immediately!"

"Rats!" responded Wally.

Mr. Selby almost roared.

"D'Arry intrer, I woudidly you—"

"You exceeded me lessons this morning, sir," called back Wally defiantly.

"Leave me alone! I want to speak to my major. It's all your fault that he's in this room!"

"Wally, dash boy—" exclaimed Arthur Augustus, from behind the iron bars.

"I don't care!" said Wally recklessly.

"Here, Gussy, take this grub!"

"D'Arry intrer, you insolent young woad-dick!" shrieked Mr. Selby, almost dancing with rage. "Come down! Do you hear me?"

Wally bowed Mr. Selby, but he did not budge.

"You will!" said Mr. Selby, between his teeth. "I will climb up and fetch you!"

"My only Aunt Jane!" ejaculated Wally, as Mr. Selby, seeing his action to be void, commenced to climb the ladder.

The hero of the Third looked apologetically at his major as the parish-room window, and thrust the handle of the lock upward. For Arthur Augustus, with a white, anxious face, refused it.

Wally dropped the parcel, and it landed on the quadrangle below.

Mr. Selby was half-way up the ladder.

"Oh crumbs!" gasped Wally. "Look here, sir—"

"As you have disobeyed my order to come down, you're come to fetch you!" gasped Mr. Selby, between his teeth.

Wally waited until the Form-master had almost reached him; then, grasping the side of the ladder with one hand, he sprung himself over, and underneath.

Then he commenced to climb down swiftly, underneath the ladder.

Mr. Selby, almost at the top of the ladder, looked in amazement, and blinked down quite stupidly to see the Third-Former climbing down beneath him.

Wally looked up and chuckled. Then, as Mr. Selby's curiosity commenced to climb down backwards, a new idea occurred to the young scamp of the Third.

The ladder was rather so old, and several of the rungs were loose.

Wally had been so recently from his pocket, and as he climbed down he looked at the rungs. Mr. Selby, making clumsy efforts to get down, did not perceive what Wally was doing.

By the time Wally reached the bottom of the ladder he had wrenched six rungs from their places, thus leaving a long gap between Mr. Selby and the ground.

Mr. Selby, when he reached the last rung, and found he was dangling into space, glared down in amazement.

"Good heavens!" he exclaimed, seeing that he could not get down any further.

"He, ha, ha!" chuckled Wally.

"Rotten ladder, sir, isn't it? What a nuisance, those rungs coming out just when you want to get down!"

"You young rascal!" roared Mr. Selby, clutching the ladder very tightly. "This is a trick—an atrocious trick! How can I get down?"

"Dunno, sir!" replied Wally cheerfully.

"If I were you, I'd slide down!"

Mr. Selby blinked apprehensively downward, but did not attempt to slide down. He was not an athletic gentleman, and he was afraid of a rusty trap.

"D'Arry intrer," exclaimed Mr. Selby, trembling with rage, "you shall be most severely punished for this! How can I fetch another ladder, boy?"

Wally D'Arry did not wince.

From the barred window above, the second face of Arthur Augustus looked down. The prisoner in Nobody's Study trembled for the fate of his minor.

"Help!" shrieked Mr. Selby, raising his voice on high. "Help, help!"

"Oh crumbs!" exclaimed Wally.

The general figure of Dr. Holborn had come from the School House. The Head gazed at the scene before him in horror, and made haste over the door.

The sight of Mr. Selby, a prisoner up the ladder, astounded him.

"Bless my soul!" he exclaimed. "Mr. Selby—"

"I have been made a prisoner up here by that misbegotten little rascal!" roared Mr. Selby, trembling with rage. "The

"The

escaped from the Farm-house under the pretext of being ill, and came here to communicate with his major. Being suspicious, I came out of the Farm-house to see whom he was, and eventually discovered him here—resting upon this ladder, speaking to his major. He refused to come down, so I climbed up after him. Then the reckless young miscreant dived down the underside of the ladder, and—and I believe he crossed those rumpo percepts!"

"Good heavens!" exclaimed the Head, trembling with a thousand fears, towards Wally. "Is it possible, D'Arcy minor, that you are guilty of such misconduct?"

"I wanted to speak to my major, sir," replied Wally stoutly. "The boarding-school won't eat grub, so I thought I might persuade him to eat some if I took it to him. There's the parcel of tuck on the ground."

"D'Arcy minor, your disregard of discipline is amazing!" exclaimed Dr. Haines sagely. "You must be taught that the rules of this school cannot be flouted in this manner. Kindly confine those rumpo in the ladder, so that Mr. Selby can descend!"

Wally did so, not daring, of course, to disobey the Head's demand.

Mr. Selby gingerly climbed down, and at last reached solid earth.

"Come with me, D'Arcy minor!" said the Head gravely. "I will see that he is sufficiently punished, Mr. Selby. This food will be reconstituted!"

"Very well, sir!" grated Mr. Selby, and he switched away, in a raging temper.

Wally D'Arcy followed the Head indoors, and turned to wave a hand cheerfully to his major.

"But Jove!" exclaimed that youth, in deep distress, as he watched Wally disappear into the School House with Dr. Haines. "What evil will happen to Wally now? The young bounder! He's in for a fearful row now! But Jove!"

And Arthur Augustus sat down on his bed, and spent the rest of that morning in gloomy, hungry, sleep.

CHAPTER 6.

Fecible Feeding!

AFTER lessons that morning, Tom Merry & Co. were assembled in Study No. 10 in the Hall just over the headquarters of the Terrible Three.

The chairs of the School House were looking gloomy and glum. Their thoughts were with the lonely janitor crouched in Nobody's Study. It was not only the fact of Gussy being shut up here; that was the worse evil. But the prisoner's longings were what carried them almost to distraction. They knew that Arthur Augustus D'Arcy would not waver one jot from his deter-

mination. Would the Head give way? they wondered. That seemed hardly possible.

"Oh, this is too awful for words!" grunted Blake. "Gussy has had nothing to eat since dinner yesterday, and it's almost time for dinner to-day! Twenty-four hours without grub! The poor chap will be ill by to-night! Goodness knows how long he'll keep it up! He's as jolly obtusinate!"

"Young Wally tried to persuade him to eat this morning," said Jimmy Lewis. "Selby was looking marvellous when I saw him last now."

The chairs of the School House groined loudly. They had heard all about Mr. Selby's adventures as the leader that morning.

"Wally had the licking of his life!" said Tom Merry. "I saw him in the yard a little while ago. He was wriggling like an eel!"

"Gerves the young beggar right!" grunted Blake. "If he was my tailor I'd skin him!"

"Tap!"

"Oh, come in, fathered!" cried Tom Merry.

The door opened, and Mr. Ralston walked in. Tom Merry & Co. gaped with dismay when they saw the House-master.

"That is hardly a polite way to invite a visitor into your study, Merry!" said Mr. Ralston tartly.

"I'm so sorry, sir!" exclaimed Tom, going red. "I had no idea it was you."

"Very well, Merry," said Mr. Ralston, his face clearing. "I hate come to ask you boys whether you would care to—er—persuade D'Arcy to take his food. He has just refused his dinner, and his breakfast is still untouched. Perhaps, as you are chesses of his, you might be able to reconstitute with him. It's a very foolish youth."

Tom Merry & Co. jumped up gladly.

"Yes, father, sir!" exclaimed Tom Merry. "We'll do our best to knock some of the obtusinate out of the chump! How many of us may go, sir?"

"You, Merry, and Blake and Herries and Digby I consider will be sufficient," replied Mr. Ralston. "Come along with me at once, my lads!"

Tom Merry and Blake, Herries and Digby followed Mr. Ralston with alacrity.

Keas was mounting guard at the end of the passage where the post-herb-rooms was situated. He scowled at the intruders as they gained into the room with Mr. Ralston.

Arthur Augustus was sitting on his bed when Tom Merry & Co. came in. He jumped up, and regarded them with evident surprise.

"Hallo, Gray!" exclaimed Blake,

making a marvellous effort to be cheerful. "We've come to help you eat your dinner, you know?"

"But Jove!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus, adjusting his rumpo. "You write me, Blake. I have already refused to eat my dinner. It is against my principle, you know. I'm on high-spirits!"

"Oh, you blithering ass!" exclaimed Blake, careless of what Mr. Ralston thought of his slang. "Can't you see how lousy you are? Now, Gussy, he's sensible, and don't play the gloomy come!"

"I refuse to have my conduct regarded as playful the piddo on, Blake!" replied Arthur Augustus firmly. "My misapprehension in both is utterly unjustified, and—"

"But you can't live without grub, you chump!" shrieked Blake.

"Wally, Blake—"

"Have your dinner, Gussy, there's a sensible chap!" urged Tom Merry. "You won't do any good by hegg-er-striking!"

"On the contrary, Tom Merry, I hope to be released!" said D'Arcy, with acquiescence. "I had kindled to refuse my grub. Please take it away, dear boys. An appetizing-looking dinner was on the table. Blake glanced at it and picked it up. The dinner consisted of beefsteak-pudding, peas, and potatoes, with apple-chumping to follow.

"Look, Gussy!" said Blake, holding out the tray temptingly. "Surely you can't refuse this! Pile it, old chap! You must be hungry!"

Arthur Augustus turned away, biting his lip hard.

"Take it away, Blake!" he gasped.

"Gussy!" murmured Tom Merry per-emptorily.

"Have a good feed, Gussy!" said Herries.

"Nothing like a good dinner to knock you up, old chap!" urged Robert Arthur Digby.

"I don't want a death boy!"

Jack Blake glanced at Tom Merry and the others.

"He's obtusinate!" he said. "We must cure him of his obtusinate. If he won't eat his grub, we'll have to make him eat it! Hold his blessed nose, and cram it down his neck!"

"Good idea!" exclaimed Tom Merry enthusiastically.

Arthur Augustus turned pale.

"But Jove!" he exclaimed. "Look here, you frightful lunatics! I refuse to be forcibly fed! I shall come to regard you as thieves if you attempt such a thing!"

"Nab him!" said Blake.

Mr. Ralston stood in the doorway, and did not interfere as Tom Merry & Co. gossiped Arthur Augustus D'Arcy and bore him backward on the bed.

"Yavvoooh!" roared D'Arcy, struggling. "Where are you horrid bounders! Gvooough! Oo!"

"I've got his room, Tommy!" said Jack Blake. "That's right, Dick and Herries—hold his arms and legs! Now, Tommy, give him the grub!"

"What-to?" chuckled the captain of the "Shell."

He cut off a piece of beefsteak-pudding, and held it out on a tack. Arthur Augustus writhed and wriggled furiously, and set his teeth.

Tom simply retrained the pudding into his mouth.

"Gvooough! Oh wumba! You wumba! Yavvoooh!" spluttered Arthur Augustus.

"Swallow it!" roared Blake.

"Gvooough!"

The St. Jim's lounge-sticker had no

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choice in the matter. The first morsel of breakfast-pudding went down, and Tom Merry & Co. nodded.

Their coats of laughter changed to roars of dismay, however, when, all of a sudden the bed gave way, and Arthur Augustus fell out of their grasp.

Crash!

"Victory!" roared Herries, as the end of the bed lunged forward and cannoned into his chest. "What the sneaky diabol—"

"The rotten bed's done!" roared Blake.

The bed in the punishment-room was an old one, and the struggles of D'Arcy upon it had caused the framework to give way.

The St. Jim's larger-sticker, that released, was up in a trice, grasping a bolster.

"You howld' bouzards!" he gasped, striding in the centre of his wrecked bed. "The first who attempts to wrench me I shall smother, but Jove!"

"Oh crumbs!"

Tom Merry had dropped the breakfast-pudding and the apple-dumpling. Fortunately, these articles were not spoiled. The chums of the School House stood back, and regarded their warlike school-fellow in consternation.

Arthur Augustus, his eyes gleaming, held the bolster aloft.

Jack Blake made a dart towards him, but fell back when the bolster thrashed upon his head. Digby, who followed up the assault, cooed with pain as the bolster whirled round upon him and sent him crashing upon the iron rail of the bed.

"That! Whark! Wallap!"

Tom Merry & Co. attacked Gussy in force, but he evaded away energetically with the bolster, and beat them back.

"Gug, chug, clug!"

"There goes the dinner gong!" exclaimed Mr. Railton, hastily re-arranging. "Dogs, please desist, and go down to your dinners. I shall have to find other means of dealing with this foolish youth!"

"You see?"

"Oh crumbs!"

"Oh, my head!"

Tom Merry, Blake, Herries, and Digby presented a battered and dishevelled aspect as they withdrew from the bedside, at Mr. Railton's command.

"Victory, but Jove!" chuckled Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, whose face, pale before, was now flushed. "It's no use trying to feed me, dear boys. I am as firm as a rock!"

"You blithering ass!"

"You dander-headed jabberwock!"

"Dear me! Boys, please go!" exclaimed Mr. Railton hastily, as Tom Merry & Co. thus delivered their opinions of the hunger-stricken. "The dinner bell has ceased to ring. Go down to your dinner at once!"

Tom Merry & Co. retired, darting aggressive glances at Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

Mr. Railton set the dinner upon the table, and also went, locking the door behind him.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy checked with victory, ignored the food, and commenced to reassemble his wrecked bed.

CHAPTER V.

Ways and Means!

"SOMETHING'S got to be done!" Thus Jack Blake, after tea that day.

Tom Merry, Manners, Louthan, Digby, and Herries agreed that something certainly ought to be done.

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"The silly ass has gone all day without anything to eat!" said Blake, almost breathless. "I heard from Kikara that Gussy has refused his tea, and that he looks quite ill. How the poor chap must be suffering!"

"Oh, it's rotten!"

Those figures loomed up in the dusk of the quadrangle. They were Figgins, Karkid Wynn, of the New House.

"Hello, you chaps do look black!" remarked Figgins. "How's Gussy?"

"Starving!" said Blake shortly.

The heroes of the New House looked extremely sympathetic.

"Jolly anxious affair, you chaps," said Figgins. "Gussy can't last long on air, you know."

"The poor chap must be going through it," remarked Karkid quietly.

"Yes, he must be," he said feelingly. "How on earth D'Arcy does it, I don't know. When did he last have a meal, Blake?"

"Yesterday dinner-time," replied Blake.

"Oh, my hat!" gasped the Falstaff of St. Jim's in horror. "And it's tea-time to-day! Oh, my hat!"

Fatty Wynn shuddered at the bare thought of undergoing that ordeal himself.

"The question is," said Tom Merry, "how are we to get Gussy out of his scrape? The Head won't give us—nobody can expect him to, hardly, and Gussy is so obstinate that he'd rather die than give in."

"The silly chump!"

Wally D'Arcy walked up and joined them. Wally was looking considerably worried.

"Gussy's still on the high seas," he said. "I say, you chaps, we've got to get old Gussy out of this. We mustn't let him stay in Nobody's Study any longer. I shall have my brother left by the end of the week."

"You ought to be in there instead of him!" growled Blake.

Wally gave a snort.

"Why couldn't the Head let me instead of wasting Guss to apologise to Selby?" he exclaimed. "I've just been to the Head and offered to have a flogging on condition that Gussy is released, but he said that Gussy had injured Selby, and could give no apology, and if he refused he must take the consequences, and that the discipline of the school must be upheld, and all that tawdry set, Gussy's an ass, but he's a good one, and he means well, and I'm going to stand by him. I'm not going to leave my major stranded. Somehow I'm going to get Gussy out of that rotten prison."

"You'll never do it, kid!" said Tom Merry. "Blessed if I know how this will end. Gussy would howl down, then."

"But how the merry thunder am I to get Selby to apologise to me!" demanded Wally. "He hates me as much as I hate him."

Suddenly Mooty Louthan gave a chuckle. That chuckle developed into a roar of mirth. Mooty's companions turned to him with glances.

"What are you laughing at, Louthan?" demanded Blake angrily. "This is no laughing matter!"

"No; but we'll make it!" checked the barometer of the Head. "I've got an idea, chaps. It's risky, but it might work."

"What is it?" demanded many eager voices.

"We'll shove old Selby to-night," said Mooty Louthan softly. "He takes a walk round the quad every evening—a constitutional, you know, well, so-

nigh he's going to see old Gussy in the quad. Now, what would Selby do if he saw Gussy scotching out of gates? Chase him—"

"But how the diabol will Selby spot Gussy scotching out of gates?" inquired Blake. "Gussy's in Nobody's Study, and there's no direct chance of getting him out."

"It won't really be Gussy," explained Mooty Louthan sweetly. "Selby will see a second edition of Gussy—old Kerr dressed up!"

"What's at it?"

"Me!" gasped George Kerr. "Yes, you old chap," said Mooty. "You've incapacitated old Gussy before, haven't you? Well, you could do it to-night. It will be as easy as rolling off a fume, is the deek. Selby would chase you, and you'd lead him into Holyoake Woods, and disappear. Then Selby will be attacked by masked raffians, who will pinch his boots and lock him up in the old woodman's hut. Those raffians will be myself and Tansy in disguise."

"My hat!" gasped Tom Merry.

"Then, while Selby is in the woodman's hut, seize his boots, and enable to get back to St. Jim's, young Wally will happen along, as if by accident, and discover Selby there. Selby will ask Wally to run back and fetch him some boots, of course. Then Wally will ask Selby to apologise to him first in exchange for that small service. You know how feckly Selby is of catching cold! He'd do anything, I reckon, rather than stay in the woodman's hut all right. He'd apologise to Wally, and then everything is the garden would be lovely!"

Tom Merry & Co. drew deep breaths. They looked at Mooty Louthan in deep admiration.

"My only Aunt Jane!" ejaculated Wally D'Arcy. "What a scheme! We can do it!"

"Yes, indeed!" said Tom Merry enthusiastically. "Are you game to incapacitate Gussy for this evening, Kerr, old chap?"

"Rely on me!" chuckled Kerr, the amateur actor of St. Jim's. "I'll woot the giddy oracle! It's a good idea, Mooty."

The hero of Tom Merry & Co. and Wally D'Arcy hid behind considerably.

"What lack of it works!" exclaimed Figgins. "Gussy will apologise to Selby, of course. We needn't tell him how we worked it, though."

"No fear!"

"I say, you fellows," said Fatty Wynn eagerly. "Gussy will be deeply receptive when he does come out of the punishment-room. Let's slip a wig round and stand him a stanning feed this evening—"

"Hs, ha, ha!"

"Good old Fatty!"

The chums of St. Jim's whipped round lively, and Fatty was entrusted with the task of preparing a feed for the hunger-stricken when he was released that evening, as they were quite confident he would be.

And they set to work on the arrangements for duping Mr. Selby.

CHAPTER 6.

The Jape on Selby!

"GOODNESS gracious!" ejaculated Mr. Selby, halting in amazement.

He was taking his evening "constitutional" round the quadrangle, a little later, when the evening shadows had fallen over St. Jim's.

Mr. Selby sniffed with indignation, and his physician had prescribed this daily exercise as a means of combating that disconcerting complaint. The master of the Third Form, in walking

roared by the children, had caught sight of a figure lurking there that caused his eyes to open wide.

"Goodness gracious!" ejaculated Mr. Selby again, peering at the elegantly-dressed junior hiding in the shadows. "D'Arcy's major! Can it be possible that he has escaped?" Mr. Selby stopped.

The object of Mr. Selby's attention jumped out into the moonlight, as though frightened. A musketeer glittered in his eyes, and there was no possible doubt, in Mr. Selby's mind, that this was Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, of the Fourth, who had somehow succeeded in escaping from the punishment-rooms.

"Good heavens! The young scoundrel! D'Arcy, come here at once!"

But "D'Arcy" did not obey that order. Instead, he turned and strooked across the quadrangle towards the woodshed.

"Stop!" screamed Mr. Selby, dashing off in pursuit. "Do you hear me, D'Arcy! Stop!"

"Get out of my way, you wretch!" was the reply, in the unmistakable aristocratic tones of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

Mr. Selby simply tore along. It seemed him to madness to think that D'Arcy had escaped from detention in the punishment-rooms. The larger D'Arcy resumed three before apologizing to him, the better Mr. Selby liked it. He was furious at the thought of being deprived of his prey.

"Stop!" he shrieked. "D'Arcy, I command you to stop!"

But the disguised Kerr did not stop. He dashed away at top speed, with Mr. Selby in full pursuit.

Kerr was a good runner. Let Mr. Selby continue to see what he was capable of, and he would have been making for the side gate. He was, however, careful that Mr. Selby should keep easy trace of him.

Kerr chuckled at, dashing through the gate into the Rylcombe Lane, he heard Mr. Selby pursuing and puffing along laboriously behind him.

"The grandest work of St. Jim's made for the Rylcombe woods."

Mr. Selby, puffing and blowing like a pair of very old bellows, followed at top speed.

Once within the shadows of the Rylcombe woods, George Kerr slackened his pace. He could hear Mr. Selby crashing through the trees after him.

"Hallo, Kerr!"

It was Tom Merry's voice, in an undertone, coming from behind a clump of bushes. But the figure who stopped did not do at all resemble the captain of the Shell. His appearance was more that of a particularly ruffianly footpad. The person who followed looked even more sooty, villainous, and disreputable. He greeted Kerr in a cheery voice, which was quite unlike that of Mosey Lotherer's.

"Worked it, Kerr?"

"Like a charm!" chuckled the peevish wren of the Fourth. "Selby's after me like a cat after a mouse! Hark! Here he comes!"

"Oh, good!" said Tom Merry. "Now to work the footpad act! This is where you disappear, Kerr!"

"Hah-ho!"

assume you I was not spying upon you! I am chasing a respectable pupil of mine, and—"

"How, how, how!" guffawed the other footpad. "Look at the old bird."

"Erbert!" Try to stuff in your own nose, you old fool! No, mate, you've had enough of your interference. I'm not going to let you get me somewhere where 'a can't spy on us."

"Erbert!"

"Watch!" chuckled. "Ehbert."

"Into the woodman's 'at air 'em, 'Arry!"

"Release me!" shrieked Mr. Selby, struggling desperately. "I promise will not act as informer upon you! I am merely chasing a runaway schoolboy."

He will shade me if you do not release me immediately! Let me go!"

"No fear!" said "Erbert." "Rush 'em away, 'Arry, and if 'e shoots, stuff that old 'obby of yours into 'is mouth!"

Mr. Selby shuddered at the horrid thought, and was hoisted away, struggling and protesting.

The woodman's hat was pushed, and into this the two "footpads" dragged the luckless Third Form master. Mr. Selby was almost frantic.

"Help!" he yelled. "Help!"

"Have, have, have!" laughed "Arry" decisively. "You can 'ell 'ill you've been in the hole, old bird, but you won't make no 'obby 'or you—not till morning, at any rate. Fiddle air's no 'ond of 'omely in these 'ere woods late of night, unless they be poachers like us—no!"

"You microcants, release me!" panted Mr. Selby. "I will not give information to the police about you—"

"Yes, we trust you—I don't think!" sneered "Erbert," dragging at Mr. Selby's arm. "You see, 'eck! That's right, 'eck! That's right, 'erry! Good! We'll trust 'em up!"

Mr. Selby struggled and protested violently, but to no purpose. His arms were bound behind him, and he was clamped down in a corner of the woodshed. Then, in order to make his escape more difficult, "Arry" and "Erbert" also removed Mr. Selby's boots, and walked away with them.

"You'll be layed in the morning, old dear!" chuckled "Arry," as he and his ruffianly companion departed. "Don't 'old like that 'ere. Bursly you don't mind spendin' the night in this little woodshed 'at! No, mate, nobody will find you this side of an o'clock tomorrow evening!"

As the woodshed door rattled to, and the rusty key was turned in the old padlock, Mr. Selby struggled to his feet.

"Oh, my goodness!" he roared, wrenching fruitlessly at the bonds upon his hands. "What a terrible predicament! Those ruffians quite misunderstood my purpose! I shall catch my death of cold if I remain here throughout the night! You can't—"

Mr. Selby uttered this Swedish yell as his unprotected feet came into contact with a sharp stone.

Sill with his hands clasped behind him, Mr. Selby hobbled gingerly towards the door.

He thrust his shoulder against the door, but it would not budge.

"That, that, that!"

"Good heavens!" gasped the luckless Third Form master, turning away baffled. "What ever shall I do? You see!"

Again his footless feet struck something sharp, and the pain caused Mr. Selby to dance about on one leg like a dervish.

At last he reached the little window. The glass had been broken out of the frame years ago, but there was not sufficient wood to enable him to climb out—except if he managed to reach it.

"Oh dear!" moaned Mr. Selby. "This is intolerable! Help, help!"

From the dark woods came the rattle of his voice.

"Thump, thump, thump!"

"Help!" shrieked Mr. Selby frantically.

Then there came hurried footsteps outside and an excited voice exclaimed:

"Hallo! Who's that calling?"

Mr. Selby heaved a deep, deep sigh of relief. He recognized the voice as that of Walter Adolphus D'Arcy, of the Third.

"Is that you, D'Arcy?" he exclaimed.

"This is I—Mr. Selby, your Form-master!"

"My only Aunt Jane?" ejaculated Wally, in tones of elaborate amazement.

"Can that really be you, sir?"

"Yes, D'Arcy, it is really I!" cried Mr. Selby eagerly. "I have been mistaken by two ruffianly footpads, and made a prisoner in this shed, and my boots have been taken away. D'Arcy, my dear boy, please release me, and run back to St. Jim's for another pair of boots!"

"Good pip!"

Mr. Selby shrieked the last well impatiently.

"Do you hear me, D'Arcy?" he exclaimed.

"Yes, sir," replied Wally, quite cheerfully.

"Then please do as I ask you, my boy!" cried Mr. Selby, controlling his passion. "I must get back to the school as soon as possible!"

"Ahem!" coughed Wally diplomatically. "I—my sir, it may not be you. How do I know that it may not be some rascal imitating your voice, so that I shall be his out?"

"I tell you, it is really I—Mr. Selby, your Form-master!" shrieked Mr. Selby, in tones of elaborate amazement.

"I know you, D'Arcy, imagine you, open this door, send them fetch me a pair of boots from St. Jim's!"

"All right, sir, I'll run it!" said Wally.

"But, my sir—"

"Well, D'Arcy?"

"If I release you, will you say you are sorry for the way you pitched into me the other day?" asked Wally, with dignified assurance.

"One good turn deserves another, you know—"

Mr. Selby hesitated long through his nose.

"Very well, D'Arcy, please," he said, with an effort. "I—I am sorry that the incident occurred. Now will you open this door?"

"Yes, rather, sir! Half a tick!"

Wally nooned his hand over his eye. He gave an inward chuckle when he saw Mr. Selby standing in his socks, his hands tied behind his back. He complied with Mr. Selby's urgent demands, and opened his boots.

Mr. Selby was free at last.

"All serene, sir!" said Wally cheerfully. "Why on earth did they take your boots?"

"The microcants were poachers, and were under the impression that I was spying on them, and intended giving information to the police," stammered Mr. Selby.

"That is why they made me a prisoner. They are well away by now. I was, in fact, pursuing you myself, when you escaped from the punishment-rooms."

"Gaxsson!" said Wally. "The place is too jolly well guarded for that!"

"I tell you the young rascal has escaped!" exclaimed Mr. Selby. "Do not stand there gazing with me, D'Arcy, please! Run the goodness to fetch me a pair of boots from St. Jim's. Be as quick as possible!"

"Yes, sir," said Wally dutifully, and he scampered off.

A little way in the depths of the wood Tom Merry and Mosey Lotherer met him.

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The Sheriff fellows had removed their disguises. They greeted Wally with grimaces.

"D.K., kids!" chuckled Wally. "Sally's apologized."

"Oh, tipping!"

"The old kid looks quite nobly in his socks," said Wally. "It's a pity he hasn't got to walk back to St. Jim's like it. There are some jolly hard stones in the lane."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You heathen young beggar!" exclaimed Tom Merry, laughing. "You'll find Sally's boots along the curb there. Buck up over the job, Wally. We want to get Gussy released, and have that spread in my study afterwards."

"Oh, of course!" said Wally, becoming alert at once. "Although I haven't been on hunger-strike, I could jolly well do with a feed. So—long, you chaps! I'll find Sally's boots and give 'em to him!"

"Buz off, kid!"

Wally "buzed" off. He discovered the boots, artfully laid them by "Arry" and "Erbert," and ran swiftly back with them to the woodman's hut.

Mr. Selby was surprised to see him back so soon.

"No, sir, I haven't been back to St. Jim's already," explained Wally. "You see, I happened to find these in the wood. These rotten footpads must have thrown them down."

"That is most fortunate, D'Arcy," said Mr. Selby. And he commenced to put on his boots.

Wally essayed to depart.

"Do not go, D'Arcy," said Mr. Selby nervously. "I think you had better—ah—ah—walk with me back to St. Jim's."

In case those footpads turn up again, sir!" asked Wally.

Mr. Selby glanced at Wally, then, having slipped his boots, he stood up and walked out of his temporary prison.

Wally D'Arcy followed him, chuckling.

CHAPTER 9. Gussy Apologues!

TAP! Arthur Augustus D'Arcy jumped up from where he was sitting on his bed in the lonely parishment-room.

The solitude of the dismal rooms was getting on his nerves, and the craving for food made his plight more distressing.

The knock at the door started him.

Tap!

"I say, Gas!"

The voice through the keyhole was

Wally's, and Arthur Augustus realized with wonder that his minor's tone was quite jocular.

"Wally! You young hoorndog!" he ejaculated. "What away, dear boy! Nobody is allowed to speak to me, and if you are caught you'll be licked, but—Jove!"

"Baise!" retorted Wally through the keyhole. "I say, Gas, you are coming out of there to-night!"

"How Jove!"

"Honest, are you feeling, old chap?"

"Written, dear boy!" replied Arthur Augustus.

His voice was harsh and strained, and he felt quite faint for want of food. "But I'm awash gotta' to give in!"

Wally chuckled.

"What do you think, Gas?" he said cordially. "Sally's apologized to me?"

"But Jove!" ejaculated Arthur Augustus, quite taken aback.

"Honest injun, Gussy?" chortled Wally. "I rescued him from the woodman's hut in Rylcombe Wood this evening, and he apologized!"

Arthur Augustus gave a gasp. This startling news had quite taken his breath away.

"Great Scott!" he exclaimed. "You have sent me into quite a flitch, Wally. Did Sally really say he was sorry?"

"Yes, rather!" said Wally jocularly.

"He's really apologized to me, and everything in the garden is lovely, old son! You'll apologize to him now, Gas, won't you?"

"Yess," said Arthur Augustus slowly and wearily. "I shall be pleased to apologize to him, as from one gentleman to another."

"Good!" cried Wally. "Then I'll go and tell him."

"Jove! Look back, Wally—"

But D'Arcy minor was gone.

At the end of the passage he ran into Knox. Gould Knox gave a palp as Wally's head struck him in the waistcoat, and he fell back against the wall.

When Knox recovered his balance, he made a dive after Wally, but that cheerless youth was well on his way up the passage.

"You little swag!" roared Knox.

"I've caught you at that door! Come here, D'Arcy minor!"

"Baise!" retorted Wally. "Go and get coke, Knox!"

"Why—you—your cheeky young monkey—"

"Chase me, Charlie!"

Wally ran, and Knox pounded after him. He was surprised when the fog on reaching the bottom of the stairs, made directly for the Head's study.

"Come here, you young rascal!" roared Knox. "I'll give you the licking of your life, young D'Arcy!"

Wally had reached the Head's study door, and his hand was on the handle, when Knox's hand descended heavily upon his shoulder, and he was whirled back. The door of the Head's study flew open.

"Got you, you little whelp!" gusted Knox. "Now I—Yarough!"

Wally was struggling desperately, and Knox was pushed bodily into the Head's study. He dragged Wally in with him, and together the prefect and the fug rolled upon the carpet, locked in each other's embrace.

Mr. Bailton was with the Head. Both masters spring to their feet in alarm and horror as Knox and Wally D'Arcy seized each precipitately.

"Knox—D'Arcy minor!" exclaimed Dr. Holmes. "Good heavens! What is the meaning of that! Get up, both of you!"

Knox struggled to his feet, dusty and dishevelled. Wally also rose, smothered with dirt, but cheerful.

"I discovered this junior at the door of the parishment-room!" gasped the body of the Sixth. "He saw away when I tried to grasp him. I chased him here, and—"

"I was coming to see you, sir," interposed Wally quickly. "My major has sent a message. He is willing to apologise to Mr. Selby!"

"Honest my soul!" exclaimed Dr. Holmes.

Mr. Bailton's worried face lit up with a ray of joyful surprise.

"Good gentlemen! This is indeed gratifying!" he exclaimed. "Is that really the truth, D'Arcy minor?"

"Honest injun, sir," piped Wally jeppantly. "Try him, sir."

The Headmaster turned eagerly to Dr. Holmes.

"The boy has given way at last, sir!" he exclaimed. "His contrition-sense has overruled his obstinacy!"

The venerable Head of St. Jim's nodded.

"Will you kindly bring Mr. Selby here, Mr. Bailton?" he said. "I will go and see D'Arcy minor. Knox, under the circumstances, I fancy minor is excused. You may go."

And Knox went, scowling.

Dr. Holmes went up to the parishment-room, and opened the door.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy stood facing him. The noble swell of St. Jim's looked beguiled and pale, and his eyes had just that languid lightness. Even his remarks seemed to have gone quite flat.

"D'Arcy minor," exclaimed the Head. "Is it true that you have consented to apologise to Mr. Selby?"

"Yess, that is true, sir," replied Arthur Augustus quietly. "He has told my master that he is sorry, so, andak that I will not trouble him, the apology that is due, as from one gentleman to another. That will make things all right."

"Very well, D'Arcy," said Dr. Holmes, much relieved. "Step this way with me, will you? You shall have the opportunity at once of apologising to Mr. Selby."

The Third-Form master was already in the Head's study when Dr. Holmes and D'Arcy arrived. Mr. Selby stared at Arthur Augustus like one in a dream.

"Goodness gracious!" he ejaculated. "You—you have just letched the young rascal from the parishment-room, sir?"

"Yes, Mr. Selby," said the Head drily. "D'Arcy minor has been there ever since Monday, so far as I know."

"But—but," stammered Mr. Selby. "I see him, with my own eyes, and I can't understand this evening. I escaped him into the Rylcombe Woods, where I was attacked by footpads—"

"Impose, Mr. Selby!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "I have not left the parishment-room since Mr. Bailton looked me up there on Monday. You must have seen him, then, sir."

"I was not dreaming," stammered Mr. Selby furiously. "I distinctly saw you—"

"At what time did this occur, Mr. Selby?" asked Mr. Bailton coldly.

"It was eight o'clock," said Mr. Selby. "The clock struck eight as I was percing him down Rylcombe Lane."

Mr. Bailton smiled significantly.

"Well, Mr. Selby," he said, "you might be interested to know that at precisely eight o'clock this evening I was with D'Arcy in the parishment-room, endeavouring to persuade him to drink some cocoa."

"I—I—"

Mr. Selby was flustered.

"You must have been mistaken, Mr. Selby," said Dr. Holmes drily. "How—"

(Continued on page 17.)



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JASPER STANDISH plans to have his servants at his manor, RICHARD HARMER, kidnapping his son DIKE and transporting him to SLAVE ISLAND. He makes a bargain with the wily, HANS MEPPLE, to this effect, and the Dane's men are carrying off Dick Hopper to the strange island, where he is made a slave. Here Dick meets Elsie, a charming little slave.

When Standish returns home, he discovers that this girl is none other than his long-lost daughter, who had been missing for many years.

CAPTAIN DIKE KENTISH, R.N.R., a retired sea captain, is employed by Dick's father to search for him. The captain visits Chinatown to recruit a crew to aid with him on his strange quest. He meets some old friends.

Having completed his tour of the Chinese quarters, he is threading his way homeward when he sees an odd enemy, one Galeppo Giglietto, an Italian, who is in the company of Peter Van Lardet, a Dutch acquaintance of Meppel's. Kentish follows the trio to the former's opium-den, and through a successful ruse he rescues the Dane's man from the clutches of the Italian. Lardet then informs the captain that he can show him where Slave Island is situated, and they commence their journey.

Dick and Elsie see their opportunity of escaping by starting away in one of Meppel's skiffs which is about to leave. Their escape is discovered, and they take to the water, but are picked up from near-sightings from the island. They dive beneath the surface and shake the white beam of light.

(You go on with the story.)

Captured!

It was, nevertheless, all to no avail. By ill-luck Elsie's head was from the water right in the direct path of the light, and a cry from quite close at hand told the swimmers that men in a boat were terribly near at hand.

Dick gulped in the air, and for the third time dived. Using a quick and powerful under-water stroke, he swam for all he was worth, and hoped that Elsie was doing likewise. As a matter of fact, she was, and had for the time being once more eluded the white beam of light.

So it went on, with those diving and coming to the surface for air, until they had put a considerable distance between themselves and the vessel, and appeared to have been lost sight of by those in the boat, or boats, in the darkness.

But the light continued to sweep great stretches of water, and as Dick realized

how easily it covered it his heart sick. How was it possible to avoid such a foe as this?

Both he and Elsie were British to their finger-tips, and possessed of all the Britcher's dogged pluck and perseverance.

They continued to dive and come-up alternately, until the strain of swimming beneath the surface began seriously to exhaust them. Then, as for perhaps the tenth or eleventh time they were forced to rise for air after a submersion, it was only to discover the searchlight playing dead upon them.

Uttering a gasping exclamation of chagrin, Dick rested for a moment, and as he did so he heard a sobbing cry from the girl.

She was in sight a few yards away on his right, but even as he turned his eyes in her direction he saw her fling up her arms, feebly beat the water, and disappear.

A great dread gripped at his heart. The boy had grown to feel a warm admiration for the pluck of the girl, and as they had talked and suffered together on the island they had become very dear comrades.

He realized in a flash that the submerged efforts had been too much for her, and that she was drowning, and with a frantic over-ear stroke he propelled himself towards the spot where she had gone down.

Reaching it, Dick drew a long breath and dived. His head down, down through the black depths, groping blindly with his hands.

To his joy his fingers suddenly came into contact with Elsie's flowing hair, and he clutched it desperately.

Striking upwards with his free arm and kicking out with his feet, he went shooting up with her to the surface. But as his head and shoulders parted the waves, and he got his five about Elsie's slender figure and held her so that her mouth and nostrils were close of the water, he heard a triumphant cry.

Right by his side, scarce three yards away, was a boat, in which were several dark figures. Foremost amongst them he recognized the gigantic bulk of the bearded Meppel.

The boat was run alongside him in a flash, and the powerful brown hand of a man's arm grasped his collar.

He did not resist. What was the good now that Elsie's strength had given out, and to remain in the water meant practically meant certain death for them both?

The girl was only semi-conscious, and

lay a dead weight upon his arm, with her head drooping upon his shoulder. She had saved her from drowning, but had been none too soon.

"Come along, you little English cur!" Hans Meppel's harsh voice grined. "Aah, himeel, you had a chance given us, put you a losing throw played all the time, and you shall learn of us out besides to go against our discipline then we get you back to the island!"

Dick relaxed his body, sure that he clung tightly to his strength little comrade. He was drawn with her over the side of the boat.

Two Malays held him down. Elsie was torn from him, and flung unceremoniously into the bottom of the little craft.

Enraged at the rough treatment of her, Dick tried to wrench his hands free and strike at the sailors' brown faces; but he was held firmly in spite of his struggles, while a third man bound his wrists and ankles.

Hans Meppel leered forward and struck the lad a stinging blow in the mouth with his clenched fist.

"So! You still were fight after, ain't it?" he sneered. "I ask your lucky stars dot! I should lose money if I took your life!"

This was news to Dick. Then for some reason Hans Meppel must not put him to death. He wondered why.

"Don't give yourself any sad-free will go!" the Dane's man sneered, seeing the surprised look that had been on the lad's eyes. "You will be punished—himeel, here you shall be punished, you little whelp!"

Again he struck the hapless boy in the face.

"You shall see dot girl you had cherished meet sad death!" he said grimly. "Dead as you—"

"You—you won't kill her!" Dick pleaded hoarsely. "The whole idea to save ourselves away was mine!" he added, unthinkingly, as an inspiration. "I urged her to start away and board the steamer with you, and—"

"For rich you would die, as she will die," Meppel interrupted; "but, as I tell you, I would lose much if you met sad death."

"Here mercy!" Dick begged. "She is young—only a girl, and little more than a child—"

"Be silent! How dare you argue with me!" Meppel thundered, shaking his fist in his face. "As an example to der other slaves, and to teach 'em not to

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try to escape, she will be put to death at dawn."

Dick could have groaned in despair. To him it seemed that Elaine's death was inevitable, for it was certain that the villainous Dutchman would not alter his decision.

He was not to know that just beyond the horizon was a steamer, which was working steadily for Slave Island, or he might have seen that there was still a ray of hope.

On the deck was a pleasant-faced Irishman, who was talking to a rather aggressive-looking man in the uniform of a skipper of the Merchant Service. The latter, who was slowly mounted and bearded, had a pet monkey squaring upon his shoulder, and smoked a strong black cigar.

When the Dawn Breaks!

THREE dark shapes of a steamer loomed out of the gloom, coming down within sight of the Slave Island's mighty rocks.

"Tell the ladder at the wheel to run her into the shadow of the rocks, O'Hara, will you?"

"Ay, ay, cap'n! Shore an' we're here at last, though O' thought the voyage would prove cut at all, at all!"

"When I set out to do a thing, you red-headed weevil, I do it!" Captain Keathish, power and master of the vessel, assured him, with a dip in the ribs. "You ought to know I do, after all these years."

"Beggers! O' believe ye'd reach the moon, if ye set your heart on it!" was the laconic reply of Patrick O'Hara, the same steamer's first-mate; and he moved quickly away through the gloom to pass the skipper's order to the man at the wheel.

A few moments later the steamer began to swing round, and slowly and unobtrusively—for fear of disturbing the red-headed weevil—the gigantic headland rocks that enclosed the island and hid it from the open sea.

Captain Keathish had arrived with his vessel only some hour after Dick Harmer and Elaine had been taken ashore and locked in the prison.

Had his course chanced to be very little different, he would have encountered Hans Meppel's vessel on its outward journey, for it had calved its voyage as soon as the lad and girl had been recovered.

At length the British skipper's ship had drawn as near to the giant rocks as the man at the wheel dared take it, and Captain Keathish stood for some time upon the deck, gazing up at their towering height.

He saw that they were very rugged, and would afford plenty of hand and foothold for a climber. He swung round upon his heels and went below to his cabin.

He had come to a decision, and meant to scratch a few hours' rest before he put it into execution.

The skipper flung off his coat and cap after seeing his pet monkey comfortably settled in his basket near his bunk. Then he climbed into the tatter, and almost as soon as he laid down was sound asleep.

Captain Keathish was one of those people who have the gift of being able to awaken after a sleep at precisely the time they wish, and at about a half-hour before dawn he was tumbling from his bunk.

He rubbed the slumber from his eyes, and gazed listlessly.—No. 968.

plunged his head into a bowl of water, and dried his face and hair; then, donning his reefers and cap, he went up on deck.

"Toz," he said, to one of the heads, who had been on duty during the night, "I am going to make those rocks, so that I am up there and able to take a look round without being seen by anyone who's the other side of them, when it gets light. You get me?"

"Ay, ay, sir! You'll want a boat?"

"Think I'm going to walk, you silly wretch!" the skipper demanded, though that was his usual manner, and the man only grinned good-naturedly.

His, like every other seal aboard, would have gone through fire and water for the dare-devil skipper, and thoroughly understood his little ways.

It was not long ere a boat splashed gently into the water.

Two sailors tumbled into it, and Captain Keathish followed. A pair of powerful glasses were in his pocket, and a repeating rifle slung over his back.

Scarcely the boat had across the intervening space of water until it lay within a foot of the rugged wall of rock. In it Captain Keathish was removing his boots and socks.

"The skipper was as agile as a weeviler, and, without hesitation, he gave a leap that carried him to a ledge of rock at the base of the towering mass.

"Wait below for me, boys!" he called to the sailors; and, losing no time, he commenced to climb.

Hard over hand he went, clinging to protuberances on the face of the rocks with both hands and toes, getting his fingers in crevices, and hauling himself always higher and higher.

He would not, perhaps, have made such good progress had the night have been moonless. At it was, in the moon's waning light, he was able to seek for each subsequent hold with his keen eyes.

Higher and higher climbed the skipper, never looking downwards, until the sailors, who were thrilled and gripped with excitement and admiration at his cool climbing, saw him half-way up the dizzy height.

There were many submerged rocks, as they knew by the feel of the boat having grazed upon them, and a fall meant almost certain death, yet the skipper seemed as calm as if he had been standing on the deck of his vessel.

Meanwhile, many were stir on the island.

One slave from each of the numerous sleeping quarters was being called out by overseers, and, when some two hundred men and women had been marshalled into a clearing near one of the banana plantations by overseers, they were marched off towards the towering rocky cliff that was shaped so like a gigantic sphinx.

Up in the town, at the prison, Dick Harmer was being brought from his cell to the stocks. In the corridor he found himself face to face with Elaine, whose arms were tied behind her back, and who was between two hefty overseers.

They had no time to speak, Dick, who saw the girl was very pale and ill along her narrow escape from drowning during the night, flashed at her a look of encouragement he was far from feeling.

His heart felt like lead. Meppel would not go back on his word, and the girl was almost to be done to death.

The boy's fettered hands clenched, and he longed to be free and armed for even the shortest time. He felt that to kill Hans Meppel would be only justice; that it would be no murder, but right—just as it is right to crush the life from a venomous snake.

Out of the prison, the boy and the girl were led.

Dick saw that Elaine's knees shook beneath her and that her lips were trembling, and he guessed that the bad news, however correct it be, Hans Meppel declines on the previous night that she should die. After all, she was but a girl, and death seemed very terrible to one of her tender years.

The slaves from the sleeping quarters had been marched up a board, sloping path that led up to the summit of the sphinx-like rocks. Their top was almost flat, and some three hundred yards in circumference. Here the men and women were called upon to halt by the overseers, and marshalled into a long row.

Another overseer appeared from the gateway, leading a spotted horse, which was closely blindfolded; and only a few minutes later Hans Meppel and a number of his favorite overseers climbed to the spot.

Dick and Elaine were brought up soon afterwards by their guards, and now the news, which was fresh and its grey light was spreading over the sky. It was just at this moment, too, that the intrepid Captain Keathish was scrambling over the brink of the other mighty rocks, which enclosed the island, and which lay about a hundred yards away.

Hans Meppel addressed the slaves in his domineering and guttural tones.

He told them how Elaine had attempted to escape with Dick Harmer, and pointed out to them that that which they were about to witness was what would happen to them if at any time they dared to attempt to follow the unfortunate girl's example.

"Ready!" he said, turning to the overseer who held the blindfolded horse.

The animal reared and pranced as the man led it up to Elaine. The overseer, who held her behind her on to its bare back, and with strong cords securely lashed her to it.

Now the animal was led to within a score of yards of the brink of the rocks, and away on the other side Captain Keathish, who had been curiously watching to see what was to happen, leapt up with a cry of horror and began frantically to emitting his rifle.

An overseer struck the horse a vicious blow across the flanks with a lead-tipped whip, and, maddened with pain, the animal bounded forward.

Unable to see that it was dashed headlong towards a hundred-foot drop, it sped straight on towards the brink of the rocks.

Elaine uttered a scream of terror, and, giving herself up for lost, closed her eyes, whilst a hundred yards away Captain Keathish had dropped to one knee and had his rifle to his shoulder.

Only a matter of six yards separated the girl and horse from the awful abyss, and the captain caught and held his breath as he looked along the barrel of the weapon and took aim.

"Unless he could kill or drop the horse, nothing could stop it dashing itself and its fair rider to destruction.

The Skipper Is a Tight Corner!

CRACK! Captain Kerish's rifle spat out a squirt of red flame, and its report awoke the echoes.

The bullet flew true, and struck the half-sleeping horse in the throat, passing through its windpipe.

For the fraction of a second it seemed to stop dead; then, like a shot rabbit, it pitched over upon its side, carrying Elaine with it to the ground.

Captain Kerish drew a sharp breath of relief. He had fired only in the very nick of time.

Nearly a yard divided the feebly-kicking animal and the girl from the hundred-foot drop towards which they had been rushing, and had he delayed another second in pulling the trigger, Elaine and the animal would have gone hurtling down to destruction.

True, the horse was dying now. There was little doubt of that. And Captain Kerish had hated having to shoot it. But the girl was saved, at least for the time being; and human life had to be counted before the life and pain of an animal.

The report of the skipper's gun had had a startling effect upon Hans Meppel, his overmen, and the slaves.

As one, every person turned their astonished gaze towards the unexpected shooter. For a long moment he was stared at in incredulous wonder, then from slaves and overmen alike there broke a chorus of excited exclamations.

One and all asked themselves who was this man whose figure they could not see upon the farther hill?

Elaine and her faithful attendants Hans Meppel and his brothers. New hope, a wild joy, gripped at the hearts of the slaves, though both asked a similar question.

Did this mean that the whereabouts of Slave Island, and what was daily and yearly going on there, had become known to the outside world?

The overmen who had looked at the horse and moved it down towards Elaine, and not knowing what he might mean to do, Captain Kerish once again swung his rifle to his shoulder.

He had leapt to his feet now, but he was no excellent marksman that a scattered rifle to him in what position he was to shoot.

He pulled the trigger, and his second charge flew on its way. The overmen, who was standing between Elaine and the brink of the rocks, was stopped over her and the horse, received the bullet in his shoulder, and, with a scream of agony, fell himself upright.

He stopped, forgetting what lay behind him in his surprise and pain.

Now he found his feet on the terrible fall, and tried to hold himself by his knees to save himself. He lost his balance, flung up his arms, and, with a cry that the skipper felt would ring in his ears until his dying day, went pitching headlong to the death he had deserved for the girl.

"Aye!" "John, my son!" [He must be captured!] Hans Meppel shouted, remembering from his unbounded astonishment. "Leave that girl where she is! Quick! Down below and give the alarm, ain't it?"

Knowing that it would be the end of Slave Island and the idle life of luxury they led if this man in the uniform of a sea-captain continued to get away, the overmen sprang into life.

In accordance with their leader's instructions, they left Elaine standing bound to the spring house, and made for the path that led down to the level ground. Dick tried to hang behind that

he might have an opportunity of helping his little comrades, but the overmen would not allow this, and forced him before them.

Down the path thudded the men, Hans Meppel bringing up the rear and crying above all. The slaves were left standing upon the hill-top, and quickly some of their number went to the half-fainting girl and released her from the animal's back.

They did not know what to do after this. Four men, they had lost all individuality and initiative, and had grown accustomed never to stir hand or foot, or hardly an eye-blink, first receiving instructions from their brutal task-masters.

They watched as the overmen and Meppel hurried down to the flat-washed as they raced across the intervening ground between the hills and struck another path leading tortuously up the side of the second group of rocks.

Captain Kerish had seen their approach, and had some cartridges in his pocket, and coolly reloaded his rifle. He had no scruples regarding these men after what he had seen. One and all were murderers, and deserved nothing as such.

As the foremost of these began to ascend the hill, the skipper calmly aimed his gun, and, cocking almost as fast as he could pulled upon the trigger, he had picked a couple of them off.

They went tottering back into the arms of their companions, and brought some four or five of these rolling back down the winding, rugged path.

The skipper did not fire again, deeming it as well to get back to his ship and make all ready for a stiver fight if such was his case. But, he was not destined to reach it as yet.

One of the overmen carried an arrow and a powerful bow, and, even as the skipper was about to draw back from where he had been standing at the brink of the hill to fire, the fellow took rapid aim and sent the arrow whizzing up towards the man's head.

The overmen was a strongly-built man with muscles like steel, and he had drawn the bow almost double when he had taken aim.

The arrow did not reach the captain's breast, for which it had been aimed, but it struck and pierced the calf of his leg, and the sudden and unexpected pain proved his weakness.

Inadvertently he thrust down his hands towards his injury, and at the same time roared.

He tried to draw back as he saw the drop yawning before him, but was leaning too far forward and could not right his body in time.

With a startled ejaculation he fell head-over-board, and the next moment was rolling at a mad rate down a sloping path towards his comrades.

Over and over the captain's self whirled, leaving behind it a dancing cloud of yellow dust. If practically all the breath knocked out of him, he landed in the midst of the overmen, who were now some half-way up the steep incline.

It had all happened so suddenly that the majority had had no time to get out of the way.

True, the foremost of them had hastily drawn in to the side of the path, but the skipper was colliding with the legs of those behind before they quite realized what was happening.

Men went down like so many trees, moving angry oaths and ejaculations of surprise.

Another installment of this magnificent adventure serial next week, at the same of year only by order EARLY.

"THE ST. JIM'S HUNGER-STRIKER!"

(Continued from page 16)

over, D'Arcy major has come here for the express purpose of apologizing to you. Is that not so, D'Arcy?"

"Yes," said Arthur Augustus slowly. "I am sorry, Mr. Selby, that you suffered so grievously in our struggle on Monday. I apologize for my well-timedness of you. I trust you will accept that apology, as given from one gentleman to another, and that you will consider everything all right."

Mr. Selby assented to this.

"Well, Mr. Selby," said the Head, raising his eyebrows and peering at the Third-Year student over the rim of his spectacles. "D'Arcy major has rendered you his apology. Is that quite satisfactory?"

"Yes," whispered Mr. Selby at last. "I am satisfied."

And, with a choleric look around him, Mr. Selby retired rather hastily from the Head's study.

"I am glad you have brought this painful matter to a close, D'Arcy," said Dr. Holmes, regarding the soul of St. Jim's severely. "I have no doubt that you were convinced that you were justified in the course you took. But surely, my boy, you could not expect me, as Headmaster of this school, to lower my prestige so far as to accede to your demands?"

"I trust you do not think I have established the suspect that it is due to you, sir," replied Arthur Augustus, in a firm, weary voice. "But, as I pointed out to you previously, sir—"

"Yes, yes, my lad!" interposed the Head. "The matter now is happily ended, and we shall say no more upon the subject. You must be anxious to have a rest, D'Arcy. Proceed out at once to your bed. You may go."

"Thank you, sir!"

And the St. Jim's hunger-striker went.

Outside, his change was eagerly awaiting him. Upon hearing that everything was settled, they cheered a cheer, and impetuously rushed Gussy away to Study No. 10 in the third passage.

Thus, a feast fit for the gods was awaiting him, Fatty Wynn having performed his task of preparing the feast like a hero.

It was a merry gathering that passed off as a result from the festive bustle that evening.

Tom, Mory & Co. simply piled D'Arcy's plate with good things, and, as Mory Leather reminded, "kept his going like a giddy machine."

Arthur Augustus was nothing loath to devour the goodly viands thrust before him, and he outdid Fatty Wynn in that occupation.

Everybody was glad that the battle between Arthur Augustus D'Arcy and Mr. Selby was ended amicably; but none was more glad, it is verily believed, than Gussy himself, who had staidly acted in his role as the St. Jim's hunger-striker!

THE END.

Another grand long story of Tom Mory & Co. next week, entitled "THE OUTSPURGE BRITAIN!" by MARY HARRIS. Avoid disappointment by ordering EARLY.

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YOUR EDITOR'S CHAT.

Address: Editor, THE GEM, The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C. 4.

For next Wednesday:

"THE OUTSIDER'S BETRAYAL"

By Martin Clifford.

Another grand, long, complete story of the charms of Mr. Jan's will appear under the same title in next Wednesday's issue of the Gem Library. As may be guessed from that title, Donald Lamsley-Lamsley plays a prominent part in the story. He develops a hidden love in return for whom he had squandered money, and is greatly surprised when more money is demanded. As he had paid off the debt, Lamsley-Lamsley laughs at the man's threats of exposure, and refuses to part with any more money. This rouses the blackmailer, and he sends an anonymous letter to Dr. Habers, informing him of the

Doctor's discovery of a certain public house for gambling.

Imagine the fact that Lamsley-Lamsley has long since returned, to be understood by experience. But in crossing the Board's daughter from a dangerous profession he gains a friend who proves a friend indeed. *Magazine.*

"THE OUTSIDER'S BETRAYAL"

is a splendid story, full of exciting and dramatic incidents, and one which you will enjoy reading.

There will also be another grand volume of our best series.

"BENTON OF THE ROVERS!"

By Paul Masters.

Benton's first thought on starting his journey is to discover the identity of the man who had kidnapped him. He engages a detective, who successfully runs the quarry to earth. Then comes the first great chase to show his prowess as a footbalter!

A further highlight of

"SLAVE ISLAND"

By Matthew Francis,

will disclose to you clearly the fact that the story is flowing to a close. For many exciting incidents lead Captain Bob Keston to think that he is getting the end of his quest.

There will also be a page devoted to our readers' own contributions, under the heading of

"MY READERS' OWN CORNER."

Contributors to this page may send half a crown for each paragraph used. Has your paragraph appeared yet? It might be in next week's Gem.

Your Editor

ARE YOU SHORT?

Has it ever occurred to you that you are short? If so, you may be interested to know that the following is a list of the most famous short men in the world. The first is the shortest man in the world, John Smith, who is only 4 feet 6 inches tall. The second is the shortest man in the world, who is only 4 feet 6 inches tall. The third is the shortest man in the world, who is only 4 feet 6 inches tall. The fourth is the shortest man in the world, who is only 4 feet 6 inches tall. The fifth is the shortest man in the world, who is only 4 feet 6 inches tall. The sixth is the shortest man in the world, who is only 4 feet 6 inches tall. The seventh is the shortest man in the world, who is only 4 feet 6 inches tall. The eighth is the shortest man in the world, who is only 4 feet 6 inches tall. The ninth is the shortest man in the world, who is only 4 feet 6 inches tall. The tenth is the shortest man in the world, who is only 4 feet 6 inches tall.



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