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ONE INSIDE!

EVERY WEDNESDAY

# The GEM 2<sup>nd</sup>

No. 225  
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October 24th,  
1925.

LIBRARY  
OF  
SCHOOL AND SPORTING STORIES



**THE BOOBY TRAP INTENDED FOR MR. SELBY !**

(A thrilling incident from the special long complete school story of Tom Merry & Co. at St. John's inside.)



Address all letters: The Editor, The "Gem" Library, The Fireway House, Farringham Street, London, E.C.4. Write me, you can be sure of an answer in return.

#### "A LEADER OF THE LEAGUE!"

THE first instalment of this amazing new story of the football field appears in next week's Gem, and my loyal readers are currently advised to make certain of reading the opening chapters. There is a distinct half-mack of quality about this coming treat that will be manifest in the first chapter, and young Dick Harris, the hero, is the kind of fellow you'll grow to admire and respect. His loyalty to his father, about whom a lot of unkind things are said, and his fine sense of honour are two traits in his character that stand out. And on the football field he is a veritable Siriv Whizzer and Charlie Buzham rolled into one. I'm not going to say more about this new serial at this stage. You'll leave for yourselves next week when you come to the first instalment.

#### TEETH!

Several Gemites have written me lately on the subject of teeth. No, I was not working hand-in-glove with a dentist; far from it! I simply want to remind you fellows that care of the teeth cannot be overdone. If the teeth are brushed vigorously twice a day, morning and night, or at least once a day, dentists won't make much money out of Gemites. Far better to dodge that nasty ordeal of "tooth extraction," even if the removal of same is painless, if we can. At any rate, we can postpone the evil day by devoting five or ten minutes a day to a "gentle exercise" with the tooth-brush.

#### SMOBBISHNESS!

A very out-going Gemite writes to me from Swarzen. My correspondent, apparently, is a "delivery boy" working for a large firm of merchants. He's doing well at his job, too, having received an increase in salary since he started work four months ago. But he's not so happy as he might be, for a former friend of his has turned his down. You see, this "friend" got a job as a "clerk," and as such considers it beneath his dignity to be chummy with a delivery boy. Did you ever hear of such nonsense? I don't think my correspondent has lost much of a friend. I'm glad this fickle-minded and snobbish fellow was not and is not a Gemite. No, Gemites don't grow like that, thank heavens! Snobbishness is about the worst form of weakness to be met with. Usually, too, the snob has nothing to be snobbish about. It all hangs round that complaint we are told to avoid like the plague, I refer, of course, to the "swollen head." Here that sets in the snobby outlook on life follows as a matter of course.

#### HOBBIES!

Any reader who is interested in fretwork will find the 1936 Catalogue issued by Hobbies, Ltd., Danham, Norfolk, of particular interest. It has 236 pages, covering twenty-one pastimes, and showing over 500 fretwork designs, and all the tools therein are of British manufacture. A 1s. 6d. design of a large cabinet bookcase, is given free. Gemites can obtain this fine catalogue at any branch or from my agent for 9d., or from the above address for 1s. post free.

#### STAMMERING!

A few letters reach me from a reader down South, who asks for advice on how to cure his case of stammering. Well, a very simple remedy is this! Get your friend who stammers to read aloud a passage from a paper or a book every day, and then, taking the theme of the passage, begin a debate. The stammerer must not be allowed to "rewind" his words. If he starts to speak fairly slowly, the stammering habit will very soon drop out. And then, once his confidence has been restored, he'll make rapid progress. Confidence is the thing to aim at in trying to cure the stammerer. If he hasn't got it himself, you must mould it for him. Don't laugh or humiliate him when he begins to stammer, and don't look as if you are aware that he is stammering. Tact and judgment, as Gussy would say, are necessary, but the application of same must vary according to the character of the individual you wish to help.

#### SOMETHING EXTRA SPECIAL!

This week may fairly be claimed for the "Boys' Friend" THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 324.

grand new Top Scorers' Competition, with 25 and Six Match Footballs as prizes. Pass the word along to your chums. The competition is simple enough. What you have to do is to send in the names of the two teams scoring the highest total of goals. It is the combined score of both sides that you have to reckon with. Just down the names of the teams which you think will pile up the greatest number of goals in a given match in Divisions I., II., and III. (Southern Section). See the "Boys' Friend" for full details. Remember—25 and Six Footballs EACH WEEK!

#### A WHITE FACE!

A reader from Gampert who has a very white face—according to his letter—wants to know if I can recommend anything that will "bring the bloom" to his cheeks. My correspondent would not feel so upset about his paleness were it not for the unpleasant fact that his schoolfellows take a delight in reminding him of it all day and every day, to use my chum's own words. Boylike, this Gemite reacts all too chipping, being, I should say, extremely sensitive. What he suffers from apparently is poorness of blood, and the best way for him to correct it is to get out into the open air as much as it is possible and take plenty of exercise. He should be particular to keep to a fairly regular mode of life, retiring and rising at a fixed hour each day. His diet, too, should include a fair amount of meat. He would be well advised, too, to sleep with his bed-room window open in summer and in winter. If my chum follows out these instructions he will very soon see a satisfactory "bloom" in his cheek when he looks into the mirror of a morning.

#### THE "SCHOOLBOYS' OWN LIBRARY."

"Do you edit the 'Schoolboys' Own Library?'" This is an extract from a letter assigned. The answer is short: "I do." I believe all Gemites, but, perhaps, the exception of the one who writes these words, know that this wonderful library of long school years is edited by your Editor, and is published on the first Friday of every month.

#### THE "MAGNET."

Attention must be directed to the magnificent series of stories now appearing in the "Magnet." George Wingate, the captain of Greyfriars, is the central figure, and close behind him is his young scamp of a sailor, Jack. To be captain and head prefect is no enviable job when you are so closely related to a fellow who persists in leading for the "cat." A fine series, chums, and really worth reading. Get this week's issue of our grand companion paper and see for yourselves.

#### NEXT WEDNESDAY'S PROGRAMME!

#### "GUSSY'S GOOD TURN!"

By Martin Clifford.

Arthur Augustus D'Arvy is always a good turn, we'll agree. And in this exciting story of Tom Merry & Co. Gussy is quite of a star performer than ever. Don't miss it, chums.

#### BE SUPPLEMENT!

To make room for the above-mentioned story of St. Jim's, which, by the way, is extra long, I am obliged to hold over the Supplement. I know this won't upset you to any great extent, for the "St. Jim's News" will be "back again" the following week with a leader bang than ever, for you see it is devoted to the celebrated Fifth of November.

#### "A LEADER OF THE LEAGUE!"

By Sydney Horler.

Gemites can look forward to the start of this magnificent new football story, which I have not the slightest doubt will score a record number of goals. Stand by for the kick-off, boys!

#### "JINGLES!"

George Alfred Grandy Eggers is next week's poem by our special Rhymester. The great George Alfred goes well in verse, and his character is hit off to a "t." Don't miss it!

Order your copies of the Gem in good time to the nearest advice of

Your Editor.

A BOY'S GOOD TURN! Not many schoolboys would care to handle a Mack-knife for the sake of treating an unpopular master from his clothes, yet a certain junior at St. Jim's takes on this unenviable job and reveals to us!



# SAVING MR. SELBY!

A Splendid New Long Complete Story of Tom Merry & Co. at St. Jim's, featuring Mr. Selby, the unpopular master of the Third, and a junior schoolboy who, for the moment, shall be nameless.

By Martin Clifford.

## CHAPTER I. A Difference of Opinion!

"NO!" D'Arcy minor—otherwise Wally of the Third—snapped out the word.

"New look here—" said Reggie Mansers.

"No!"

"Look here—" said Hobbs.

"No!"

"Look here, Wally—" said Lovison minor.

"No!"

The answer was in the negative— emphatically so. Walter Adolphus D'Arcy sat on his desk in the Third Form-room at St. Jim's, with a frowning brow. For once the wrang of the Third was not in a good temper. His usual cheery cheerfulness had deserted him.

"I've said no, and I mean no!" he went on, categorically.

"Let Mr. Selby alone! What's the good of japing him?"

"What's the good?" repeated Reggie Mansers. "Why, you silly ass, aren't we up against Selby all the time?"

"No!"

"Well, you fooling duffer!" said Mansers minor, in disgust.

"What's come over you, Wally?"

"Oh, rats!"

Wally of the Third frowned more deeply. His comrades eyed him in considerable amazement. Even Frank Linton, the most easy-going fellow in the St. Jim's Third, was exasperated.

Generally Wally was as ready for a jape as any fellow in the Form—readily, as a rule. And Mr. Selby, the unpopular master of the Third Form, was considered fair game. Certainly, it was a risky business to jape Mr. Selby—decidedly risky. He had a bad temper and a heavy hand. Of late his temper had been worse than usual, and his hand heavier. But apart from the risk, there was no reason why Mr. Selby should not be japed till his wavy hair turned grey, so far as the Third Form could see. Walter Adolphus D'Arcy, for once, did not agree.

"Is it look?" asked Mansers minor.

Wally glowered.

"No, it isn't!" he snapped. "I'm not afraid of Mr. Selby, if you come to that. But what I say is, leave him alone. It's a hell holiday! He's got out of gates."

"But it's no end of a chance," urged Hobbs. "Selby's gone out—"

"Oh, bother!" grunted Wally.

"We can get into his study quite easily," said Reggie Mansers.

"Leave his study alone."

"We've got a bag of coal," said Lovison minor. "I tipped the sweep a bit to let me have it."

"Better have saved your bits," said Wally. "Share the coal into a dustbin. That's the safest place for it."

"It's as easy as falling off a log," said Mansers minor.

"We rig up the bag of coal over his study door, and when he goes in he gets it fairly on the nose. Just fancy it!"

The lads chuckled. Even Wally of the Third grinned

lazily. There was something entertaining in the moral picture of Mr. Selby with the bag of coal landing on his

snout.

But Wally shook his head.

"And it's as safe as houses, if that's what's worrying you," went on Mansers minor.

"That isn't it!" snapped Wally.

"We shall clear out of gates as soon as we've rigged up the booby-trap, and we shan't come in till after tea. There won't be an atom of evidence against anybody!" urged Reggie Mansers.

"Selby will be wild, of course," said Frank Linton.

"But then, he's always wild, more or less. It's no end of a lark, Wally!"

Great from Wally.

"Look here, what do you mean, young D'Arcy?" exclaimed Mansers minor angrily. "If you're not funky, what's the game? Why don't you want to join in a jape on old Selby?"

"Well, he's not been well lately—" said Wally, rather reluctantly.

"His temper hasn't!" said Hobbs. "It's been jolly bad!"

"He gave me two on each hand this morning!" said Reggie Mansers angrily. "If he's really, really funk right! He can't expect fellows to sympathize when he's so jolly free with the cane."

"Besides, he's always more or less," agreed Hobbs.

"He never takes any exercise. I've got two hundred lines to do for him."

"I've got three hundred!" said Lovison minor.

"Wally hasn't any," said Mansers minor. "He hasn't been kicked, either. Selby's letting him off this week."

"For goodness' sake check it, you chaps!" said D'Arcy minor.

"It's a fine afternoon for you. Let's get out."

"No! It'll never be rigged up the booby-trap for Selby!" said Reggie Mansers obstinately.

"I tell you, no!"

"And I tell you, yes!" retorted Reggie. "If you're funky, we'll do it without your help. We're going to do it, whether!"

"You're not!" roared Wally.

"Rats!"

D'Arcy minor slid off the desk and pushed back his cuffs, with a wretched look. Wally was cork of the walk in the Third Form, and as a rule the Third were his faithful followers. Perhaps that was because their leader generally led them the way they wanted to go. Now that there was a difference of opinion it looked like trouble.

"Now, then," said Wally. "I tell you you're not going to jape Selby. Never mind why—I say you're not! That's enough!"

"Rubbish!"

"Rats!"

"Do you want me to give you a thick one all round?" shouted Wally.

"Go and get some!" retorted Reggie Mansers. "You're funky! That's what's the matter with you, young D'Arcy!"

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That was enough for Wally of the Third. His reasons for showing unusual consideration to Mr. Kelly, whenever they were, seemed satisfactory to himself. Certainly, "funk" was not one of them. Such an imputation was not to be tolerated by the leader of the Third. He looked at Reggie Manners and roared him tip and thigh.

"There, back up, you mean!" roared Reggie.

"Stop that, Wally!"

"Back up!"

And in Wally of the Third did not stop, but persisted in assuming Reggie Manners into a state of discipline. Frank Lovison and Hebble looked themselves upon their leader and rolled him on the Form-room floor.

"Bang!"

Wally went down with a loud exclamation and a leader

"My only Aunt Jane!" he gasped, "I—I—[H—]" Wally of the Third was up again in a twinkling.

"Bang him!" yelled Reggie.

"Scrag him!" gasped Frank Lovison.

These unprovoked fags belabored D'Arcy minor, Great fighting-man as he was, Wally had no chance against the three. He was swept off his feet, and he made the Form-room floor with what a scowling would call a sickening thud.

"Bang!"

"Bang!"

"Hit him!" yelled Reggie.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, say hi!" gasped Wally. "Oh! Oh! Groooch! Groooch!" he yelled and utterated as the interval from his own desk was squandered over his flushed face, stroking his crimson complexion with black.

"There, you cheeky scallywag!" gasped Reggie Manners.

"Punching your old man for nothing! Take that!"

"Der! Groooch! FI— Groooch!"

"Roll him under the desks."

"I—I— Oh! Ah! Oh!"

Wally of the Third was rolled under the desks. The three fags, laughing loudly, opened the Form-room, leaving D'Arcy minor to scot himself out of his bureau.

The hapless Wally crawled out, ink, dirty, bewitched. His comrades were gone—to carry out the lapa they had planned on Mr. Kelly, the master of the Third. And Wally, as he limped away from the Form-rooms, was just thinking of interfering further with his malicious followers. His chief need at present was soap and water, and plenty of it. Reggie & Co. were left to their own devices.

## CHAPTER 2.

### Worried About Wally!

"D O you know, I am awfully worried!"

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy of the Fourth made that observation.

The aristocratic hero of D'Arcy major was writhed in thought as he confided in his chance that he was worried.

Blake and Herrie and Digby did not seem to share his worry. They were looking very cheerful.

Study No. 6 were strolling under the class after dinner. It was a fine afternoon and a half-holiday, and as far as Blake & Co. could see there was nothing to worry about. School House jokers were playing New House jokers that afternoon, and all Study No. 6 were booked for Jack Wally's team to play for the School House. So Jack Blake and George Herrie and Robert Arthur Digby, at least, considered that the universe was going on in a satisfactory manner. Only Arthur Augustus was worried.

"Worried, dear boy?" repeated D'Arcy.

"Oh, you're all right!" said Blake. "Not ready, are you?"

"Not at all."

"Feel up to the game?" asked Dig.

"What game?"

"Eh? What game?" said Herrie. "You jollygen are, have you forgotten that we're playing the New House today?"

"For the moment, Herrie, I had forgotten! I was thinking about something else."

"Well, don't!" said Blake gently. "Think about football if you can think of all—which I don't."

"Really, Blake."

"We're all drawn to play," said Blake. "Tom Merry has done the sensible thing for once, and got in the whole study. We've got to show the House that we can't be left out. You've got to play up, Gump! None of your belly business this time."

"If you regard my play as belly, Blake—"

"Well, mind your eye this time," said Blake. "We've got to keep our end up. Stand with your fellows. Especially you, Dig. That one Cardew is wandering out, and you've got a chance to show that you're a better man."

"You're all right, Blake."

"That one Cardew suggested that Smith was a bookmaker."

"Oh, no!" said Blake. "Don't let any harm in it. That one Cardew suggested that Smith was a bookmaker."

"I don't know that I'm better than Cardew," said Dig modestly. "I hope I'm as good."

"Well, so be quite careful, you're not," said Blake frankly.

"But you're more reliable, anyhow, and that's something. I've tried to explain to Tom Merry that a steady chap can rely on it better than a shifty player who never knows his mind from one day to another. Put all your best into it, Dig."

"I'm going to," said Robert Arthur Digby.

"And you, Gump?"

"That's all right, dear boy; I'm not worried about the football match," said Arthur Augustus. "That's all right! I have no doubt that I shall bag a goal or two for the House. I am worried about something else."

"Never mind anything else," said Blake.

"There's Mr. Kelly."

"Never mind Mr. Kelly."

"You're better."

"By Jove! He looks black!" remarked Herrie, and all the chums of Study No. 6 glanced at the Third Form master, who was walking under the class.

Mr. Kelly did, undoubtedly, look black.

His heavy eyes contracted, his thin lips set in a tight line, and under his limited brows his eyes glared oppressively.

He did not observe the Fourth-Formers; he seemed buried in deep and unpleasant reflections as he paced the path under the class.

They regarded him cautiously.

The Third Form master passed on without a glance at them. Jack Blake shrugged his shoulders.

"Looks unconcerned that way!" he remarked. "Jolly glad I'm not in the Third!"

"Yes, wally! But—"

Blake looked up at the clock-tower.

"About time we get changed," he remarked.

"That was what you were sayin' me," said Arthur Augustus.

"That was what you were sayin' me," agreed Blake.

"Well, his face is enough to worry anybody," agreed Blake.

"I do not mean that, Blake! My mind Wally—"

"Better your mind, old man!"

"There is something up, you know," said Arthur Augustus, endeavoring. "You remember the day we heard Wally at the window-curtain, the day he breaks detention—"

"Oh, yes?" gasped Blake.

Blake was chiefly interested just then in the House match, and not in Gump's name in the Third Form.

"Something happened then," went on Arthur Augustus.

"Wally appears to have dodged out of Mr. Kelly's sight when he came down, and very unfortunately saw a mortal between Mr. Kelly and a man who appears to be named Smith."

"Dear man, that's ancient history," said Blake. "What the dickens does it matter?"

"It does matter, Blake. Wally appears to have heard that name"—quite by accident, of course—and Mr. Kelly was suddenly upset when he heard it. It appears that he was talking about very private affairs with a man named Smith."

"And he's taking it out of Wally?" asked Herrie.

"Well, Wally shouldn't have cleared off from detention. If Kelly is taking it out of him he can't say he hasn't asked for it."

"But that is not the case, Herrie. I hear that Mr. Kelly has been slightly half-tempored in the Third, but he has let Wally alone ever since that afternoon at the old castle."

Blake grinned.

"Saw of up to Cardew!" he said. "He doesn't mean your minor to jaw about what he heard. Seems to me that Wally is in luck; Kelly was always down on him before."

"Yes, but the truth is really serious," said D'Arcy.

"Young Wally doesn't seem the same chap since. He has a secret to keep, and it is worryin' him."

"He doesn't seem to be keeping it very close," grinned Digby. "All the fellows have heard about Mr. Kelly going to the old castle to meet a man named Smith. There's been no end of talk about it."

"That was not Wally's fault, Dig. Waggie Manners heard him speak to Mr. Kelly, and caught the name, and spread it about."

"It's jolly odd, come to think of it," remarked Blake.

"If Kelly wanted to see a man Smith, why couldn't the man come here? Jolly odd to fix up a meeting at the rear three or four miles from the school."

"I regard it as very odd, Blake; but, of course, that is Mr. Kelly's business. What worries me is that my mouth has got mixed up in it. He knows what Kelly was talking to the man about, and it weighs on his mind."

"Oh, no!" said Blake. "Don't let any harm in it. That one Cardew suggested that Smith was a bookmaker."

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"That one Cardew suggested that Smith was a bookmaker."



"Oh, my hat!" gasped Wally D'Arcy. "Oh! Ow! Gracious! Gracious!" He yelped and spluttered as the ink-well from his own desk was up-ended over his flushed face, striking his arched eyebrows with black. "There, you cheeky scallywag!" gasped Reggie Mansers. "Punishing your old pals for nothing! Take that!" (See page 4.)

and Mr. Selby had been barking horses. But that's too thick."

"It cannot be anything so disputable as that, Blake; but it is something serious, and Wally is worried about it. I cannot ask him to confide in me, in the city, as of course he has no right to repeat a private conversation which he overheard by accident. So it is worth a deuce for me to advise him in the matter as his chief breath."

"Go on!"

Blake & Co. grinned. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy took himself very seriously in the role of elder brother, and guide, philosopher and friend to his minor in the Third Form. Wally of the Third did not take him so seriously.

"It is not a laughing matter, Blake," said Arthur Augustus severely. "I have been wondering what to do in this very disagreeable affair."

"Nothing, old man," said Blake. "Least said soonest mended. Besides, you always make a muck of anything that you both into."

"Wally, Blake—"

"Hallo, here's those Shell fish!" said Dig.

Tom Merry and Mansers and Lowther of the Shell, came along. They nodded cheerily to Study No. 6.

"About time to get changed," said Tom. "Hallo, what's the trouble, Gussy? Where's that worried look?"

"Thinking of the goals you're going to mull!" asked Monty Lowther.

"Wally!"

"It's his jolly old minor," said Blake, with a grin. "His minor and Mr. Selby. Those minors want kicking all round."

"They do!" said Mansers. "I believe my minor is up to something this afternoon, with young Leeson and Wally. I know I saw Leeson's minor with a bag of wool he had bagged from the sheep."

"But Jove! What does Leeson's minor want with a bag of wool, Mansers?" exclaimed Arthur Augustus, in surprise. Mansers chuckled.

"Blessed if I know, unless it's a horse-trap. Selby has been a regular Tartar in the Third team, and the legs may be giving him something back."

"Young men!" said Blake. "It will only make him

wary. We passed him a few minutes ago, and he looked like thunder."

"I trust that my minor is not jolting in any disrespectful jape on his Form matter."

"What a trusting nature!" grinned Lowther.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, come on," said Tom Merry. "We don't want to be late for the House match, you fellows."

"But Jove! I really think I had better keep an eye on my minor," said Arthur Augustus. "I am rather worried about him. Perhaps you had better tell Carlew to play stick all, Tom Merry, and I will stand out."

"You jolly well won't!" said Blake, before the captain of the Shell could reply. "All Study No. 6 are in this game. Come on!"

"Wally, Blake—"

"Come on, foolhead!" said Hercules.

"Wally, Hercules—"

"Carlew says he's not to," said Tom. "But I can easily find another fellow—Rayburn, or Wildrake—"

"You don't want another fellow," said Blake. "Gussy's playing, and his minor can go and get rick. Are you going to walk to the changing-room, Gussy, or shall we carry you?"

"I think I had better see my minor—"

"Carry him!" said Blake.

"I refuse to be carried! I—Yerrocch!" roared Arthur Augustus, as his comrades rolled him.

Blake took the aristocratic shoulders of Arthur Augustus, and Hercules and Dig took a leg each. They rushed him away towards the House, and the Terrible Three followed.

## CHAPTER 3.

### House Injun!

"GETTING none else, isn't it?" yawned Ralph Beckman Carlew.

Carlew was standing at the window of Study No. 9 in the Fourth, looking out into the quadrangle.

His study-mates, Leeson and Clive, were in the room. It was time to get ready for the House match, but Leeson and Clive did not seem in a hurry to go.

Levison of the Fourth looked at his watch.

"About time, I suppose," he asserted.  
 "Come to the window, dear man," said Cardew. "There's something worth seeing."

Levison and Clive joined him at the window, and gazed. From under the eaves in the distance a party of juniors emerged heading for the House. Arthur Augustus D'Arny of the Fourth was wriggling in the grasp of Blake and Horrie and Digby, and Tom Merry and Manservant and Leathers walked behind, grinning. Through the open window the voice of Arthur Augustus floated from the distance.

"You football wretch! Welcome me at once!"  
 "Good old Gray!" murmured Cardew. "It's really kind of him to provide the comic relief in this way."

"You twiggled wretch!"  
 "Hallo, there's Killalee!" grinned Clive.  
 Killalee of the Sixth came along, and Blake & Co. stopped Arthur Augustus as if he had suddenly become reborn. "The crowd of St. Jim's sprang on the ground and roared."

"Now, then, what's this game?" asked the peevish gruffly.  
 "The sort of thing in the quad—"

"Only helping Gray in to change," said Blake affably.

"Well, chuck it!"  
 Arthur Augustus picked himself up, and with a glance of lily wrath at his comrades walked into the House. Blake & Co. and the Terrible Three followed.

Cardew turned from the window with a yawn.

"They're going in to change," he said. "These you fellows did the same if you're going to play the New House."

"Come on, Levison," said Clive.

Levison hesitated.

"You ought to be playing, Cardew," he said.

"I'm not fit, old man."

"Not?"

"My dear chap, I told Tom Merry so when he asked me."

"Oh, rubbish! What's the matter with you?" snapped Levison.

"Sudden and unaccountable attack of shakiness," said Cardew coolly. "Sudden and unaccountable attack of shakiness."

"You're coming to see the game?"

"Even that position is rather beyond me," asserted Cardew gravely. "The way you go for the ball, Ernest, old bean, makes me feel like to watch it. I dare say I shall find something to do."

Clive gave him a rather suspicious look. Levison of the Fourth knitted his brows.

"I'm not quite an ass, Cardew," he said gruffly.

"Not quite," agreed Cardew. "I've always said so. Very nearly, but not quite."

"Last half-day you wanted to go over to the Abbotsford races, and we took you for a walk instead," said Levison.

"So kind of you!" murmured Cardew. "A fellow can always rely on pals like you to play the great."

"There are some at Abbotsford to-day," said Sidney Clive, his look growing more suspicious.

"Are there?" said Cardew blandly.

"Look here, Cardew, there's a rotten game!" said Clive abruptly. "Come down to Little Side and see the football."

"Too excellent," old man.

Ernest Levison's face was grim.

"Hold on a minute, Clive," he said, and he shut the door of the study. "I'm not quite an ass, Cardew, and I know why you're not on football this afternoon. You're not going over to Abbotsford."

"No!" said Cardew blandly.

"No!"

"And what's going to stop me, old bean?"

"We are," said Levison coolly. "If you won't take care of yourself, Cardew, your friends are going to take care of you. You're not going to be caught lagging and loitering from St. Jim's if I can help it!"

"But you can't help it, old top!" snarled Cardew. "You must even let me go on my own naughty way, and take my chance."

"Not in the least! Clive, there's a card in that cupboard."

"And what are you going to do with a card?" asked Cardew.

"To put up in the armchair while we're playing football."

"What—?"  
 "Good egg!" exclaimed Clive heartily. "We won't take you for a walk this afternoon, Cardew, as we're playing football. But we'll take care that you don't play the great, all the same."

Cardew harked away a pace, breathing hard.  
 "If you fellows are going to meddle with a stamp, and butt into my personal affairs, the friendship in this study will come to a sad and sudden end," he remarked.

"We'll risk that."

"Look here, Levison—"

"Will you give us your word not to go near Abbotsford this afternoon?" said Levison quietly.

"No, I won't."

"I know you'll keep your word if you give it."

"Thanks!" sneered Cardew. "But I'm not giving it."

"Then we'll jolly well rope you in the armchair, and lock the door on you and take away the key," said Ernest Levison.

Clive grinned and nodded.

Ralph Rickman Cardew eyed his two comrades grimly. There was determination in both their faces.

The friendship of the rather oddly assorted chums of Study No. 4 had had many shocks, but it had survived them. More than once Levison and Clive had taken drastic measures when they had become "fed up" with Cardew's wild ways. Now they were prepared to take these again—in a rather more drastic way than before.

"Look here—" said Cardew.

"Callin' him, Clive?"

Cardew harked round the study table.

"I don't want to knock you about just before a football match," he said, his frowning face breaking into a grin.

"After all, I've not been on the giddy race. They're a bore, like everything else—almost as much a bore as you two good fellows. So long as you don't ask me to watch the footer, I'll agree to anything."

"Honest? Honest?" asked Levison.

"Honest beyond!" said Cardew.

"That's good enough."

Cardew threw himself into the armchair when they were gone, and peeped in his pocket for a cigarette and lighted it.

"What a bore!" he murmured. "Must be nice to be a fellow like Trimble, without a friend in the world."

Friends are a bore, especially when they're really friendly. Now, I wonder whether a man would be justified in breaking a promise entered by force?

Cardew reflected on that problem as he smoked his cigarette. A fat face looked into the study, and Baggie Trimble, of the Fourth, grinned and nodded to Cardew.

"All on your own?" he asked.

"Quite."

"I'll keep you company, old chap."

"So good of you!" murmured Cardew.

"Give a fellow a smoke!" suggested Trimble.

Cardew shook his head.

"Dear man, don't you know it's wrong for kids here to smoke, and strictly against the rules of the school, which we are bound to respect," he said.

"Oh! You're smoking!" said Trimble, with a stare.

"That's a different matter, dear man. A fellow can be a blackguard without being a corrupter of youth!" explained Cardew.

"Oh, rats! I smoke," said Trimble. "I'm rather a goer, in fact."

"Good!" said Cardew. "If you're a goer, go! Good-bye."

"I didn't mean that."

"I did."

Cardew blew out a cloud of smoke, and eyed Trimble thoughtfully.

"Would you like to give me some advice, Trimble?" he asked.

"Pleased, old man," said Baggie.

"Suppose a fellow was thinkin' of knockin' all the rules of the school into a cocked hat by goin' to the races," said Cardew.

"Suppose his pals loved him to promise that he wouldn't! Do you think he would be justified in breakin' a promise given under such circumstances?"

"Yes, rather!" said Trimble sagely. "I'll come with you, Cardew."

"You really think that such a promise is not bindin'?"

"Quite certain."

"Thanks so much," yawned Cardew. "It's really good of you to give me advice on a knotty point, Trimble. I'm satisfied now."

"So are you, then?"

"No, I'm not going. If you think it right, old bean, it must be jolly wrong," explained Cardew. "I'm stickin' to the promise."

"You silly ass!" scoted Trimble.

**ANSWERS**  
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"Are you going to walk to the changing-rooms, Gussy," said Blake, "or shall we carry you?" "I think I had better keep an eye on my trunk." "Carry him, then!" ordered Blake. "I confess to be somewhat of a passenger!" roared Arthur Augustus, as his overcoat sustained him. Blake took the aristocratic shoulders of the coat of St. Jere's, and Horrie and Dig took a leg each; then they rushed him away towards the house. (See page 5.)

"Thanks!"

"You fooling clamp!"

"Trimble, old man, your opinion of my intellect may be well founded—I dare say it is—but your voice is unpleasant. Will you leave the extreme positions to get on the other side of the door?"

"You stily fathead—"

The cushion from Carden's armchair whizzed across the study, and caught Buggy Trimble under his fat chin. There was a roar from Buggy as he disappeared into the passage.

"Come back, old man!" called out Carden. "I've got another cushion here."

Buggy Trimble did not come back. He did not seem to want the other cushion.

Carden finished his cigarette and yawned, and detached himself from the armchair. He was at a loose end for the afternoon, and—as was often the case with the deputy of the Fourth—did not quite know what to do with his leisure. His promise to his chums was binding—Buggy's advice had confirmed that, if it needed confirming. The Abbotsford race were off, so far as Carden was concerned.

He yawned deeply, shoved his hands into his pockets, and lounged from the study—almost regretting, after all, that he was not playing football with Tom Merry & Co. on Little Side. But it was too late to think of that—neither did the inevitable clock chime regret it. He looted away from his study idly and dismally.

CHAPTER 4.  
D'Arcy Does It!

"GUSSY!"

"That an—"

"That fathead!"

Blake & Co. were wrathful.

There was a crowd of fellows in the changing-room,

getting ready for the House match; but Arthur Augustus D'Arcy was not with them.

Blake's unfortunate intervention had had that result. Arthur Augustus, no longer carried, had walked into the House by himself, and instead of heading for the changing-rooms, he had slipped away from the eyes of his comrades.

"If he's not slipped away," said Blake emphatically—"if he's not ready for the match, we'll lynch him."

"Lynching is too good for him," said Dig. "As if it matters about his blessed return."

"How his return?"

"Better his return!"

"Why grudge?" said Tom Merry, laughing. "Gussy will turn up all right—and if he doesn't, we'll pin it Bates or Troop."

"How Bates and how Troop?" said Blake angrily.

From Jack Blake's point of view, it mattered very much whether all Study No. 6 played in the House match, and it did not matter very much—*at all*—what happened to D'Arcy's missus.

D'Arcy major's point of view was quite different, however.

He was worried about his missus. Although not a very observant fellow, D'Arcy had observed that Wally had seemed worried ever since that strange affair at the old castle on Wayland Hill. Whatever it was that he had heard Mr. Selby discussing with the mysterious man South, it had had a very disturbing effect on the boy. It had brought him more than ever into his Fern major's bad graces, though it appeared that Mr. Selby had been less harsh to him than of old. Possibly the Fern major realized that it was as well to placate the boy who knew some stuff that was better not talked about.

Wally certainly was not a natter. He had refused to explain anything about the matter to his own chums, and

had said nothing to his major. Only the name of Smith had leaked out, and that was not Wally's fault. But Mr. Selby must have felt very disturbed and uneasy, knowing how little a junior schoolboy's discretion was to be relied upon. With matters in this state it was no time for Wally of the Third to join in some reckless and lawless jape on his Form master, and Gussy, though he sometimes erred on the side of a too hasty concern for his young brother, was quite right as that point.

Right or wrong, Gussy was not to be moved by argument. Leaving his claims in charge for the football match, he proceeded to look for Wally of the Third. He looked in the Form-room first, and found only Piggott there.

Heban Piggott of the Third greeted at him.

"Looking for your minor?" he asked.

"Yess, wallyah."

"Better look in the bath-room."

"But Jove, why?"

"He's been washing with the other cuds," explained Piggott, with a chuckle, "Messers minor and young Lexion and Hobbs. They bumped him and asked him. He was a jolly sight! Ha, ha, ha!"

"But Jove?"

With a glance of strong disfavor at the hilarious Piggott, Arthur Augustus withdrew from the Third Form-room.

"Hallo, old Gem?"

D'Arcy minor came down the staircase. He had a newly washed and gaminish look, evidently freshly washed and brushed and combed, though there were still traces of ink about his ears and his hair.

"Aren't you playing foster, Gem?"

"Yess! but I was wallyah worried about you, Wally. I hear that you young sweeps have been printin' a bag of soap."

"That young an Lexion!" said Wally. "They're going to set up a booby-trap for Mr. Selby."

"I am very glad to see that you are havin' no hard in it, Wally," said Arthur Augustus.

"I'm letting Selby sleep," muttered Wally. "He's let me sleep the past week. Besides, he's got enough to worry him, I fancy, without japing or sagging going on."

The smell of St. Jim's eyed his minor curiously.

"If you are alludin' to that man Smith, Wally—"

"Anghem, I'm keepin' clear of him," said D'Arcy minor. "You told those young ones to do the same, and they won't! They can go and eat oaks!"

"Where are they now, dear boy?"

"Gone to Selby's study. I expect to fix up their silly booby-trap," answered Wally carefully. "If he catches them at it; there will be a row. I don't care—let 'em rip!"

And Wally of the Third walked on, Arthur Augustus D'Arcy stood for a moment or two in thought, glancing after him, and then moved off towards Mr. Selby's study. It was a relief to him to find that his minor was not concerned in the projected jape on the Third Form master, and, really, he might have dropped the matter now and repaired his friends in the changing-room. But it was like the noble Gussy to decide to speak a word in season to the misguided lads, who were about to call down their Form master's wrath upon their unthinking heads.

As Arthur Augustus came into Messers' corridor there was a sound of scuffling feet at the other end of the passage.

Beyond the corner three breathless lads gathered.

"Just in time?" panted Reggie Messers.

"Was that Selby?" asked Hobbs.

"Most likely!" said Lexion minor. "I didn't stop to look, but it was somebody, at any rate. We don't want to be seen near Selby's study."

"No fear?"

"Look round the corner!" whispered Hobbs.

Reggie Messers duck his head.

"Better keep close!" he answered. "If we're spotted about here it's all O. P. Selby will get it as soon as he opens his door."

"I'll chance it!" muttered Lexion minor.

"Keep back, an!"

But Frank Lexion cautiously put his head round the corner and glanced along the corridor. He gave a jump.

"My hat! It's D'Arcy major!"

"Oh, that an?"

"He's stopped at Selby's door!" breathed Frank.

"If that thumping idiot opens our booby-trap—!" hissed Messers minor furiously.

"Oh crumbs!" gasped Frank.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, quite unconscious of the proximity of the three young rascals of the Third, had stopped at Mr. Selby's door. The door was ajar, and D'Arcy knew that Mr. Selby was not there—he had seen him walking under the eaves in the quad. His impression was that the master of the Third was there, preparing some surprise for

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Mr. Selby, and Arthur Augustus was glad that he had arrived in time to speak a word in season.

He pushed open the study door and swept in.

Squish! Squash! Squash!

"Oh?"

Something descended from above—something that rattle upon the table head of Arthur Augustus and seemed to burst into black smoke.

"Goooooh!" What—oh gad? Bad Jove! Goooooooh!"

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy staggered in the doorway. The cupboard door had fallen fairly on his noble head, hammering him, and the seat smothered him from head to foot. Feet was all over him—his hair, his face, his eyes and his nose, his clothes, even his boots. He lived, moved, and had his being in seat!

"Messers-minor-minor!" spluttered Arthur Augustus helplessly.

"He's got it!" shrieked Frank Lexion from the corner of the corridor.

"Who has?" yelled Reggy.

"D'Arcy major!"

"Oh, the gas!"

"Goooooh!" Goooh!" came in a wild, wailed, suffocated howl from the midst of St. Jim's. "Oh wallyah! I am smothered! I am suffocated! Goooooh! Oh dear! Oh! Woe! Goooh!"

There was a step in the passage, and Mr. Selby came along. He stared blankly at the blackened figure that was cowering in his doorway in a sea of seat.

"What—what—that—?" gasped Mr. Selby.

"Goooh!"

"Who—what is that?" gasped the Third Form master.

Three lads, at the sound of the dreadful voice, were fleeing, unseen, by remote passages. But Mr. Selby did not think of looking a long the corridor. His amazed eyes were fixed on the blackened figure in his study.

"Goooh!" gasped Arthur Augustus. "Gag-gag-gag! Goooh!"

"Who is it?" shrieked Mr. Selby. The roof of St. Jim's was quite unrecognizable.

"Goooh!" D'Arcy, ah! I am smothered! Somebody's hat fallen on my head! Oh! Goooh! I am smothered with seat! Oh dear! Some fearful young wifian had fixed a box of seat over the door!" wailed Arthur Augustus. "Oh wallyah! Gag-gag-gag!"

"Upon my word!" gasped Mr. Selby. "A trap for me—in my study! This was evidently intended for me! It is very fortunate, D'Arcy, that you came to my study."

"Goooh!" I quite fail to see that, sir!" gasped the hapless wretch of St. Jim's. "I am very sorry I cannot—Goooh!"

"Pooch!" said Mr. Selby. "I shall inquire into this. Serious punishment shall be administered. Do you know who did this, D'Arcy?"

"Goooh!"

"You had better get and clean yourself," snapped Mr. Selby. "You are in a disgusting state, D'Arcy."

"Messers-minor-minor!"

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy gazed at the seat in his eyes. He blinked his way out of the study and limped away, leaving a trail of seat after him as he trod.

"If that been what doesn't been up—!" Jack Blake was saying, in a whispering tone, in the changing-room. "Why—what—who—here—what's that? Who's that nigger!" Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, black as the ace of spades, dashed on the footballs.

"Gussy!" yelled Dig.

"Oh, my hat!"

"Is that D'Arcy?" gasped Tom Merry.

"Yess, wallyah!" groaned Arthur Augustus. "Goooh! I am smothered with seat! Oh dear!"

"But what the thump—?"

"Let me get of the hot wallyah, dear boy. I am in a frightful state!"

"You look it!" checked Tom.

"It is not a laughin' matter."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"But what on earth's happened, Gussy?" exclaimed Talbot of the Shell. "Have you been up a chimney?"

"Wallyah, Talbot!"

"Just like Gussy, to do these stunts when we're ready for footie," said Blake. "Couldn't you have collected that seat till after the match, Gussy?"

"Goooh!"

"Is it Lexion minor's seat that you've got hold of?" grieved Messers of the Shell.

"Goooh!" Yess, the wrong wallyah!"

"My minor!" shrieked Frank Lexion.

"Yess, the young sweep!"

"You look more like a sweep than my minor does, I think," shrieked Lexion of the Fourth.

"Ha, ha, ha!"



"Oh dear! I shall give your misshapen a fearful thrashing, Lovison, and your misshapen also, Mamma. A pair of football-going walkmen! Ooooh! I went to Mr. Solly's study to stop them, your knower, and it did not occur to me that they had already fixed up a booby trap."

"Ha, ha, ha!"  
 "You got it instead of Solly?" shrieked Mamma.  
 "Yes, wath! Ooooooh!"  
 "Ha, ha, ha!"  
 "I fail to see anything funny in this fearful outrage!"  
 "Look in the glass," shrieked Clara. "You'll see something jolly funny then."  
 "Ha, ha, ha!"  
 "Oh, wath!"

Arthur Augustus hurried rusty garments to right and left, and plunged into steaming hot water. Bound him the School House janitors fairly rocked with laughter.

The swell of St. Jim's failed to see anything funny in his misadventure. But the other fellows did not feel. They yelled and they snarled.

When Tom Merry & Co. streamed out of the changing

Frank Lovison looked over the crowd.

"Wally's not here," he said.  
 "Can't see him," said Hodge.  
 "Said I from Reggie Mamma's."  
 "Oh, he's walking. Let him walk."  
 "Rats!" said Lovison miser. "Let's look for him."  
 "Oh, all right!"

And the lags proceeded to look for Wally of the Third. But they did not find him. Whether he was walking or not, as Reggie sadly admitted, D'Arcy minor was not to be found by his comrades of the Third Form.

#### CHAPTER 3. The Blackmailer.

**B**UZZZZ!

The telephone bell rang in Mr. Solly's study.

Mr. Solly gave an almost convulsive start.

It was a quarter of an hour since he had returned to the study, and heard Arthur Augustus there covered with soot. Soot smattered the floor near the doorway, but Mr.



# St. Jim's Jingles!



No. 8 D'ARCY Minor  
(OF THE THIRD FORM.)

**T**HIS cherry, lily-fingered  
tag,  
Great Gussy's merry  
minor,

Has taken part in many a "rag"—  
He thinks there's nothing funnier!

He's always organising japes  
That drive his seniors frantic;

And with the other Third Form  
ages

He's up to many an antic.

Some fellows seem to drift through  
life

In gloom and melancholy;  
They relish not its storms and  
strife—

That's not the way with Wally!  
It takes a lot to put him out.

He's happy as a sandboy  
(Except, perhaps, at Solly's shout,

"D'Arcy! Hold out your hand,  
boy!")

He doesn't warship silk top-hats  
Like the complacent Gussy;

On matters such as socks and spats  
He's not a trifle fussy.

His Elton coat is often torn,  
"A thing of shreds and patches,"

Through being dragged in beamble  
there,

Or rent in wrestling matches!



WALTER ADOLPHUS D'ARCY.

His faithful friends are young Joe  
Frayne,

Gilson, and Ernest Jameson;  
They join the fray with might and  
main

When there are sports or games  
The reputation of the Form

Is in their jealous keeping;  
And never, even in the dorm,

Do they believe in sleeping!

The words of these gay young  
Tanks,

The pranks they've taken part  
Are they not written in the works

Of the illustrious Martin?  
Week after week, in breezy style,

He tells of all their vapors;  
And those who want to laugh and  
smile

Read the Companion Papers!

Here's to this mischief-loving Peck,  
The minor of Augustus!

To wish him nothing but good luck  
He certainly may trust us!

Long may his merry antics be  
A source of jubilation  
To readers all, on land and sea,  
Of every rank and station!

**NEXT WEEK: GEORGE ALFRED GRUNDY.**

rooms, and headed for the football ground. Arthur Augustus was still mopping up the soot. His aristocratic face was crimson instead of black when his exertions were over at last, and he sprang about his comrades.

"Just in time," said Tom Merry cheerily, as Arthur Augustus arrived on Little Sole. "Another minute, and you'd have been checked, old man."

"Wah!" said Arthur Augustus breathlessly.

"Loo up!" said Tom, laughing.

And the School House fellows, and Figgins & Co. of the New House, lined up for the House match.

Three lags of the Third joined the crowd of fellows who were looking on as Tom Merry looked off for the House. Lovison minor, Reggie Mamma's, and Hodge grinned as they stared at the crimson face of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, crimson with scrubbing and rubbing, this aristocratic countenance shone like a beacon among the School House footballers.

"Silly me!" commented Mamma's minor. "All that soot wasted—after you gave a look for it, too, Frayne."

Solly had not rung for a maid to sweep it away. He hardly seemed to notice it. He seemed to be giving very little thought even to the fact that a booby-trap had been laid for him in his own study. That was not at all like Mr. Solly, and it showed that weightier matters were on his mind.

He had been staring with his eyes on the clock, doubtless expecting the telephone call. But when the bell rang he did not seem to be in a hurry to go to the instrument.

Buzzzz!

He stepped over to the telephone at last, but even then he hesitated to take up the receiver. He was expecting the call, but he was extremely reluctant to take it.

Buzzzz!

With a nervous, shaking hand Mr. Solly jerked the receiver off the hook at last, and placed it to his ear. He spoke into the transmitter in a faint voice.

"Is that Mr. Solly?" came a hard, sharp voice.

"Yes!" located the Third Form master.

"Smooth speaking."

"Well?" gasped Mr. Selby.

"I have given you a week, Mr. Selby, and have now rung you up again. I am in Wayland this afternoon."

The receiver shook in Mr. Selby's hand.

"As you did not care to make an appointment when I rang you up, I am making one myself. I will meet you at four o'clock, Mr. Selby, in the same place as before—the old gateway of the castle ruins near Wayland."

"I—"

"There is still ninety pounds due on this—the document I hold," went on the voice. "Ten pounds was paid on account, as doubtless you recall. The balance must be paid today!"

"I cannot—"

"It is useless to waste words, Mr. Selby," came the cold, hard voice of Mr. Smooth. "I am fairly well acquainted with your position, and I am quite aware that you can raise the money if you choose. If necessary, probably your headmaster would oblige you with a temporary loan."

"I cannot ask him, I—"

"That, however, is not my affair. My business is to collect this debt without further delay."

A spasm of rage seized Mr. Selby's weak, meagre face.

"You usual," he breathed. "You are well aware that there is no debt—that I owe you nothing, not any more. You hold a paper that is absolutely worthless, excepting that it can be used to seal an epileptic in a prison, and cover my name with disgrace. You are well aware—"

"I advise you, Mr. Selby, to take care what you say on the telephone," broke in the cold voice. "Other ears may hear."

Mr. Selby broke off, stammering.

"If you choose to acquit the whole world with the peculiar proceedings of Lucien Selby, you are your own master," went on Smooth. "I am sure I have no objection to offer."

"Silence!" breathed Mr. Selby.

But the voice went on, with a note of mockery.

"You are not responsible for your nephew. No one can

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**GRAND**

**FOOTER SERIAL**

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tell upon you legally to discharge his liabilities. You are entirely your own master in the matter."

"Enough!"

"If you choose to come to an arrangement, I am at your service, Mr. Selby. What is your decision?"

"I repeat that I cannot—"

"Very well," the matter said, then. The cheque I hold will be presented at the bank, and matters will take their course."

"One moment—give me a moment!" gasped the Form master.

"Two, if you like."

Mr. Selby passed his hand across his perspiring brow. He tried to think, but it was difficult to think clearly. It was bitter to yield to the demands of this blackmailing man; dearly would Mr. Selby have liked to ring up the police-station. But he dared not. The arrest of his near relative—a prosecution and a sentence of imprisonment—his name in the papers—it was impossible! All the school would know—the headmaster would know! How could he ever hold up his head at St. Jim's again, after such an exposure, if indeed Dr. Holmes did not request him to resign?

Would the Head allow him to remain, after such a scandal? Scandal was quite out of place in connection with a man holding such a position as that of Form master in a school like St. Jim's.

He dared not defy the blackmailers.

A strong man, doubtless, would have defied him. But Mr. Selby was not a strong man, or a brave one; he was only violent and passionate.

"I am waiting," came the cold, clear voice of Smooth.

"Have you made up your mind, Mr. Selby?"

"I—I think—a smaller sum—"

"The balance due is ninety pounds, Mr. Selby. I decline to accept even eighty-nine pounds sixteen shillings—"

"I—I will you—"

"It is useless to prolong this discussion, etc. I shall be waiting for you in the same place as before, at four—  
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o'clock. If you are not there, you must be prepared to take the consequences."

"One word—"

"Smooth, are you there?"

There was no reply.

The man had rung off.

Mr. Selby replaced the receiver with a trembling hand.

He glanced at the clock again; it was past three. And it was three or four miles to the north ruins on Wayland Hill. Mr. Selby had not much time left to make up his mind.

But he could not make it up.

He moved restlessly about the study, pacing to and fro, a prey to conflicting thoughts.

What was he to do?

He left the study at last, and put on his coat and hat, and walked out of the School House. Half-past three chimed from the clock tower.

He would be late—and if Smooth did not wait—

He hurried out of gates, Mr. Latham, the master of the Fourth, was just turning out of the gateway into the road.

"Ah! You are going for a walk, Mr. Selby," he said— "to the village, no doubt? Shall we walk together?"

"I—I happen to be going through the wood, sir," answered Mr. Selby, with a gulp.

Mr. Latham smiled benignly.

"It is immaterial to me," he said cheerily. "I shall like a walk through the wood, if you would care for my company."

"Has the fact been—"

"That is rather a heavy, Mr. Latham—excuse me."

And with that the Third Form master almost ran, leaving the master of the Fourth staring after him blankly.

CHAPTER 6.

Cardew Finds Occupation!

"MY excellent young friend!"

Wally of the Third started and stared round as Ralph Beckton Cardew tapped him lightly on the shoulder.

Cardew smiled at him approvingly.

Wally did not smile in return. He had no special liking for the dandy of the Fourth, and the meeting did not please him, though it seemed to please Cardew. The scamp of the Third, in fact, did not think much of the Fourth Form at all, and he was the very last lag at St. Jim's to be patronised by an Upper Form man.

So he stared grimly at Cardew, with an unbecoming stare.

Cardew did not mind.

He had been stammering lately along the deep shady lane, bordered by brown woods, towards the Wayland road, when he came on the lag. He was at a loose end, and utterly bored with his own company. Nothing seemed agreeable that afternoon. He had refused to play football, and refused to watch the game in which his classes were playing. Hacks and Crooks of the Sixth, based on one of their shady half-holiday excursions, had asked him to join up, but he was not in a mood for Hacks's dingy blackguardism, and he had declined, without thanks.

In Ryeburn Lane he had met Wilbrake of the Fourth, who was going down to the village to hire a horse for a ride; and he had been a little tempted to go with the Canadian jockey. But, on reflection, he decided that riding was a bore, like everything else, and Wilbrake went his way alone. Absurdities were barred by his promise to Lovison; but on the whole he did not feel very keen on evening. He was not keen on anything—just lary and bored, dissatisfied with himself and things generally. And then he came on Wally of the Third, and greeted that independent young gentleman.

Depending on the somewhat mysterious affair of Mr. Selby and the man Smooth, Wally of the Third had a slight interest for the lary Cardew; he had wondered about that affair, and it occurred to him that it might be entertaining to "pump" the lag.

So he smiled cheerily in return for Wally's grim looks, and walked by his side as the lag swung along the lane. Nobody's company, that afternoon, had seemed to please Cardew; but by this time he was fed-up with solitude, and wanted somebody to speak to.

"My excellent young friend—" he repeated.

"Oh, don't be an ass, you know," said Wally minor gruffly.

"How is it I find you on your own?" smiled Cardew. "You and young Lovison and Manzoni minor are generally as thick as thieves. Aren't you generally inseparable on a half?"



"Come on, you reptile!" said Cardew, grasping his cudgel tightly. "I'm ready for you!" Smooth jerked out a life-preserver. "Now, you young rascal, get out of it, or—ah!" Smooth uttered a sharp cry, as Cardew, with a sudden spring, came at him. The cudgel struck on the man's wrist, and caught it with a locking blow, and the life-preserver dropped to the ground. (See page 18.)

"We've had a row," grunted Wally.  
 "Naughty!" sighed Cardew. "Bad form to quarrel with your pals, kid. Very naughty."  
 "Futhead!"  
 "I've just had a bit of a row with mine," sighed Cardew. "I suppose, after all, the chief use you can put a pal to is to quarrel with him. What?"  
 "Oh, no!" said Wally.  
 Cardew smiled.  
 "So you're all alone, and I'm all alone," he said. "Do you mind lettin' me have you for a little while if I let you have me? One good turn deserves another."  
 "I think you're a silly ass!" said the tag, with the frankness of the Third Form.  
 "Right on the wicket," agreed Cardew. "Are you quite anywhere in particular, my esteemed young friend?"  
 "No; only touching," said Wally. "I thought of dropping in at the pictures in Wayland. It's too hot out of bounds."  
 "What a pity!" sighed Cardew. "If it were not of bounds I think I might be tempted to go there also. But it's not very interesting to go anywhere within bounds. By the way, who's Smooth?"  
 Wally started violently.  
 "Smooth?" he repeated.  
 "Just Smooth!"  
 "So you've heard about it, have you?" said Wally reproachfully. "All through that young ass, Maximo's mess! I wish I'd given him another punch now!"  
 "But Maximo's mess wasn't at the merry meeting in the old room," said Cardew.  
 "He heard me speaking to Mr. Selby. I never meant to say a word," said O'Aray miserably. "But all the fellows seem to have got hold of the name of Smooth now. Well, they won't get hold of anything else from me, at any rate."  
 "You can keep a secret!" smiled Cardew.  
 "I rather think so."  
 "So our esteemed and respected Mr. Selby met a man-named Smooth at the ruins, and you heard them talk," said Cardew. "That's how I've heard about it. I'm rather shocked at you, O'Aray miser. Even in Baggy-Triple's line these years, that sort of thing!"

Wally of the Third Form criticism.  
 "You cheeky ass, do you think I'd listen to a private conversation?" he broke out angrily. "I couldn't help it. I'd climbed to the top of the old gateway, and was there when Selby came along. Think I was going to let him see me, when I was out of bounds, breaking detention!"  
 "Wiser not, I agree," said Cardew.  
 "Well, then," growled Wally, "how could I help it? They stopped just under the gate to talk. How could I help hearing them?"  
 "You couldn't," agreed Cardew. "This man Smooth is some relative of dear old Selby, I suppose?"  
 "Of course not."  
 "Oh, only a friend—what?"  
 Wally grinned.  
 "You wouldn't have thought he was a friend if you'd heard them talking," he said. "Of all the rotten rascals!"  
 "Oh—Selby or Smooth?"  
 "Smooth, of course," said Wally irritably.  
 "A rotten rascal, is he?" said Cardew loudly. "My dear kid, is that quite respectful to your beloved Pooze master, makin' out that he has mysterious secret meetings with rotten rascals?"  
 "He wouldn't have met him if he could have helped it. I know that," said Wally. "If I were in his place, I'd jolly well have got Smooth in prison. But Selby's got no pluck."  
 Cardew's eyes glinted.  
 "He was content, with a conviction born of sheer ill-humor of mind. It amused him to draw the story from the reluctant tag, little by little."  
 "But how could Mr. Selby see him in prison?" he asked.  
 "Well, he could," said Wally obstinately. "What Smooth is doing is against the law."  
 "And what is he doing exactly?" asked Cardew softly.  
 "I'm not telling you anything," said Wally loudly. "It's Mr. Selby's business, not yours, or mine either. I'm not going to say a word about it. The fact is, I'm sorry for him."  
 "I didn't know you liked Selby."  
 "I don't like him," growled Wally. "But I'm sorry for him, all the same. He hasn't thanked me, or given me  
 THE END. (See page 18.)

lies, since that day; he's afraid to. Thinks I'd tell about him if he did." The bar's lips curled. "It's a bit alarming to see a man cross, and Selby's giddy enough, at the idea of the whole thing getting out. As if I'd tell anybody a word!"

"It seems to me, young 'un, that you must have heard something jolly serious when you were perched on the castle gate that afternoon," drawled Cardew.

Wally did not reply.

"What has Selby done?"

"Nothing, that I know of," growled Wally. "It was a relative of his, he said, when I was speaking to him afterwards."

"And what has the giddy relative done?"

Wally gave a grin.

"Look here, Cardew, you're trying to pump me, and I'm not going to say anything. If you want to know about Mr. Selby's affairs, you can ask Selby himself—can't you?"

"You're not going to tell me anything?"

"No!" growled the lad.

"It seems to me that you've told me a good deal already," said Cardew, laughing. "Don't worry; I've none."

"I don't see that I've told you anything," growled Wally.

"What the things do you mean?"

"Well, it seems that Mr. Selby met this man Smooth—amazingly, and they're not friends—rather enemies—and Smooth's doing something that he could be put in prison for, and Mr. Selby's giddy relative has done something unknown," smiled Cardew. "Putting two and two together, my young excellent young friend, I should say that when you were on the top of the castle gate that afternoon, you had learned that some relation of Mr. Selby's had made a bad break, that the man Smooth knows about it, and that he's sticking poor old Selby for a top to keep quiet about what he knows."

Wally of the Third drew a deep breath.

The expression on his face was enough for Cardew; he could see easily enough that he had guessed correctly. It was an interview with a blackmailer that the lad had unconsciously witnessed.

Cardew whistled.

He had never liked Mr. Selby or respected him very much. But he could feel for any man at the mercy of a blackmailer, the innocent and honest of criminals.

And Mr. Selby, he knew very well, was not the kind of man to deal successfully with such a scoundrel. He was more likely to struggle up at a throat than to defy the rascal to do his worst.

"So that's it," murmured Cardew laisly. "Some jolly old member of Selby's family has put his head in it, and poor old Selby has got to shell out to keep it dark. What a life!"

"Look here," broke out Wally angrily, "you've no right to know a thing out of me like this, Cardew. It's jolly none!"

"Is it?" purred Cardew.

"Yes, it is, and if I were big enough I'd jolly well punch your head!" exclaimed the lad, with bursts of vermin in his eyes. "It's bad enough for Mr. Selby, without a lot of fellows knowing."

I never meant to say a word."

"My dear lad, I'm an idiot as the game," said Cardew. "Not a syllable from me, even to my own pals in Stinky No. 9—eat a giddy syllable!"

"You'd no right to draw me out like that," murmured the lad. "A fellow like Tom Merry, wouldn't he give you that?"

Cardew winced a little. But his answer was very well made, as he answered:

"Thomas sets a high standard which common mortals can never reach, lad. Thomas is a model we strive after in vain."

"Oh, chuck it!" snapped Wally.

He hastened his steps, as if to get rid of the dandy of the Fourth. They had reached the turning of the lane into Wayland road, and Wally walked along towards the town. Cardew hurried after him, feeling a little uncomfortable.

"Look here, lad, I'm sorry," he said apologetically. "I mightn't to have drawn you, I know. But I'm not going to say anything; it's all as safe as if you hadn't let out a word. Catch on!"

Wally did not reply; his eyes were fixed on a shabbily-dressed man who was coming up the high-road from the direction of Wayland—a man with spare features, and slant, shaly eyes strangely reminiscent of a rat's.

"My only Aunt Jane!" breathed Wally. "He's here again!"

"He? Who?"

"That's the man!"

Cardew fixed his eyes on the rat-eyed man. So this was Smooth, the man whom Mr. Selby had met at the ruined castle. He was here again, and proceeding, too, in the direction of the ruins. Cardew wondered if that meant another meeting with Mr. Selby.

Smooth glanced carefully at the two juniors as he passed them. He turned into the path that led up from the high road to the ruined castle.

"So that's the man!" murmured Cardew. "He looks a low-down sort of merchant."

Wally nodded. Cardew stood looking after Smooth with a strangely absent gaze as the man followed the hillside path (the brown woods concealed him from sight).

## CHAPTER 7.

### Chipping In!

WALLY of the Third shook a clenched fist after the rat-eyed man as he disappeared. Then he walked on without another word to Cardew.

Ralph Redburn Cardew stood quite still. His face was curiously thoughtful, as he watched the wooded path by which Smooth had gone.

Strange thoughts were working in his brain. If Amy never disappeared from sight along the high road, but Cardew did not look after him. His gaze remained fixed on the wooded path on the hillside, beyond which the massive ruins of the ancient castle loomed among the trees-tops.

Tom Merry & Co., on Little Sals at St. Jim's, were playing football and enjoying their game. But it seemed to Ralph Redburn Cardew that for some at the beginning of a game were intensely exciting than football. He had found an occupation for his idle afternoon.

Cardew was not, perhaps, a particular fellow in some respects. Certainly there was a great gulf fixed between him and a fellow like Tom Merry, or Arthur Augustus IV Amy, for instance. He had a cynical tolerance for the sins of others, as well as for his own. But there was a limit, and the mere thought of a blackmailer exacting money from a scared victim for keeping a shady secret filled him with loathing. He would gladly have taken a great deal of trouble and risk to defeat the blackmailer, or, if that was not feasible, to make him "squint" as much as possible.

Mr. Selby was nothing to him. He either liked or respected the man. But Mr. Selby was, after all, a St. Jim's master. Any shame or disgust that fell upon him would be reflected on the school to which Cardew belonged. That was something. And though he detested the Third Form master for his feeble yielding to threats, he felt something like compassion also. A threat to a fellow like Cardew would have roused him to the fiercest resistance, regardless of risk. But the wretched Mr. Selby was not made of the same stuff.

Whether it was loathing of the blackmailer, compassion for Mr. Selby, concern for the good name of St. Jim's, or the sheer excitement of entering into a contest with a dangerous rascal, Ralph Redburn Cardew resolved to take a hand in the game. Possibly it was a mixture of all these motives. Now what Cardew harbored about his motives, Wally of the Third was not of sight when Cardew ascended the slope to the old castle, bordered by trees and thickets.

Cardew, in his more energetic moments, joined in the Second year of St. Jim's juniors, and he was quite a good sport. It was easy enough for him to keep in cover as he advanced up the wooded path.

He stepped in the cover of a thicket at the raised gateway looked up at the end of the path. Only one side of the gateway and a fragment of the top arch survived. The rest lay piled in many fragments. Under the broken arch the man Smooth was standing.

He was looking at his watch, and then at the path on the hillside, with visible impatience in his face.

Evidently he was waiting for someone.

(Continued on page 164)



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## IF I WERE the HEAD!

By  
Sidney Clive.

I'd be a easy-going apart,  
I'd let you lie and snore in bed,  
You'd vote me all a real good sort,  
If I were Head!

No mugging Latin, swotting Greek,  
For these have ever been my dread,  
Just seven days' holiday every week,  
If I were Head!

No cane, no birch, no whipping-stick,  
No impats, hops, it must be said,  
Would ever reign at this old school,  
If I were Head!

In fact, you'd thrill to be alive,  
Life would be one grand sweet  
spread,

And you could call me Sidney Clive  
If I were Head!

And midnight fecks with piles of  
luck,  
You'd find me there at every  
spread,

In truth, I'd be a rare "old back"  
If I were Head!

But as the proverbial cup and gown  
Will never earn for me my bread,  
I'll seek my living up in town,  
I BRAN'T be Head!

### BARRING SIXPENCE!

A school-teacher asked the class to bring some small articles, each one to represent a song. The pupil who brought the most pleasing object would get sixpence. The following morning everybody brought something. Jimmy Jones turned up with a lump of coal. This suggested the song, "Don't Go Down in the Mine, Daddy." Freddie Fellow had a cake of soap to indicate "Bubbles." Young Williams surprised everybody by producing his father's employment-card.

"What song does this represent, Williams?" asked the Third Form master.

"Oh, You Beautiful 'Dea'!" replied the youngster.

He was the sixpence!

### ON THE AVERAGE!

Teacher: "What is an average?"  
Pupil: "Something a hen lays eggs on."

"What makes you think that?"  
"I saw in a paper that seven hens laid on an average forty eggs a week!"

## EDITORIAL!

By Tom Merry.

MASTERS are necessary evils. Moody Lovther declares that they ought to be abolished. He says that St. Jim's could get along very well without them. But, of course, a school without masters is unthinkable. It ever took a state of affairs came about, systematic kinds of the north would take the government of the school into their own hands, and we shouldn't have such a jolly time as might be supposed.

There are only two masters whom St. Jim's could safely dispense with. I refer to Mr. Ratcliff and Mr. Selby. They are a sour and spiteful pair, and if they were to pack up their traps to-morrow, and shake the dust of St. Jim's from their feet, we shouldn't put on our overcoats and hats and go into mourning. Rather, we should rejoice with a great rejoicing.

But, like the poor, Messrs. Ratcliff and Selby are always with us, and we must grin and bear them.

Undoubtedly the most popular member of St. Jim's is Mr. Victor Radford. As a Third Former, the School House has got him, and not the New House! If we had Mr. Radford as our Housemaster, I fancy there would be a riot.

Mr. Radford is young and dandy and a writing good specimen. Above all, he is the soul of fairness. He never publishes a letter to excess, or runs amok with his cap like Ratty does. Read you, he has "soft." I've had many a loving from Radford, and it has been as much as I could do to suffer them in silence. But I'm the first to admit that these feelings have always been thoroughly deserved.

I'd rather be hated by Mr. Radford than beloved by him. He has a special way of talking to you that makes you feel a perfect worm. His manner is far more cutting than his cane; but there, again, his lectures are always thoroughly deserved.

I told Mr. Radford we were getting out a special "Masters'" Number of the "St. Jim's News," and I begged him to write an article for us. But he told me to find a pile of exam papers to correct, and a number of merrily papers to correct into the bargain, so he couldn't spare the time. However, I prevailed upon little Mr. Latham, the master of the Fourth, to write an article on "The Misadventures of a Master," from which you will see that being a master at a school like St. Jim's is not all honey!

Sidney Clive of the Fourth, the being companion of Ralph Brewster Gardner, has been chosen forth into poetry, and you will find his short story, "If I Were the Head!" very amusing.

I hope you will all enjoy our "Masters'" Supplement up in the fall.

Tom Merry



## MYSELF When Young!

The St. Jim's Masters furnish many agreeable recollections of their school-days.

### MR. RATCLIFF:

Wase I ever born young? I suppose so, but I can only fairly recall my school-days. I was educated at a famous public school, but I was far from happy. For some reason, which I have quite failed to fathom, I was cordially detested by my school-fellows.

### MR. RADFORD:

I look back upon my school-days with the keenest pleasure. Little did I dream, in those far-off days, that I should ever follow the profession of a schoolmaster, for I confess I was rather a dandy in the Form-room, and was continually getting into hot water. However, atoned for that by showing proficiency in sports. I won my school colours for both cricket and football; I won the lovely championship silver a despatched commiseration with a sturdy giant in the North Forest; and I had a place in the rowing eight; so it will be seen that the athletic side of my school training was not neglected. I got into frequent scrapes, and once came within an ace of suspension; but, on leaving school for the University, I settled down in a course of real hard study, and well-live I am!

### MR. SELBY:

My school-days were spent in a constant atmosphere of strife and trouble. I was a sort of Ishmael, with my head against every man, and every man's head against me. For some extraordinary and unaccountable reason, I was very unpopular with my school-fellows, and was hated and bedeviled from morning till night. My nickname was "The Tumbler" - which, in passing strange, being that my nature is not at all venous. Life of school became so unbearable that I was compelled to ask my parents to remove me to another school. They did so, and the same thing happened over again. I went to three schools altogether, and was not happy at any of them.

### THE HEAD:

Like Mr. Radford, I look back upon my school-days with great pleasure. They were happy, carefree days, and I would give much to be able to live them over again. I loved my old school, and can sincerely relate the words of the poet!

"For though we roam from the frozen Pole to India's coral strand,  
Or gaze at night, by the camp-fire light,  
Of hills in the dear Homeland;  
We only sit and survey the past from the top of an office stool,  
It must be confessed the days were hot  
We spent at our dear old school!"

# SPOOFING ST. JIM'S!

A special story that, although it doesn't deal with "Masses," undoubtedly comes under the heading of a "master" joke.

By DICK REDFERN.

"WHAT an afternoon!" greeted Tom Merry, looking from his study window as the driving rain poured down on the quads. "It's raining down as if a giant cloud had burst!"

"Tipping weather for a rainy day!" greeted Masses.

"The rain, it rains every day," said Mervyn Lester. "The clock of the weather's a beast! He always turns on the water-tap when it happens to be a half-holiday."

"The question is, what are we going to do with ourselves?" asked Tom Merry desperately. "We can't go out in that deluge. It's raining down as if a giant cloud had burst!"

"Somebody's out in it, anyway," said Masses. "Look at that barometer!"

The Terrible Three glanced towards the school gates.

A dapper little gentleman, carrying a small bag, came walking into the quadrangle. He wore a raincoat, which clung to him like a wet sack. His toilet had a sudden and suspicious pause, and his polished French boots were shining brightly as he walked.

The dapper little gentleman did not seem to mind the elements, however, for he was smiling cheerfully.

"A stranger," said Tom Merry, with interest. "What's he up to?"

"An old boy, perhaps," said Masses. "He hasn't shown a very nice day for popping a visit to his girl, Miss Maber."

"He's a plucky customer, anyway!" said Lester, with a gasp. "Shall we show him out a ticket?"

"No, he, he, he!"

Speaking and speaking as he came, the stranger presently disappeared up the school house steps.

After a brief interval there was a tap on the door of Tom Merry's study.

"Come in," enjoined three voices in chorus.

It was the dapper little gentleman who entered, and his watch did not improve the study carpet, on which a muddy pad began to accumulate.

"Good afternoon, young gentlemen!" said the stranger in a pleasant, high-pitched voice. "You seem somewhat surprised at my intrusion. Permit me to make myself known to you."

So saying, the visitor placed his little bag on the study table, and fumbled in his pocket and produced a visiting-card, which he handed to Tom Merry. The card bore the inscription:

"PROFESSOR FRANCE,  
Travelling Physiologist."

Tom Merry glanced at the card, and smiled.

"Pleased to meet you, professor?" he said. "A physiologist is a person who examines your lumps, I believe?"

"Quite so," said the professor. "Physiology may be said to be the study of the functioning of our body-organization of that sort. It is a useful and recognized science. Having an afternoon at my disposal, I decided to call at the school and examine the heads of some of the young gentlemen here."

Tom Merry made a gesture.

"We'd like to have our bumps read, professor," he said. "But the fact is, we're busy, and I believe a physiologist's fees are pretty high."

"The professor smiled.

"Would you like to start on me, professor?" said Mervyn Lester. "I'll start myself first, if you don't mind."

The professor removed his raincoat and hat, and Tom Merry placed a chair for him by the fire. There he sat and stammered for about ten minutes, at the end of which time he announced that he was ready.

Slowly Lester was asked to take a seat by the window, and the professor, looking very grave and businesslike, ran his fingers over Monty's cranium.

"It's a very ordinary head," murmured the professor, "lacking distinction about it. You are endowed with moderate brain capacity and an intellect which is somewhat retarded."

"What?" roared Lester.

And Tom Merry and Masses chuckled gleefully.

"Pray do not interrupt!" said the professor. "You have a penchant for picking practical jokes, and for perpetrating silly and childish puns. A practical sense of humor is a valuable asset, but it must learn to curb and restrain it, or it may finally lead to insanity. Have you any insanity in your family, my boy?"

"No, I haven't!" shouted Lester, springing to his feet. "And I don't go to lunatic asylums in a ridiculous way, either!"

Believe your a qualified physiologist at all! If you were, you'd admit that my case of insanity is quite healthy, and drive it into the bargain. Unhappily, indeed, to do so! If you were twenty years younger, professor, I'd punch you on the nose!"

"Dear me! What a tremendous amount measured the professor. I did not examine the bump of egotism, however, and I should say it was very developed."

The professor beckoned to Tom Merry.

"Your turn now!" he said.

Tom took the chair which Lester had vacated, and the professor's fingers made a circular tour of his head.

By this time a crowd of fellows had gathered in the doorway of the study. Jack Blake & Co., and Harry Trimble, and George Alfred Grady were surveying the scene with interest.

"Oh! Another very ordinary head," said the professor in a disappointed tone. "You possess a limited amount of common sense, but you do not exercise it sufficiently. You are running to seed, my boy!"

"He, he, he!" came a roar from the doorway.

Tom Merry flushed crimson.

"Look here, professor," he said. "I'm not going to be laughed! You're as good as saying that I'm a blundering idiot!"

"Not at all! You possess, as I remarked just now, a limited degree of brain-power. You may seem slightly without stopping, and you may come up to ten—possibly a little more. If you will exercise your brain instead of letting it droop, you will in time be able to memorize a short and simple verse by heart, such as a nursery rhyme."

"Bliss!" he said, and then contemptuously snatched Jack Blake, from the doorway.

"He, he, he!"

And Tommy's look his wool into the bargain, grunted Masses.

Tom Merry certainly had.

"I'm not going to sit here and be made a laughing-stock of!" he growled. "That's what I think of your physiology, professor!"

And the captain of the staff flung his little contemptuous.

"I say, professor," said Harry Trimble, rolling into the study, "will you read my bumps?"

"Certainly! Pray sit down—if the chair will accommodate your weight!"

Harry seated himself, and the professor proceeded to "size him up" in routine fashion.

sitting and drinking to reckless excess! Your stomach craves a greater amount of food than Nature requires! But are you such an available glutton? Never have I seen the bump of gluttony so strongly developed in a boy!"

"Oh, really, professor?"

"You have no study of letters?" went on the professor gravely. "You are a student, a pro, a philosopher, and a thoroughly respectable person in every way!"

"Well, that's twice enough!" said Arthur Augustus D'Arvy. "I'm afraid, dear boy, that the professor is joking slightly! He has never met Trimble until to-day, yet he can read his character like a book!"

"He's a fraud!" roared Erictho. "He hasn't said a word about my wonderful brain!"

"Well, you can't describe what isn't there!" said the professor.

"He, he, he!"

"I'm feeling!" roared Trimble.

And he rolled out of the chair, and made way for Grady of the Staff.

Now, Grady was awfully keen on having his bumps read. He believed that he was a very superior being in every way, and he was confident that the professor would be able to capture over him.

But the professor did nothing of the sort.

"The shape of your head," he remarked, "amply bears out the Darwinian theory that man is descended from the ape!"

"He, he, he!"

"What cheek!" roared Grady.

"You are very weak-minded—I might almost say 'non compos mentis'—went on the professor. "Your mentality is on a par with that of a human for instance!"

Grady roared up in wrath. He made a rushing noise like Francesco prior to an explosion. He clenched his big fists, and he would certainly have committed assault and battery upon the professor had not Tom Merry & Co. dragged him back.

"He, he, he!" howled Grady.

"Lounge get at him!"

But the truculent Grady was headed out into the passage, much to the relief of the professor.

For a couple of hours that learned gentleman continued to examine the bumps of St. Jim's juniors, and in every case he told them some painful home truths with brutal frankness. He called Arthur Augustus D'Arvy "a daffodil dress-worshipper," which greatly upset the soul of St. Jim's. He said that Mervyn had no mental talent whatever—such greatly annoyed the eminent viceroy-planet of the Fourth. He said that Blake was a weak and unstable character—which infuriated that sturdy son of Yorkshire. The professor, in fact, seemed to be in lucking good in any way.

Tom Merry & Co. recovered their good humor in the extent of inviting the professor to stay to tea.

The Terrible Three were "stung," but they had plenty of supplies in the cupboard, and the professor did not leave till the good things of the table.

He had the spirit of a healthy scholar rather than that of a middle-aged gentleman who has to be very careful in choosing his diet.

Before taking his departure, the professor was seen to place a sealed envelope on the study table, and to bid good-bye to Tom Merry upon the envelope in wonder. Then he gave a roar.

"Spotted! Just look at this, you fellows!"

The envelope contained a brief note, as follows:

"Dear Tommy,—My best thanks for a tipping tea and a thoroughly enjoyable afternoon!—Yours cheerily,  
Thomas Cox  
(alias Professor France)"

"Gordon Gray, of the Grammar School," gasped Masses. "Oh, what a giddy old!"

"After him!" roared Lester.

The Terrible Three then dove into the quadrangle, and a moment later they were scolding one of the gates on their bicycles. But, though they peddled their hardest, they failed to capture the audacious transgressor who had succeeded in spoofing St. Jim's!



# MISADVENTURES of a MASTER!

Extracts from the Diary of Mr. Philip G. Lathem, M.A., Master of the Fourth Form at St. Jim's.

**MONDAY.**

I awoke this morning to find myself locked in my bed room. Some unacquainted young rascal must have entered my room by stealth during the night, appropriated the key from my pocket, and locked me in! I thumped and hammered on the door, and called for assistance, but all in vain. At length I began to look at it. I decided to wait till breakfast, and later for morning school. Having dressed, I looked out of the window and measured the distance to the ground; but, although my earliest ancestors might have managed to discover the technique without difficulty, I am the old and stiff to attempt such acrobatic feats. Presently I caught sight of Taggart, the porter, carrying a ladder across the quadrangle. I called him, and told him of my plight, and he returned the ladder and it rested against my window-sill. I then made my descent. I made efforts during the morning to discover the identity of the practical joker who had locked me in my room, but the mystery remains unsolved.

**TUESDAY.**

The morning passed without incident, but a dreadful calamity befell me this afternoon. I had occasion to call upon one of my pupils. While—so you if he had completed an imitation I should have. On pushing open the door of Study No. 5, a large paper box, filled with soap, ink, tins, and other hideous ingredients, descended upon my head and burst all over me! I had changed my Sunday clothes, too, for the Head had invited me to take dinner with him this evening. Naturally, I was incensed. My fingers itched to get at a corner, in that I could chafe with—his hands for playing such a wifed and wanton trick upon a master. But Blake hurriedly explained that the "body-lump," as he called it, had been intended for Frank of the Sixth Form, whom the Head was expecting a visit. In the circumstances, I awarded them My Three apiece, and staggered away to the nearest bathroom.

**WEDNESDAY.**

After my misadventures of Monday and Tuesday I anticipated a pleasant and

peaceful time to-day, but I was rudely disappointed. I was asked by Mr. Barry master of the afternoon between the Second and Third Forms. In a moment of weakness, I consented. I had no idea what a dreadful ordeal awaiting me. The game had not been in progress many moments when I was "taken" by a rickshaw full of the players, and had to be carried off the field.

**THURSDAY.**

I once considered a letter to my father, but I informed me that Thursday was my lucky day. So I wrote in excellent spirits this morning, looking forward to a calm and tranquil day. But what? Fortune-tellers are not infallible. A whole chapter of calamities befell me in the course of the day. Here is a brief list of them:

Fell down just a night of state, and severely sprained my ankle.  
 Had again an inverted mistake, which had been placed on my chair in the Form-room.  
 Was late in the quadrangle by a wheelbarrow carelessly pushed by Taggart.  
 Happenly beaten at chess by Mr. Selby.  
 Kept awake after midnight with raging toothache.

**FRIDAY.**

That wretched boy Selby was sneering and chaffing all the morning in the Form-room. He has unaccountably contracted a very bad cold since I saw him in the morning, but had before he passed on the game to me. I started sneezing myself, and as the day advanced my cold developed. I have done and doctored myself with possum and lotion, but all in vain so far.

**SATURDAY.**

Continued to look with a cold.



# A VERY "PAINFUL" SUBJECT!

By Our Special Representative.

A PRICED argument was taking place in the Junior Common-room of St. Jim's. There were a number of tansagers, which put the jolly old Tutor of Babul completely in the shade.

This was the subject under discussion: "Which master of St. Jim's has the most when he comes young?"

Tom Merry declared that Mr. Kaitlin was the hardest-hitting master in the school. "Kaitlin has it on good and proper," said Tom. "I'd rather have six from Linton than three from old Kaitlin any day!"

Pipkin laughed scornfully at this. He said that Mr. Kaitlin's strikes were gentle pats compared with those that Mr. Kaitlin dealt out.

"Really has brought coming to a fine art," said Piggie. "The hardy stroke Blacksmith, swinging his heavy sledges, is a pity working by comparison with Kaitlin. And Kaitlin always manages to catch you in the same spot every time, the old tread!"

"I'm talking from the Head," said Tom Merry, "would swing means and grows from the stomach of the stroke. He's been coming fellows for decades' now, so he ought to be an expert by now!"

Then Jack Blake took up the cudgels on behalf of Mr. Lathem, and the argument raged more hotly than ever.

"The only way to settle this vexed question," I said, "will be to interview the masters themselves, and get their own views on the subject. I'm quite willing to do the interviewing."

"Better you than me!" said Tom Merry, with a laugh. "I shouldn't care to leave the lion in their glory den. Matter of fact, though, I'm short of copy this week for the "St. Jim's News," and if you'd like to collect the views of the various masters as to who is the champion sledge-basher, I'll pay you handsomely for your article."

"Done!" I exclaimed.

And I promptly trotted off to interview the masters.

There is a saying that both rick in where angle feet to tread, and I ought to have remembered that saying and peddled by it. Instead of which, I cheerfully made my way to Mr. Kaitlin's study and tapped on the door.

"Come in!" said the Headmaster's deep voice.

I marched boldly into the apartment.

"Excuse me, sir," I said, "but we've been having an argument as to which master has the most when he comes young."

"Indeed!" said Mr. Kaitlin, striking his forehead.

"Yes, sir, and I'm calling on the different masters to see if they can help me solve the problem."

Mr. Kaitlin rose to his feet. His hand strayed towards a cane, and I began to feel a bit wobbly at the knees.

"The only way you can decide the question," said Kaitlin, "is by a personal test. Now, I will give you one powerful stroke with this cane."

"Oh!"

"And then you can collect samples, as it were, from my colleagues," said Kaitlin gently. "Is that way you should now be able to discover who is the hardest hitter. Hold out your hand!"

"Oh, but, sir—"

"At once!" tapped out Kaitlin. Instantly I obeyed.

"Yarwood!"

I uttered a Spanish yell as the cane bit into my palm. This stroke had been delivered with all the strength of a muscader arm, and I began to think that Tom Merry must be right in awarding the palm to Mr. Kaitlin.

"There! That is the best I can do," said

Kaitlin. "I have no doubt that my colleagues, Mr. Kaitlin, will be able to improve upon my performance. You had better go and see Kaitlin."

I gave the Headmaster a respectful bow and hurried out of his study. I didn't feel equal to collecting a "sample," as Kaitlin called it, from Mr. Kaitlin, though I would not see little Mr. Lathem, who is a very weak and mild sort of master, and who would be prepared to give me his views on the matter without making me undergo a personal test.

Mr. Lathem was in, but my luck wasn't! I didn't show at the time, of course, but Mr. Lathem had just received a crushing defeat on the golf-links. He was in everything but a happy humour. He played at me quite furiously as I strolled into his study without having taken the trouble to knock at the door.

"Ho!" thundered Mr. Lathem, "how dare you enter a master's study without knocking!"

I was so startled by Lathem's tone that I jumped back in alarm. In doing so I knocked over a little ornamental table that Lathem sometimes uses for writing. There had been a large inkpot on the table. It now rolled across the carpet, staining the latter a dark blue.

"You've completely changed my boy!" roared Lathem, stretching by a vein. "Hold out your hand!"

"Ah—! I—I'd rather not, sir, if you don't mind."

"Then hand!" thundered Lathem. Gingly I extended my left hand. My right was already busy do combat, thanks to Kaitlin.

"Selby!"

"Woody!"

Two strokes were a real "dinger." Whether it produced a greater degree of pain than Mr. Kaitlin's had done I can't say, nor did I stop to reflect. I bolted from Lathem's study as if all the furies of the underworld were let loose upon me.

In order to settle the argument, I suppose I ought to have called on the Head, and Mr. Kaitlin, and Mr. Selby, and the others. I ought to have done, but I didn't! I had collected two separate samples of corporal punishment, and enough was as good as a feast.

The argument has now died down. I wish I could say the same about the pain in my palms!



## SAVING MR. SELBY!

(Continued  
from page  
12.)

"Another jolly old scoundrel" with Selby, of course!" Cardew murmured to himself. "Dear old Selby is late."

The man looked at his watch again, snatched it shut, and thrust it into his pocket. Then he lighted a cigarette.

Cardew watched him for a few minutes from the screen of the thicket. The man smoked hastily and impatiently, threw away his unfinished cigarette, and lighted another, after a glance across again at his watch. His spare, hard face expressed anxiety and strange impatience, and his eyes glinted more than ever like a cat's.

Cardew was "string up" the man as he watched him. He was considering what the chances would be in a physical encounter with Mr. Seath. The man was spare, meagre, and obviously not in good condition. He looked like a City man who led a sedentary life, and never troubled about keeping himself fit. But he was a man, and Cardew was a schoolboy, though a very fit and wiry schoolboy, with plenty of strength and unlimited courage. It was very probable that in a struggle Mr. Seath did not excel.

Still, he was a man against a boy, if it came to a struggle, and Cardew shook his head doubtfully. Unless he could take Mr. Seath by surprise, and get the upper hand of him at the start, it was not of much use to think of tackling him. A knock-out blow to begin with might make all the difference, and Cardew would have been very pleased to use Mr. Seath's skinny features as a punch-ball. He turned that pleasing idea over in his mind.

The sound of a footfall behind him on the hillside made him start. It came into his mind at once that Mr. Selby was coming.

Cardew breathed rather quickly. Quietly, without a sound, he plunged deeper into the mass of thickets and branches beside the path. The dense, leafy-looking bushes came up the rugged path from the high road, and he heard through the screen of leaves and twigs a heavy, slow-moving breathing. Through the interstices of the thicket he caught sight of Mr. Selby.

The Third Form master was not a good walker. His heavy walk from the school had tired him, and he was tramping slowly and breathlessly up the path in the rain.

He passed the thicket where Cardew lay concealed, peering within a yard of the Fourth-Former without suspecting his presence.

His dejected, tattered face, his slow-moving breathing, struck the junior with a new pity.

Mr. Selby was not a pleasant man; his temper was bad, and his nervous system was, he was suspicious and harsh. But anyone might have compassionated him in his present miserable situation. Even Wally of the Third, who had suffered a great deal from Mr. Selby's better temper, pitied him, and would have helped him if he could. To Cardew, just then, Mr. Selby was no longer the harsh, bitter-tempered master; he was an honest man in the power of an evil genius, suffering for the sin of another. It was the duty of any honest man to help him, if help was possible.

Whatever Cardew's motives might have been for determining to take a hand in the game, his mind was made up now, and irrevocably fixed. Somehow or other he was going to defeat the scoundrel with the rat-eyes, or, if he could not defeat him, at least he was going to punish him. He withdrew from the bottom of his heart that Clive and Lexton of the Fourth had been with him. But Cardew was accustomed to relying upon himself, and he was prepared to act alone. He did not even think of the possible danger—that would rather have attracted him than otherwise.

Mr. Selby laboured on up the path, and came peering into the old gateway.

Seath eyed him evilly.

"So you've come?"

"Yes," gasped Mr. Selby. "As—as you see, Seath."

"You're late."

"I—I regret that I am late. It—it was a long walk, and I—I am no longer a young man."

Cardew sat on his teeth. In the stillness of the woody hillside the words came quite clearly to him. The sight of a St.

Jim's master almost cringing made him sick with disgust and anger.

Seath laughed contemptuously.

"Well, now you are here?" he snapped.

Mr. Selby sunk down on a block of masonry. He breathed hard and wiped his brow with his handkerchief. The shabby man stood looking down at him with bullying contempt in his look.

"—I am fatigued!" gasped Mr. Selby.

"Let us come to business," said Seath icily. "I have no time to waste on this trifling matter, Mr. Selby. I have other errands in the fire."

"It may be a trifling matter to you, sir," muttered Mr. Selby. "It is not a trifling matter to me. I have told you that I am not in a position to meet your demands."

"Have you come here to tell me that again?" sneered Seath.

"My—my salary—"

"You are quite able to hand over a hundred pounds, if you choose."

"It is a large sum!" groaned Mr. Selby.

"It is for you to consider whether your position in the school is worth it," sneered Seath. "I imagine that it is."

"I am not so sure that my position is at stake!" said Mr. Selby. "Dr. Holmes is a just man, and he would not visit upon my head the sin of a relation. I am not responsible for Lucien Selby. He is my nephew, and that is all. Neither is he a criminal; I am assured that he was led into this mad act, probably by you!" Mr. Selby's anger and resentment seemed to lend him courage for a moment.

"Yes, by you!" he went on. "You hold a cheque for ten pounds signed by my nephew, with a name that is not his own, endorsed by him. How did it come into your hands, how did that wretched lad come to commit such a crime?"

You are a money-lender—he was in your clutches. I am well assured that it was he threats and menaces that you drove him to this, and that you will have the cheque to be forged when he gave it to you!"

Seath made a gesture.

"I am assured of it!" exclaimed Mr. Selby. "I am assured that you had already made inquiries concerning his relatives, and learned that his uncle held a responsible position in a great public school. I am assured that this was your object—that you frightened and threatened that foolish youth into this act, in order to blacken me, sir! It was my money you were aiming at, all the time!"

The infuriated man shrugged his shoulders.

It will be difficult to prove all that in a court of law, and it would make little difference if proved," he said coolly.

"As the matter stands, I hold a cheque forged by Lucien Selby."

"And how do you know it is a forged cheque, when it has never been presented for payment, and the banker has never seen it?" exclaimed Mr. Selby. "That alone is a proof that you were a party to the forgery."

Seath snarled contemptuously.

"Officially, I know nothing," he answered. "If the cheque remains in my hands, it will be presented for payment, and then the forgery will transpire. Lucien Selby will be prosecuted; his name and your name will be in the papers, and it will be over, too, that copies of those papers reach St. Jim's. Dr. Holmes may not ask you to resign, but I fancy that he will do so. Men with criminal connections are not wanted in a school. But even if your headmaster does not send you away, are you prepared to face the scorn and disgrace—to face the knowledge of every St. Jim's boy that your nephew has been sent to prison?"

Mr. Selby did not answer.

His brief courage was gone. His face sunk into his hands, as he sat on the block of masonry; he sat overwhelmed with dismay and terror under the contemptuous eyes of the blackmailer.

### CHAPTER 9.

#### Cardew Takes a Hand!

SEATH broke the silence.

"We are waiting time," he said. "This is our last meeting, Mr. Selby. What is the use of brooding words? If I return to London without the money, the law will take its course. You know very well that your position at St. Jim's would be impossible, even if the headmaster allowed you to remain. Your post is worth more than a hundred pounds to you. Have a little common-sense, sir!"

Mr. Selby raised a white face.

"I have paid you ten pounds, the face value of the cheque," he said. "I cost you nothing. I will give you another ten—"

"We are waiting time."



"Secondly!" muttered the Form master.

His eyes glistened at the blackmailer, and South stepped back a pace, and half-drew a short, heavy, life-preserver from his pocket.

"Calm yourself, Mr. Selby!" he said. "You tried that game when we met before. I should have no hesitation whatever in knocking you senseless, if you laid a finger on me. I have been through this kind of thing before."

"I do not doubt it!" said Mr. Selby bitterly. "Money-broker and blackmailer—"

"That is enough! Do we cease to learn, or do we not?" snapped the sat-eyed man.

"Yes—you have shown the document with you!" faltered Mr. Selby.

"It is here. You tried to snatch it when I showed it you last time," sneered South. "But I am not afraid of that. Keep your distance—and look!"

He drew a slip of paper from his pocket, and held it up at a safe distance from the Form master. His other hand held the life-preserver; and Mr. Selby did not venture to make a movement. He was not of the stuff of which heroes are made; he was, in fact, the very kind of man to be the victim of a blackmailer.

"It is yours, if you do the stretchy thing," said South. "If you do not, it is mine unless you get in prison."

"He has already bid the contrary!" muttered Mr. Selby. "No doubt you gave him a warning after our meeting last week," sneered South. "But the law and my cry will make a more public scandal than even a prosecution and a trial. Are you prepared for detectives to visit St. Jim's and inquire there regarding your nephew's whereabouts?"

Mr. Selby shuddered.

"Give me that paper!" he muttered hoarsely.

"You know its price."

"Let me think!" muttered Mr. Selby. "Let me think! If I hand you the sum you name, what guarantee have I that you will hand me the—the document, then? What guarantee?"

"My word!" sneered South.

"Your word!" muttered Mr. Selby bitterly. "Wretch! Even in making me this offer, you are compensating a fellow as well as blackmailing. Five years' penal servitude—"

The sat-eyed man laughed.

"Give me time to think!" whispered Mr. Selby.

South looked at his watch.

"I will give you five minutes," he said. "Not an instant more! If I go, you will never see me again—I think you will regret it! But take your choice, Mr. Selby."

He leaned back on the old gateway, and lighted a cigarette, and waited.

From the thicket on the path, Cardew watched him with glittering eyes.

In his longing for theascal, the darts of the Fourth found it difficult to keep to cover; he longed to plant his fist full in the hard, covering face. But he kept cool. He was no match for the casual stung; but with Mr. Selby's help—that was the thought that was now working in his mind. But he abandoned it. The Third Form master was cooler, wiser, than useless—a thing of untanned nerves, incapable of action. The mere glimpse of the life-preserver had terrified him up.

But Cardew's determination was fixed. This wounded held the document which he was holding over the Form master's head in terror; somehow, at any price, he should never take it away with him. Upon that point Cardew was grimly resolved. But he was in no hurry to act; to act hastily was to risk failure. While he watched Mr. Selby cut with his hand bowed in his hands, and the blackmailer smoked cigarette after cigarette, and watched him sneeringly, Cardew opened his pocket-bag and cut a stout ridge from the thicket.

South looked at his watch at last.

"Time is up!" he said. "Your answer, Mr. Selby!"

"I have no choice," said the Third Form master hoarsely. "I am in your hands, and you are a wounded without mercy! You—you shall have the money."

"I am waiting to receive it!" sneered South.

"I do not require sixty pounds in my pocket, sir," said Mr. Selby. "But—but I can obtain the money in Wayland."

The sat-eyed man sneered.

"This is treachery, to gain time. The bank is closed in Wayland at this hour—"

"I can arrange the matter with the manager!" purred Mr. Selby, in sneaked horror. "I give you my word—it is easy! Wait here while I go down to Wayland; I shall return in an hour."

South eyed him sneeringly.

"This is the last concession I shall make," he said. "I will wait exactly one hour; and if the money is not in my hands by then, prepare for the worst. If you are not back in precisely sixty minutes, Mr. Selby, you will not find me here."

Mr. Selby staggered to his feet.

"I—I will hasten!" he muttered.

"You had better."

Mr. Selby almost tattered out of the old gateway. But the need for haste was strong in his mind, and on the path he hurried his steps; he was almost running when he passed the thicket where Ralph Rockness Cardew lay in cover. His footfalls died away down the hilly path to the high-road.

Cardew's lips curled.

Mr. Selby had failed, to return with the money the blackmailer demanded; not with a constable, as he should have done—as he would have done had he possessed courage equal to the emergency.

He was gone, and South sat on the block of stone where Mr. Selby had been sitting, and lighted a fresh cigarette. There was a sneering grin on his face as he smoked. He was sure of his victim; he had scored him into abject submission. That anyone else was at hand in that lonely and secluded spot he had no suspicion—not that he would have been dismayed by the sight of a Fourth Form fellow. But he had no doubt that he was alone. The birds twittered near the old stones and the creeper that clung to the dismantled walls—all was silent and still in the autumn weather.

Cardew watched him, thinking hard. His hand was tight on the wedge he had cut in the thicket.

Mr. Selby would be gone an hour—probably he would be back under the hour in his present state of nervous fear. But Ralph Rockness Cardew had plenty of time when he had decided on his course of action. In strange contrast to Mr. Selby's lack of nerve was the cool, reckless hardihood of the dandy of the St. Jim's Fourth. Cardew had seen the life-preserver; he knew that he had to deal with a dangerous man—a desperate man if driven into a corner. He did not care—no, rather, he was looking forward to the struggle upon which he had now determined.

If he passed, it was simply because he would risk nothing by haste—he was not counting failure. When he acted, it was to be with success, or he would probably leave matters worse than he had found them. At any risk, at any cost, he was going to defeat this reckless rascal; he was not courting the risk, but calculating his chances, as he stood silent and watched the waiting rascal.

He stirred at last, and walked up the hilly path to the old gateway, his right hand on his arm, ready to slip into his hand when he wanted it.

South looked up sharply at the sound of footfalls.

There was suspicion and a lingering fear in his sharp look. It was said of old that the third ditch bear such high an office. Doubtless Mr. South lived in constant dread of feeling a constable tap him on the shoulder.

But the sight of a well-dressed, handsome schoolboy lounging lazily up the path was not alarming.

South gave him one glance carefully; after the first

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suspicious stare, and then bestowed no further attention upon him.

Cardew walked on, easy and sauntering, and stopped in the old gateway, a few paces from the seated man.

"Lookin' your own old ruin, air—what?" he said civilly.

"Hi! Oh, yes!" answered South.

"Very interesting' old place, air," said Cardew. "Lots of people come here to see this old castle—jolly old architecture, and that sort."

"Do they?" said South indifferently.

"Oh, yes," said Cardew, smiling and civilly. "Lots of interesting' things. Have you seen the old champagne?"

"No."

South's manner was extremely dry, conveying a hint to the schoolboy that he did not care for a conversation. But Cardew was blind to the hint.

"Worth seein'," he went on. "Look yonder—see that gap in the old wall? That's the entrance. There's a stone stair leads down to the vaults."

South did not answer.

He lighted a fresh cigarette from the old one, intentionally ignoring Cardew, as a plain hint to the schoolboy to pass on his way. But the St. Jim's junior seemed idly on a stack of old masonry quite near him, as if glad to have found someone to chat with in the lonely old ruin.

"No joke to get shut up in these vaults," continued Cardew. "There was another way out once, but it's been blocked up. I was lost in those vaults once, air—a silly fellow closed down the stone after I'd gone down."

South did not speak.

"You see that big stone beside the opening?" asked Cardew. "It's a bit heavy to move, but a fellow can move it. Once that's tipped over the opening, a fellow descends in a jiffy prisoner. I can tell you it was awfully exciting when it happened to me once. Fellow named Burke played that trick on me and some other chaps."

South looked at him.

"All this may be very interesting to you, my boy," he said, with a snarl, "but it has no interest for me. On my way."

The dandy of the Fourth did not stir.

"I'm takin' a little rest," he said easily. "Besides, Mr. South, I'm rather interested in lookin' at you."

"You know my name?" exclaimed the rat-eyed man.

"Oh, quite."

"And how do you happen to know my name?" asked South, with a threatening glint in his eyes.

"Dear man, I happen to know your name—and your jolly old champagne, too," said Cardew, with a smile.

"Excuse my starin' at you. I know it's not good form, but I've never seen a blackmailer before."

South started violently.

"What? What did you say?"

"Blackmailer!" said Cardew coolly.

"You young rascal!"

"Isn't it called blackmail when you stick a man for money with threats?" asked Cardew carelessly. "I confess I'm not very well acquainted with the business."

"So you have been listening?" asked South, breathing hard.

"Yes, old bean. It was quite entertaining. Poor old Selby was quite crumpled up—what?"

"You looking to Mr. Selby's school, I suppose?" said South, staring hard at Cardew, quite at a loss what to make of him, or how to deal with him.

"That's so."

"And you heard—?"

"Every jolly old word, dear man. As a witness, I suppose I could testify sufficiently in get you sent to chocky for a good long stretch," said Cardew thoughtfully. "In they let schoolboys give evidence in blackmail cases, Mr. South? I suppose you know something of the law—you surely need to in your line of business."

"I think you had better go," said South, breathing hard.

"Before Mr. Selby comes back—what?"

South nodded.

"Thanks; I'm not gain' you," said Cardew easily. "I'm rather a student of human nature, Mr. South, and I like to study all sorts. But at school one's scope is rather limited. You're my first blackmailer, you know."

"I do not want to do you a mischief," said the rat-eyed man between his teeth, "but if you do not go—"

"Lovin' your jolly old temper!" asked Cardew banteringly. "You don't like hearin' me out all a speck a speck—what? I should hardly have thought that a man in your line of business would be at all sensitive. Dear me! Are you really gettin' cross?"

South threw away his cigarette, and rose from the block, and came across towards Cardew. His raty eyes were glittering with rage, and his hands were clenched.

"You'll have to go."

"You'll have to go."

"You'll have to go."

"You'll have to go."

"You'll have to go."

"Get out of this!" he said. "Now, then, I'm fed up with you and your impudence! Get out of it!"

Cardew slipped the cudgel down into his hand.

"I mean so," said lightly; "I'm ready, you rascal!"

"I have something a little more dangerous than that stick here," said South, slipping his hand into his pocket. He jerked out the life-preserver. "Now, you young rascal, get out of it, or— Ah!"

South snared a sharp cry, as Cardew, with a sudden spring, came at him. The cudgel struck the man's wrist, and caught it with a lancing blow, and the life-preserver clattered on the stones.

South recoiled back, his face white with pain. His hand, numbed by the blow, hung helpless at his side.

Crack!

Cardew was fairly on the staggering rascal, his eyes blazing. His left, clenched, as hard as iron, crashed on the blackmailer's face, and South went over backwards as if a cannon-ball had struck him.

He cracked on the stony stones, dazed and gasping; and the next instant Cardew's knee was on his chest, and the crowd thronged near his shuddered, terrified face.

"Lift a hand, or give me speak, and I'll crack your skull like an egg!" said Ralph Redness Cardew.

## CHAPTER 9. The Upper Hand:

SOUTH stared up at Cardew of the Fourth.

All the voracious carelessness was gone from the dandy of the Fourth now. His face, as he lay on the ground, was hard and grim, and his eyes glittered.

The cudgel swung up, ready to strike, and the blackmailer covered from the expected blow. He was at the mercy of the St. Jim's junior, hand to hand in a struggle, doubtless the man—ready as he was—would have proved too strong for the schoolboy. But Cardew had the advantage, and the grim look on his set face showed that he meant to keep it. It would have cost him little to bring down the cudgel on the cowering head, so intense was his longing for this rascal to human form.

"Stop!" roared South. "Hold your hand! Stop!"

"Keep still, old bean!" said Cardew. "I think I'd rather crack your jaw than not! Anyhow, I'll crack it fast enough if you give me any trouble, you rascal!"

"You—you—" roared South.

He did not stir to a struggle.

Cardew's knee was grinding into his chest, the heavy cudgel was over his upturned face. One blow would have stung him, and it was easy to read in Cardew's look that the blow would be given if it was needed. The rascal lay quivering, his rat-eyes glittering and glancing up at the St. Jim's junior with awe and hatred and fear.

"That's right!" said Cardew. "Take it quietly! You feel me a little tougher than Mr. Selby—what?"

"You young rascal!" roared South, choking with rage. "If I had my hands on you—"

"But you haven't, old bean; at present my hands are on you!" said Cardew cheerily, with a return of his old manner.

"Snot of ought you nappin'—what?"

"What do you want?" hissed South. "Why are you interfering in this matter—you, a schoolboy? It does not concern you, I suppose?"

"Not at all. That's why!" said Cardew, with a grin.

"You haven't the pleasure of my acquaintance, Mr. South, or you'd know what a fellow I am for bustin' into what doesn't concern me."

"You—you find? You—?"

South stirred, and the cudgel made a threatening motion.

"You want it, then?" asked Cardew. "Well, if you ask for it you shall have it, by god! You'll be easier to handle when I've knocked you on the head!"

"Stop!" roared South, cowering in terror.

Cardew laughed and held his hand.

"You're a pretty sort of worm!" he said. "If I was in your place, South, I should put up a fight and let you go ahead. All the same, you haven't much of a look-in. I'd rather let you than not, Mr. god. I'll let you anyhow if you don't chuck that!" he added, as a string of curses broke from the rascal.

South was silent at once, panting with rage.

"It's your own lot you go!" he hissed at last. "What is your game? What do you mean by this?"

"I'll let you go when I've done with you," answered Cardew. "For the present you're in my hands, Mr. Blackmailer, and I'm givin' orders. I'm takin' a hand in this game to get Mr. Selby clear of you."

"Then—then he knows— This is a trap!" roared South.

Cardew chuckled.

Cardew chuckled.

Cardew chuckled.

Cardew chuckled.

Cardew chuckled.

Cardew chuckled.

Cardew chuckled.



"Will you have the kindness to get a cross on," said Cardew, "or do you want the help of my boot?" Smith could not use his hands, they were too securely tied. In desperation, however, he kicked at the St. Jim's junior. But Cardew was on his guard. The cudgel cracked on Smith's knee, and he staggered, with a howl of pain. "Have another?" smiled Cardew. "Ow! Oh! Ow!" roared Smith. (See page 95.)

"Not at all! Mr. Selby doesn't know! By gad! I think he would faint if he knew I knew about it. He would think it was like my cheek, battin' it like this! So it is, I dare say. My dear man, I'm not even goin' to tell Selby; I'm goin' to spare his feelings. I'm one of those philanthropic jehannu who do good by stealth and blush to find it fame. Catch on?"

"Let me go!" breathed Smith.  
 "On conditions," smiled Cardew. "You've got a little bit of paper in your pocket that's no end interestin' to Mr. Selby. It belongs to him, as he's already paid you ten pounds for it, accordin' to what I heard. Will you give me that little bit of paper with his nephew's autography on it if I let you go?"

"The forged cheque?" started Smith.  
 "Smith!"  
 "Never!"  
 "Never's a long word, old bean; and I want that bit of paper," declared Cardew.

"If you are going to rob me—" blazed Smith.  
 "Not in the least! I wouldn't even touch you, if I could help it, with a large pair! You're not keen enough for a fellow to touch, Mr. Smith. You're goin' to check over that paper for me to pick up."

"Never! And if you take it—"

"I'm not goin' to take it," said Cardew calmly. "I don't quite know whether I should be justified in takin' it from you by force, Mr. Smith; an' I'm a frightfully careful chap in deta' exactly what I ought. You're goin' to give me that bit of paper of your own accord."

"Never!"  
 "Spare!" asked Cardew.  
 "Yes, you young ruffian! Now let me go!"  
 "Not just yet!" With his left hand Cardew groped in his pocket, and produced a watchdog.

Smith was watching him like a rat, only too obviously watching for a chance to take the tail. But the dandy of the Fourth was not off his guard for a second. The cudgel was ready to crash down, and the cowering rascal dared not risk it.

Quietly, coolly, Cardew made a dip-sneeze in the length of his watchdog.  
 "For your watch is that, Mr. Smith?" he said.  
 "I will not!"

"I think you had better," said Cardew, with steady coolness. "Understand me, Mr. Smith, I look on you as a rebel, and I do not care a rap whether I damage you or not. You are goin' to have your hands tied, and whether I knock you senseless first or not does not matter a button to me. You can take your choice, but be sharp about it. Time's goin'!"

The cudgel made a threatening noise, and the rascal's face was white with apprehension. He ground his teeth as he put his wrists through the noose, his eyes on the cudgel above. With his left hand Cardew drew the noose tight round the rascal's wrists, binding them together. He knotted the cord, and knotted it again, sealing down at the crossed ends of the blacksmith's.

"Ever done any smuttin', Mr. Smith?" he asked. "It's a useful thing; I learned to make knots with my left hand, it's a bit difficult till you get used to it. Feel safe now, old bean?"

Smith was safe enough; his hands were bound tightly together. Cardew removed his knee from the man's chest and nose. Smith wriggled painfully into a sitting posture.

"And now—" he started. He was still at a loss to understand the intentions of the St. Jim's junior.

"Now for the next item on the programme," said Cardew cheerily. "Do you know what sentence blacksmiths generally get, Mr. Smith?"

Smith glared without speaking.  
 "I'm not well up in these things," said Cardew regretfully. "But I know they get something in the way of imprisonment. You can look on me as at the present moment as judge an' jury combined, Mr. Smith. I sentence you to imprisonment in the jolly old dungeons underneath this golden mine—I think I mentioned them to you in our pleasant conversation a little while ago. Will you have the kindness to get a move on?"

He dragged the rascal to his feet. Smith stared at him, panting, and then stared at the gap in the old flagstones that gave access to the ancient castle vaults.

"You dare not!" he protested. "You dare not!"  
 "Dear me!" said Cardew. "I think I should dare ever, if there were any risk! But whose's the risk? Are you goin' to bring an action for false imprisonment, Mr. Smith?"  
 He chuckled.

"Do you see, there's a certain drawback to your line of business," said Cardew. "Rain's up against the police an' law an' order; you can't call on them to see you through when you find yourself up against it. You can't walk into a prosecution an' complain of a fellow stoppin' you from blackmailin' an' extortin' a bribe. Will you have the kindness to get a troop on, or do you want the help of my best?"

Smith could not use his hands—they were too securely tied—when, with a desperate look, he kicked at the St. Jim's junior. But Cardew was on his guard. The cudgel struck on Smith's knee, and he staggered with a loud pain.

"Here another!" said Cardew.

"Oh! Oh! Oh!" panted Smith.

"Quite at your service if you want a little more," drawled Cardew. "Will you get a service, Mr. Smith? I want to get back to St. Jim's for the finish of a football match, and I've wasted time on you. If you don't hurry I shall have to help you with my best—like that."

Smith gave a loud and staggered towards the opening of the stone stair in the vault.

At the top step he paused, with a look of hate and fury at the St. Jim's stairs.

"I—I will not go down!" he breathed.

"You'd rather not walk?" asked Cardew. "I don't mind you'll still manage if I give you a shove."

"You dare not!"

"Dear man, you're repeatin' yourself," re-asserted Cardew. "The fact is, you're beginnin' to bore me, Smith. I'm tired of your company. Will you walk down these steps, or shall I tell you down?"

Smith, panting with rage, stepped into the opening.

"That's better," said Cardew. "Say good-bye to the day-light, old bean—it's a bit dark when the stone is closed. I'll come along to-morrow and give you a call, if I can. If not, it will have to be the next day."

"You dare not keep me a prisoner here!" panted Smith.

"Stop! Stop! Do not close the stone! You young villain, I—I—I am as really in earnest. I—I—I—"

"Never more so, old top! What are you gravin' about?" asked Cardew.

"You're only goin' to get a few days' imprisonment, and you're entitled to these years at least."

"Stop!" panted Smith. "I—I—I'll give you the paper!"

"You late, old pipin'! I'll call for it to-morrow," said Cardew lightly. "I want to see the finish of a football match, and I've really wanted more time than I can spare. I suppose you're not interested in football. You wouldn't be. But I'm rather here to see whether old Ernest has bagged any goals against the New Hero. Good-bye!"

Cardew grasped the great stone that in the old days had been used to block up the entrance to the cattle vault.

"Stop!" screamed Smith in terror. Up to the very last moment he had doubted whether the robbery was in earnest. But there was no room left for doubt now. Cardew was in deadly earnest.

"Stop! Here is the cheque!" shrieked Smith.

"You don't deserve another chance, old bean," said Cardew. "But I'm an easy-going chap. Crawl out and give up the bit of paper."

"Help me out!" panted the rascal.

Cardew stooped and grasped the man's collar and helped him out. Smith panted with relief to find himself above ground again. One glimpse of the dark stone stair leading into the damp black vault had been enough for him—more than enough.

"Now take the paper, and take my car as along with it!" he snarled.

"I don't think your car-wheels will do any better any more," drawled Cardew. "I think I'd rather have them than your bloodin' Mr. Smith. But I'm not goin' to take the paper—you're goin' to give it to me."

"How can I give it to you with my hands tied?" wailed Smith, with a gleam of hope in his out eyes.

"Cardew smiled. He read the man's thoughts.

"I'll loosen 'em now," he said. "If you try any tricks, look out for a cracked nigger. I sha'n't stand on ceremony with you."

The rascal was watched as a rat, but Ralph Beckness Cardew was a watchful. There was no chance for Smith and the "document" was handed over with his free hand. Cardew bound his hand again—he was taking no chances—and then examined the paper. It was a cheque drawn for ten pounds on the Wayland and County Bank, payable to Lucien Selby and endorsed with that name on the back. Evidently it was the largest cheque, the evidence of the crime of the Third Form master's nephew. The rascal speechless, dunned and hunted by money-brokers, had fled from the country, leaving the burden of his misdoings to fall on his hapless uncle. Cardew examined the cheque carefully, while Smith watched him with burning eyes.

THE NEW LIBRARY.—No. 224.

"That's the goods!" remarked Cardew, with a nod. "I wonder to whom this glibly document belongs! Anyhow, Mr. Selby can decide that! It doesn't belong to you, old bean, not to me. I'm takin' charge of it for the present—on your request! You're sure you want me to?"

Smith gave a glance at the opening of the dark vault.

"Yes," he breathed, almost speechless with fury.

"Then I'll oblige you, old bean," said Cardew, politely.

"Leave it in my hands, Goodafternoon."

"Till we see hands!"

"So that you can begin again at the beginnin', dear man," Cardew laughed. "I may be an ass, but I'm not a silly one! I dare say if you wander along the Wayland road you'll find some Good Samaritan who will let you loose, sooner or later. Anyhow, it seems to me that you've got to take your chance. Ta-ta!"

With a nod and to the outraged rascal Ralph Beckness Cardew walked out of the vault. For several minutes after he had gone Smith stood there, muttering savage imprecations. Then, twisting his hand in the knotted shroud, he shook out all of the old vault. It was useless to wait for the return of Mr. Selby now—his teeth were drawn and his power was gone. Indeed, he was rather apprehensive of what might happen if the black-headed Form master came on him in his present helpless condition. The debated rascal disappeared into the vault, but it was a good hour before he had twisted his hand free at last and tramped away angrily to Wayland Station.

## CHAPTER 10.

### After the Match!

"GOAL!"

"Good old Tommy!"

"Goal!"

"School House wins!"

"Hurrah!"

There was a roar on Little Side at St. Jim's. School House fellows leaped up their caps and cheered and cheered.

It had been a hard and exciting game. The first half had been drawn blank, and in the second it was ding-dong from start to finish. Almost on the stroke of time Tom Merry had put the leather into the New Hero goal, leaving Patsy Hyatt at long last. And the School House fellows, who had made up their minds to a draw, let themselves go and fairly howled.

"Goal! Goal!"

"Tom Merry! Tom Merry! Hurrah!"

"Good man, Tom!" exclaimed Talbot of the Shell as the referee's whistle whistled.

"Yess, wathah!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

"But Jerry, you know, that was really a wippin' goal, Tom Merry! I hardly thought you would bring it off, you know. 'Frequently speakin', you should have passed to me."

"Go on!" said Tom, with a laugh.

"Yess, wathah! You see—"

"I don't, old chap!" said Tom. "Well, we've been lucky, you fellows. Better luck next time, Figgie, old man."

Figgie of the New Hero nodded and grinned.

"Goosy, old man," said Blake, "where are all those goals?"

"What goals, dear boy?"

"The hundreds you were going to get. Waaa! It hundreds!"

"Well, Blake—"

"Oh was it thousands?" asked Blake thoughtfully. "Any-way, hundreds or thousands, where are they?"

"Eh, he answers where?" shrieked Dig.

"The fact is, dear boys, I came very near it several times—"

"So near, yet on far!" sighed Monty Lewther.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"But I wathah think that I was wathah got off my form, you know," said D'Arcy. "Gettin' that knowin' next week my nappah wathah upset my nervous system, you know."

"Do you know where your misah is, Lewther? I think I had better give him a faithful drenchin'. Also your misah, Munnah."

"My dear man," said Lewther, "if you put your head in where it isn't wanted, you must expect what happens."

"You're a Scout," grinned Munnah. "Call it your good turn for the day. You've saved Selby's napper from the snare!"

"Yess, last—"

"Good game, you fellows!" said Reggie Munnah, as the football came strapping off. "Good game—for you chaps! I didn't see you taking any goals, Harry."

Munnah's major grinned.

"It was Gos, Ernie!" said Frank Lewther. "I saw you give Tom Merry that pass. It was really your goal, wasn't it?"

"Not in the least, you young ass!" said Lewther of the Fourth, laughing.

"Is my nephew back, you kids?" asked Arthur Augustus.  
 "I trust you have not been having any more woes."  
 "Here he is," said Levison miser. "He's come back into the fold like a good kid."

"Oh, chuck it!" growled Wally of the Third.  
 "A'ny miser was with his comrades of the Third again, but he was not looking very bright. He had come in in time to see the finish of the House match, but he seemed in rather troubled spirits. As a matter of fact, the evil face of Smooth haunted him. The unexpected sight of the man that afternoon on the Wayland road recalled his memory. He was worried, too, with the remembrance of what he had "let out" to Carlow of the Fourth. Lightly as he liked Mr. Selby, he hated to see the man so utterly "down," and the last thing he desired was to cause the miserable affair to be talked about in the school.

Tom Merry & Co. went off towards the School House. Levison and Olive looked around among the crowd of fellows for Carlow, but they did not see him. Apparently the cloudy of the Fourth had not yet come in. Quite probably he had forgotten that there was a House match on at all, and was not interested to know how it had gone. Levison wondered how Carlow had spent his afternoon as he went into the changing-room with the footballers. He was sure that the newspaper had kept his word and kept clear of Alkford's Haven. But it was very likely that he had engaged in some other risky escapade to fill up his time.

"Hallo, here's Carlow!" said Olive suddenly.  
 Levison looked round, with his jersey half over his head. Ralph Robinson Carlow stood in the doorway of the changing-room, with a cheery smile on his face.  
 "You late to see the finish, old bean?" said Carlow; "and I enjoyed it as anything."

"Yes; I can see you having?" said Olive.  
 "But I did—honest Injun! How did it go?"

"We beat the New Boys," said Levison.  
 "Bound to, with all Study No. 4 in the team," remarked Blake. "It really was a cert from the start."

"Yess, wotnot?"  
 "Study No. 4 bagged all the goals?" asked Carlow.  
 "Hem!"

"There was only one goal, and Tom Merry bagged it," said Arthur Augustus. "But for certain circumstances, however, I feel sure that I should have taken several goals."  
 "You didn't make your century, then?" asked Carlow eagerly.  
 "Ha, ha, ha!"

"Wally, Carlow—" "What have you been up to, Carlow?" asked Sidney Olive. "If you wanted to see the finish, why didn't you?"

"Fressin' engagements kept me away," said Carlow. "I was gone" to be a lad had this afternoon, as you know, and Levison stopped me. So what was a fellow to do? Had deeds been barred, I went in for some good deeds. I've been doing good deeds."

"I don't think!" remarked Horrie.  
 "Right on the nail, old man—you don't!" agreed Carlow.  
 "Couldn't if you tried, I dare say."

"Look here, you are—" "Have you been scragging?" asked Tom Merry, with a curious look at the dandy of the Fourth. "You look a bit like it."

"Well, there was a sort of a soap," said Carlow. "Not much of a thing; but I was a bit clotted and frosted. I suppose I look a bit clotted. But it wasn't much trouble, really."

"Scragging with the Grammar School chaps?" asked Blake.

"Good heavens, no!" Carlow smiled. "I've had a merry afternoon. I ran your miser, George, and had a very pleasant walk and talk with him. I never knew that the Third Form could be so enterprising. I shall have to celebrate the Third a little more."

"Wally, Carlow—" "And then I saw dear old Selby," went on Carlow. "That I didn't walk and talk with him—he didn't quite look as if he would enjoy the company of a really genial and enterprising fellow. And then after that I had a little scrag—quite a good thing, but enterprising" while it lasted. A busy day, Levison. You're not the only fellow who can lead the strenuous life."

"You're jolly well backed your knuckles," said Tom Merry, with a glance at Carlow's left hand. "You've hit something pretty hard."

Carlow laughed. "I hit something. It was hard but not pretty," he said. "I hit something. I came across a bad man down" wicked deeds. You can guess how shocked I was—a fellow like me!"

"Fetched?" "Honest Injun!" said Carlow. "He was a real bad man, doing real bad things. I backed my knuckles on his face, but his face suffered more, I think, than my knuckles. Tai

(Continued on next page.)

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afraid he's got a pain in his features. But it's your fault, Tom Merry."

"My fault!" ejaculated Tom.

"Years. You set an example of high and thin'd integrity, and we try to follow on at a respectful distance," explained Cardew gravely. "That was why I was so shocked at that bad man. But for your improvin' society—"

"Oh, don't be so sad!" said Tom gratefully.

"Amen, old bean, are like post-beans, not made. Ask me anything else."

"I suppose all this is gammon, Cardew?" said Arthur Augustus. "You are trying to pull our legs."

"Not at all! I've been doin' good deeds; and it's such a natural sensation, you know, that I'm revealing it, and I'm going to tell everybody about it. I want all St. Jim's to know that Thomas isn't the only shaver 'gile in the school."

Tom Merry picked up a wet sponge, and Cardew rather hastily stepped out of the changing-room.

"What a fellow Cardew is for gammon!" said Arthur Augustus. "You can never believe a word he says, you know."

"Silly as!" commented Tom Merry.

"Playing the goat when he might have been playing better!" granted Blake. "If we had him in Study No. 3 we'd jolly well make an example of him!"

"Yess, wathah!"

Levison and Olive were rather perplexed. They hurried over their changing and went up to Study No. 9 in the Fourth, and found Ralph Beckton Cardew there.

He was standing at the study table, sticking the flap of an envelope. He glanced round at his shame with a smile.

"What about tea?" he asked. "I've come in as hungry as a leopard."

"You might have started the fire," said Olive.

"What a lot of things we might do that we don't do, old bean. But I really had to get this done." Cardew slipped the envelope into his pocket.

"You haven't addressed it," said Olive.

"Haven't I really?"

"No, you ain't!"

"Well, never mind. I dare say it will get along all right without an address on it. I've given down—shall I bring in some tuck from the shop for tea, while you fellows are getting the fire going and the jolly old kettle-boiling?"

"Do," said Levison.

"Right, do."

Cardew left Study No. 9, and went down the staircase. In the lower passage, he looked about him, and muttered with a careless air into Master's corridor. There he tapped at Third Form master's door but yet came in; but he tapped to make assurance doubly sure, as it were. There was no answer from the study, and Cardew opened the door and entered.

He laid the envelope on the study table, placed a paper-weight on the corner, and left the room again. Then, with his hands in his pockets, he strolled carelessly out of the School House.

## CHAPTER II.

### A Surprise for Mr. Selby!

"HOLD ON, Olden!"

Wally of the Third came up as Cardew went into the quadrangle. The dandy of the Fourth passed.

"My excellent young friend—" he began.

"Oh, cut out that too!" said the big gruffly.

"Dear youth!" said Cardew urbanely. "What exceedingly plain English they speak in the Third! I admire it immensely. But I don't want any of it. Cut!"

"Look here, Cardew—"

"The actual fact is, dear youth, that I've not returned the conversation with Third Form lags," explained Cardew. "I found you rather uncommunicative for half an hour this afternoon. Then you began to pull. You pull now. Catch on!"

And Cardew walked on. Wally of the Third gave him a place and ran after him and hooked his arm.

"You silly!"

"Dear man! You again!" said Cardew.

"Don't be a silly fooling chap!" snapped Wally. "I've got to speak to you, Mr. Selby's just come in."

"Has he? I hope he's enjoyed his walk."

"He looks jolly bad," said Wally, in a low voice. "Look at him—there he is!"

Cardew glanced across at the Third Form master.

He was not the only fellow who glanced. Mr. Selby's face was white and almost drawn; he looked ill as he walked from the gates to the House. Cardew's expression became compassionate.

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 324.

"Poor old bean!" he said. "Must be a pretty rotten thing to have no nerve and no pluck. He looks fairly broken."

"It's a rotten shame!" muttered Wally. "He's not a nice man, but it's a rotten shame!" I patted Master's elbow to-day for wanting to rag him."

"He doesn't look as if he wants raggin'!" agreed Cardew, as the almost limping Form master disappeared into the School House.

"I can't do anything to help him except hold my tongue about what I heard," said Wally. "That's what I want to speak to you about, Cardew. You pumped some of it out of me this afternoon—it was jolly mean, as I told you. I shall be jolly careful another time. But I want to be sure that you're not going to talk about what I said. It's rotten enough for him, without a lot of tattling to the masters."

"I catch on, dear boy," asserted Cardew. "You're not a tattling man, and I'm not either a word! And if your jolly old conscience is worried about chattering to me, old bean, set it at rest; it was the best thing you could possibly have done for Mr. Selby."

"Rot!" granted Wally.

"Honest Injun, kid," said Cardew, with a touch of earnestness. "I know the whole story now—and Selby's all right."

"Safe?" repeated Wally of the Third.

"Safe as lead. I've seen the man Steady, and had a little talk with him, and he's given up that paper—you know he had an interesting discovery? I persuaded him to hand it over, and it goes into Selby's hands—without his knowing who sent it. Steady's a back number—his teeth are drawn; and you'll find your Form master much brighter in prep tonight, kid—if that's what you want."

"Steady gave you that paper?" repeated Wally.

"He did! I persuaded him."

"How!" demanded the big incredulously.

Cardew held up his left hand.

"What with backin' my knuckles, and handlin' a mink, and talkin' to him like a Dutch uncle, I brought him round," he said. "It's all serene, kid; tattle's no more what you did was the best thing you could possibly have done for Selby. Now it's all over, and you'd better forget about it as soon as you can—it's not a pleasant memory."

And with a nod to the astonished big, Ralph Beckton Cardew walked on to the school shop.

Meanwhile, Mr. Selby had limped into the House, and gone to his study. He closed the door and locked it, and threw himself into a chair.

His face was white and set, and something like despair was in his eyes. He had returned to the ruined castle to find Steady gone. He had been back under the door, but the blackmailer was no longer there. He had searched the room for him, directed to him, and had had to realize at last that Steady was gone. And he walked back to St. Jim's in a state of terror.

Why had the man gone? What did it mean? Had he made terms with the rascal too late, and was the blow to fall?

He groaned aloud as he sat in the chair. What was to happen now? The wretched speechless ruffian who had brought all this trouble upon him had fled beyond the sea; but he had left the trouble behind. Degradation, shame, scornful hung over the unhappy man. What—could the Head allow him to keep his position in the school? If he did, would he face the glances, the whispers, the knowledge of that black disgrace by all the St. Jim's fellows?

He knew that he could not.

He gazed in letter-box of spirit. As he sat in dreary thought his eyes fell on the envelope on his table, with the paper-weight on the corner of it. He noticed it, but did not stretch out his hand to it; he supposed that it was someone that had been left for him by a prefect or another master.

He rose from the chair at last; he was late for tea, certainly, without interest, he picked up the envelope and slit it open.

Then he started, and a shiver ran through him. There was no note in the envelope. There was an engraved slip of paper—a cheque! With trembling fingers the master of the Third drew it out; with starting eyes he examined it closely. It was the cheque he had had sent in the hand of Steady—the cheque that was endorsed by his blackguard nephew.

He stared at it, dumbfounded.

He examined the envelope from which he had taken it; it was quite plain, nothing was written on it, and it was empty. Not a word or a syllable!

And the cheque was in his hand.

It seemed like black magic to Mr. Selby. He was too amazed, at first, to feel regret. How had the document come there? Had Steady—the ruthless blackmailer—repented of his evil schemes, and sent the cheque? But it



"Now give up the bit of paper," said Cardow. "I'll loosen and part. If you try any tricks, look out for a cracked mallet! I shan't stand on ceremony with you!" Smooth was satisfied on a suit, but Ralph Hockness Cardow was not satisfied. There was no chance for Smooth, and the "observed" was headed over with his iron hand. It was a cheque for ten pounds! (See page 20.)

had not come through the post; and Smooth could never have obtained admittance to his study at St. Jim's. It had not come from Smooth; yet he had seen it, that very afternoon, in the hand of the rat-eyed man. Only some St. Jim's fellow could have placed it where Mr. Selby had found it—on his study table!

And then the Third Form master thought that he was right. If Avey never came into his mind, if Avey never knew of Smooth—knew more of the matter than Mr. Selby had dared to question him about. Was it Wally of the Third who had done this? Had Smooth been so involuntarily careless as to drop the document somewhere, and had Avey never found it, and—knowing what he did—brought it to Mr. Selby's study in this strange way?

It seemed the only possible explanation; and yet it seemed scarcely possible. Mr. Selby stood with the slip of paper in his hands, staring at it like a man in a dream.

But it came clearly into his dazed mind, at last, that somewhere the tell-tale paper had come there, it was—in his back. Whether Smooth had parted with it willingly or unwillingly, the blackmailer's power was gone now. Mr. Selby could afford to snap his fingers in the man's face.

He took the paper, and stirred together the waters of the ice. The slip of paper was thrown into the glowing coals, and Mr. Selby felt as if a scorching weight had been rolled from his mind, and his heart, as he watched it consume. He was free—free at last from the grip of the blackmailer—free to call in a constable if Smooth should trouble him again.

Mr. Selby seemed to be walking on air as he left his study. On his way to Masters' Room, he passed three lads in the passage; and in the appointment of Levison minor and Reggie Marston, he gave them a general smile. To

their still further astonishment, he tapped Wally of the Third kindly on the shoulder.

"I hope you have had a pleasant half-holiday, my boy?" he said; and he passed on before the lad could answer.

The three minors stared after him.

"Well, my hat!" said Frank Levison. "Selby's in a good temper! What's the matter with him?"

"Must be ill!" said Reggie Marston, in wonder.

Wally of the Third grinned. He was aware now that Cardow had "worked the article". Mr. Selby's new and surprising mood could only mean that Cardow had stayed the facts, and that the Fourth master's danger was over—the trouble with the blackmailer was a thing of the past.

"Oh, Selby's not a bad hat, in his way!" said Wally.

"Well, he seems jolly good-tempered now," said Levison minor. "I'm rather glad, after all, that your master got the won instead of Selby, Wally."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

And Mr. Selby's remarkable good temper seemed to last.

It was a wonder to the Third; and only Wally had an inkling of the reason—which he kept to himself.

Many times afterwards Mr. Selby puzzled about the mysterious help that had come to him in his darkest hour. But in all the propped-up collections of the Third Form master the name of Ralph Hockness Cardow never came once into his mind. He did not know, and was never likely to know, the part Cardow of the Fourth had played in saving Mr. Selby.

THE END.

Another scuffling fair gave next week, chance, entitled: "GIBSON'S GARDEN FIGHT!" By Martin Clifford. Don't miss it, whichever you do!

## THE OPPOSITION!

Despite the power of the recently Van Hous he is frustrated at every turn by Penny Ruff and his Chinese chums, and at every turn the red draws nearer!



# THE CRIMSON CLAW!

The conclusion of this popular mystery and adventure serial.

By  
**LESTER BIDSTON.**

### The Tables Turned!

**D**ARRID and bewildered by the terror he had sensed, stood and dazedly yellow men breaking in pairs here. Remembering Pan, he was hurrying to his aid when a bullet crashed vertically through the wall he held. He had a fleeting vision of How's later figure darting behind the shelter of the door, then he saw Pan stretched face forward across the steps and motionless still!

Hearing the word, he forgot the fiery fury raging round him and was hurrying to the steps when his chair rolled over and abruptly set up.

"Goodness, Pan!" he yelled. "Thought you'd surely taken the count that time."

Pan groaned, and fingered a swelling temple.

"I took the edge of the table with my head," he muttered; then, as a huge segment of stone crashed from the broken wall, he gave a startled yell. "Buckin's ghost! Is an earthquake happening?"

"It's this rotten ray," Pan snapped. "How's smashed it with a bullet meant for me. The whole place is tottering as rain—help, lower these fellows—then outside!"

Slinking readily through the boards with Chang's man-eared sword, he forced his legs as he worked.

"The ray's melted one twice wall, the whole building's tottering!" he panted. "We're in the option of being buried in its ruins, or being landlocked outside—but function and safety are landmarks of miles away. It's every man to his choice, come to me!"

But Enrico, now freed, stretched Pan's arm.

"The Dragon!" he croaked hoarsely. "When in use the archer in the flat roof—and How hoisted to was starting at dawn to bomb Hajar!"

In the moment that followed Enrico's daring bid, the sudden onset of the raised screen mingled with the rumblings of breaking walls and the splatter of spreading fire. Instant decision had to be made, and Pan never wasted a second in making it.

"Dinkie, we die—how?" he yelled. "How, a—

quick end—with a bare chance of escape! Who's for the roof!"

But that way there was really no choice; in fact, Enrico was already spreading past the flames, crying that the others follow him with all speed.

"Look out for armed lumps," Pan warned. "They'll be stragging this way at any moment."

But Enrico sped past the wide stone stairway and wrenched a door open further on.

"How's private road to his room in the dome," he explained, hurriedly. "If he's still in the building, it's this way he has gone."

As they raced up flight after flight of narrow winding steps the roar of raised priests dwarfed even the thud of scrambling walls.

Screams, shriek, clanking steel—all told that a frenzied light was in progress on the public stairs, and Pan shuddered at the thought of being caught unarméd by that crazy mob.

But How's sacred portion of the place was still inviolate, and Enrico guided them in safety to the dome of the dome. He was about to rush within when Pan jumped and held him back.

"Wait, sir!" he cried.

"If How's taken this road, he's already aboard the Dragon."

"That's what will cut off the instant he is," Enrico yelled, trying to push Pan aside.

"No; he'll be lingering for the red ray, for he cannot leave his fancy shot has already killed its night," Pan snapped. "We're safe enough for the moment, so tell me what lies outside the dome!"

"The platform he's built as a stage to the Dragon," Enrico replied, "and the flat roof over as an anchorage for the ship."

Pan nodded, and rucked his brains for a clue to How's probable movements. He'd the yellow covered rushed straight to the open. Pan would have accepted that as a sign of defeat on his part. Instead, he had hoisted himself in a dazed building! Why? Pan had a hunch a trap, and meant to avoid its jaws, if possible.

"There'll be other ways to the roof!" he asked.

"There's the priests' road along this corridor," How answered.

### WHAT HAS HAPPENED.

**PENNY RUFF**, better known as "Penny" Ruff, born and bred in China of English parents. Enemy of the Oriental from A to Z. Attached to the Public Legation, and holds a waiting list for the British Government on matters affecting British residents in China.

**PRINCE SHEN**, a young Chinese, enemy of the red and socialist. **PRINCE YEN SHUN**, chief of the notorious League of the Crimson Claw. Possessor of amazing magnetic powers and of the magic talisman of the Red. You know his fate in becoming another Mr. Vampire.

**GRAND FU**, one of How's principal agents.

You know also to dominate China, but without modern machinery and European science it did him, he realizes that he can do nothing. With circumstances during the recent prior years to England and Europe are of the most famous European aristocrat. He recognizes the fact about a great ship and takes them to China.

Penny Ruff and Pan then follow back on You How's trail, and, after a series of shocking adventures, eventually locate the captive aristocrat. The party finds an unfortunate enough, however, to fall into How's hands, and the instant point, who study his entire activities involving to aid him in his diabolical scheme, and capture attention to the center in the hope that their activities will weaken the aristocrat's influence. With pure good luck, however, Penny and Pan then escape, and the former catches a mysterious man that contains the Death Ray. With this powerful weapon held from the terrified You How (Chang Fu, How's right-hand man, tries to escape Ruff, but it is in the last minute he can perform for his master, he jumps from the ray upon Pan. In a moment the deadly Chang Fu is obliterated to dust, but the power of the ray is so great that it plays havoc with the political headquarters of the empire. Five hundred men and countless stone pillars crumble up like molten lead, in a few seconds at a distance.

(New read on.)



"Then give us a minute's grace," Pen said quickly. "And when you enter the dome, look out for bullets! Coming, Fan?"

Fan nodded, though he had less than a hazy idea of Pen's latest move. But he followed without hesitation, and was in close attendance when his leader reached the stone ladder to the open.

"Carefully, now," Pen whispered over his shoulder. "It's just possible the trapper's guarded."

But that fear proved groundless, and one anxious glance showed the dark bulk of the ship still floating overhead—without lights, and apparently without life. Swinging heavily in the breeze, she was anchored at a height of fifty feet above the dome, her keelson cut directly above their heads.

"The dome door will be watched," Fan whispered. "That rules out the ship's ladder, doesn't it?"

"Bats out the feet of the ladder," Pen admitted. "But the swing of the ship's taking the middle of the ladder near the top of yonder spine—and that's our road!"

Fan was quick to grasp the idea. Though watchers above might be having a trap with that innocently fixed ladder, the floor of the dome would render half its length invisible, and the last place from which to expect attack.

Crouching low, they crept to the base of a spine that arched over one of the roof's four corners. Reached like a peninsula of Dutch cheese in lowering seas, it gave fair hold for hand and foot—through a downward glance in daylight would have pained the mind.

Fan, in fact, did sink a look. Sighting lights that looked like earthbound stars, he glimpsed a slip and turned sick and dizzy with the thought!

Until his senses steadied, he pressed with thrilling haste forward to the solid stone; then, receiving the benediction of the journey, he was startled afresh by a beam of light from the opened door of the dome, and the instant "let-a-go!" of bullets from the ship.

"Star's playing up badly," Pen whispered. "He was sick in hanging the door again—quick enough to make How think he has us recovered, I hope."

Now, when they were three-quarters way up the early spire, a searchlight suddenly flamed into being from the larboard and bowled on the dome.

How's game was plain, at last. Knowing the building was an inferno of fire and fighting below, he meant to cage the rebellious crowd in the dome until they surrendered the ray, or died by the succeeding fire.

Fan noticed that his pal had slung the attached ray box over a shoulder and wondered why he busied himself with the thing at such a moment. But there was no time for questions, and Pen was again bending nearer to him.

Ladder's too exposed with that light going," Pen breathed. "But here's an anchor rope [at white reach—and that's our road!"

At a speed that brought a cold sweat to Fan's temples, Pen lifted the box well back, reached recklessly out and released hold! Fan's heart missed a beat and his eyes blurred—then he realized that Pen had judged distance to a nicety and was laboriously securing the snapping rope!

Now was he long in following, though such dramatic success he expected the sudden outbreak that would mean discovery. But the eyes of the divergent people were evidently focused on the dome, and the struggling pair actually won to the ear before the alarm sounded.

As Pen swung inward, a Chick officer turned from the ear's office, shrieked startled warning, and threw himself forward. Pen jumped, hunched out even before his feet touched solidity, and hunched as a pistol exploded above in his face. The bullet ripped an ear—though knowledge of the wound only came later—but his fat suit and the creature staggering to the rail, and Fan arrived and snatched the gun from the hand before a second shot could be pulled!

"Look out, Pen!" Fan yelled. "How's the whole blasted crew going for air?"

They were, with How in the van! Lights flared, the lattice bridge was suddenly filled with a dozen cowering, tugging forms, and How was madly tearing at a gun holster!

Pen's lips closed grimly as he snatched the box from his shoulder and pointed it straight at How.

"You've won the right of the race, Outcast!" he called loudly. "Hold, or, else I'll wreck the ship as I wrecked the place below!"

"Curse you!" he flamed. "To think that one prying fool is fated to ruin the life work of a genius! How the gods must love—"

His wild words were drowned in a roaring flame that shot over Pen's shoulder and left him with brain momentarily numbed. Then, recovering so quickly, he saw How snatching a shattered wrist, and knew that Fan's swift action had saved his life.

"He was getting ready to shoot from the hip," Fan whispered. "Should I thank the gods, Pen?"

But Pen ignored that. Fan's drastic intervention had strengthened his bluff immensely, and he stroved fortidly on the hesitating crew.

"Drop those knives, you scum!" he yelled. He cut into How's lance incessantly with leading tongue. "Blig off, Outcast—we're masters here! Now, you fellows, you've one second for sense, or we'll learn together!"

"They haven't one second!" Star's voice yelled from the rear. "We're armed from How's store, and we're waiting to wipe 'em out on the word!"

But the word was unnecessary, despite How's vindictive snarl. Thenceforth from front and rear by ray and gun, the rebel army revealed the soft spot that has ever been China's curse. Howling that the gods had deserted them, they hung knives overhead with desperate haste, and scowled sullen surrender.

Even in that moment of victory Pen allowed no single second to be wasted.

"Glad you jumped to the chance, Star!" he shouted aft. "Are all aboard?"

"All that will be," Star answered sally. "There we left, victims to How's machine gun."

"We're not out of the wood ourselves, yet," Pen sighed. "Star, you're the ace expert. You'll take command of the ship, with Pen to interpret your orders." He stared sardoniously at How. "And you will come up on deck, where I can keep an eye on you."

Swallowing muttering words, the threat his tongue could fashion, How obeyed. But Pen, still unconsciously holding the shattered ray box, was already crying Star in



Pen realized as he leaped over the rail that the bridge had been released on the boom. And there, as though the earth's crust had broken asunder by volcanic fury, the whole vast space the fugitives sought in was filled with an appalling series of detonations.

~~~~~  
**Range Page!**  
 ~~~~~

I was a glorious bluff, and for a moment it brought How to a standstill. He had seen his favorite jacked man to dust in a second, he had watched walls of stone turn to lava as the red heaven touched them. Small wonder then that he crowded back on his heels, and less wonder that his stony faced master halted.

speed the breakfast and anxiously spying the town below.

That the boat wild strokes were raising Kanago was evident. Twinkling lights were appearing in buildings and streets even as the last tethering cable was broken. Abruptly the first wavering searchlight sprang into being and directed on the floating monastery.

Then, as the throbbing engines drove the Dragon from the dangerous vicinity, a second and third beam focused on the ship and threw its every movement into prominence.

"Think they'll fire on us, Hadd?" Ericc asked anxiously.

"Pen shook his head and smiled.

"Not while you've the sacred Son of Heaven on board," he replied. "More likely they'll reckon we're only moving away from the fire, the first will come when we pass over the town, and there we're making off."

Unnoticed by Pen, Talasco was listening to his words and smiling grimly, as he examined a row of polished lenses near the end of the deck.

"They're anxious to hurry us with," he muttered. Then, louder: "Don't Radd, it was in the light's path we must travel. Fly fast, we've lost the town, and it is worth while."

"But that's simply exposing us to every gun in the place," Pen protested.

"To do as I say, set in worth while," Talasco repeated. "Pen gave the order, thinking that the boldest course was, perhaps, the safest. After all, the newspaper could have an idea as yet that the ship had changed hands; they would hardly reason that their bitterest enemies would actually encourage investigation.

So, at a height of five hundred feet, the Dragon sailed towards the north side of Kanago, wherefrom the rest of lights emanated. The nearer they drew, the more the lights turned perpendicular, and only when they pointed straight up into the sky did Talasco's grim purpose become plain.

At that moment the Spanish sprang to the fore and called all three in with excitement. An instant later Pen realised that the boats meant for Hajia had been released on the town, and that the warring lights had indeed been switched.

And then, as though earth's crust had become wracked by volcanic fury, the whole vast space they sailed in was filled with a most appalling series of detonations.

Later, they guessed the ship's great speed had carried three across the river between the release of the first and third levels. What actually happened was that the third level "fell" dropped full into the midst of Kanago's main-line factories and spread red rain over half the city.

Whilst Pen stared aghast at the crimson fury below, a shower of scorching air hit the Dragon and tossed her aloft like driftwood on a tidal wave.

Fling down, cruelly bruised as the dangerously-angled deck, every man aboard clutched the handiest fixture with terrified intensity. But Hsu, recovering quickly, because his mind glimpsed a chance to turn back defeat to annihilating victory, chose that mad moment to sweep down on Pen and snatch at the once deadly ray box.

Taken aback by surprise, Pen crouched heavily against the deck-rail, and was almost flung overboard by the first terrific onslaught. He saved himself by instinctively clutching the rail, but head and shoulders were banging over the side, and his throat was expanded in the yellow clay that now sank in with English purpose.

"Release the ray, devil up!" Hsu hissed. "Give it up, I say, or we die together!"

Winded, choked, and horribly jarred by the savage onslaught, Pen felt as though his spine would snap on the rail, or his throat be torn out by the talons that choked him.

Knowing the box was already useless for Hsu's original purpose, he dropped it willingly enough. Anticipating by a fractional instant the havoc by which his better enemy sought to fling him overboard, his fixed hand clenched and smothered full into the heaving box.

As though Fate called him to the evil How had wrought, the Dragon chose that moment to roll on the rebound. Flung upward in the first place, as if hit by Titan's hammer, her fall was equally swift and bounding.

Clutched unconsciously back on deck, Pen had the wild idea that the world had turned upside down in an instant. Glaring horrified at an inferno of flame where his head should have been a leaping geyser, a second before he was grabbed abruptly by How as that terrified tyrant felt himself slipping down the awful slope.

As one in the throat of nightmare, Pen knew that they crashed heavily into the lower guard-rail. Dazed with the certainty that How's locked hands were leaving him to destruction, he had the hazy thought that another's strong grip was on him. With glowing eyes he glimpsed a falling

body, a squat, fore-shortened outline of spreading limbs, then overbrought nature snatched feet tall, and he sagged slowly to the Dragon's leveling deck.

Twelve hours later Pen gained understanding of the amazing climax in which he had taken a major part. Opening his eyes, he was staring in perplexity at the comfortable furnishings of a tiny cabin when Fan appeared. Following delighted greetings came the explanation that he was lying in How's particular "dupon."

"How was an 'other' use for it, Henry Radd," Fan said quietly. "In fact, he has no further use for anything, unless it be good lies to appease his venalistic ancestors."

"But what happened?" Pen asked. "I remember pitching across the deck, heading for the volcano that had ripped Kanago open."

"You How took the leader, though you nearly went with him," Fan explained. "As it was, Pen, you hit the rail within three feet of where I was holding, and I just had time to snatch at you." To avoid Pen's thanks, he continued quickly: "A single aeroplane was clear of the city and came sailing round the Dragon, but it shivered off when Talasco loosed a machine-gun, and that was the last interference we had from How's frightened dupes."

"Um! Rather grim, Fan. But it was Kanago or Kanago," Pen said soberly. "What business of the ray box, by the way?"

"Went overboard with How, I expect," Fan replied. "As I said, we haven't seen a trace of it since, so I suppose How was at back in the end."

"That's good hearing, anyway," Pen argued. "It proves for evil was too great for any man to hold, and I sincerely hope our crash-landed scientist will ever invent his like again." A troubled frown creased his face. "There's still How's mighty armies to reckon with. Even now they may be marching to India, or spreading terror over half China." At that moment the door opened to admit Starr and Ericc.

"Thought we heard voices," Starr smiled. "We're more than glad to see you better, Hadd, and— He turned whimsically to his companion. "Now, how am I to begin?"

"We were there so much, the therapy of a lifetime could not express it," Ericc admitted. "That we do thank you, my friend—"

"Give without saying," Pen interrupted quickly. Then, to cover his confusion: "We were speaking of How's armies, a Hsu's will to be reckoned with."

"Not now, Radd," Ericc laughed. "The Dragon's wireless has been busy, and I've already shared the story to four stations in the East. By some, the threat against the world, and our rescue, is spreading the globe, and a usual world will have no fear of Hsu's half-trained soldiers."

"On Hsu's suggestion, we sent a special message to Sir William Mason of the Yang," Starr explained. "It is too wild to tell how and Chang had faced the penalty of their Lincolnshire crime, and that Yidie was avenged."

"And Mason has already replied, saying a more important person than he will express England's gratitude to the pair of you in person," Ericc smiled. "In fact, a wireless stream of thanks from every country in Europe tells that Signora Radd and Starr have become famous men."

"They'll become famous anywhere if the stream doesn't dry up," Pen muttered. Like most fellows who do big things—

(Continued on page 27.)

## STARTS NEXT WEEK!

**A LEADER  
OF THE  
LEAGUE!**

By **STONEY FISLER.**

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**SCOTLAND SCORES:  
HIS DIAGNOSIS!**

"Ah," said the doctor, looking into one eye, "it is easy for me to see what is the matter with you! This is not merely eye trouble; it is an indication of the nervous system. There are all the signs of liver trouble, of fatty degeneration of the heart, of a bad blood supply. The only thing I can recommend is— "Here, just a minute!" cried the patient excitedly. "Isn't it about time you looked into the other eye? That's my glass eye, you know!"—Tuck Hamper, filled with delicious Tucks, has been awarded to Miss Jessie Mitchell, 1, North Shore Street, Campbelltown, Argyllshire.

**SIMPLE ARITHMETIC!**

He was teaching her arithmetic—he said it was his mission. He proved a kiss upon her lips, and said: "Now, that's addition." And as he added his lip to her in silent satisfaction, she gave his knee back, and said: "Now, that's subtraction." Then he kissed her, and she kissed him, without an explanation. They both together smiled, and said: "Oh, that's multiplication!" They had appeared upon the scene, and made a quick division. He kicked the teacher down the stairs, and yelled: "That's long division!"—Half-a-crown has been awarded to E. S. Bennett, Galloway Road, Sanflor, Lincoln.

**A READY REPLY!**

A candidate was summoned for exceeding the speed-limit. Arriving at court, he tried to make a good impression on the judge, and said: "Good-morning, sir! And how are you keeping?" "Fine," came the judge's reply in a stern voice. "Are staying?" "Half-a-crown has been awarded to Emmanuel Gohi, 78, Highbury Street, Brick Lane, London, E. 1.

**CLEVER TEDDY!**

Teddy: "There were not so many teddies fifty years ago as there are now." Billy: "How so?" Teddy: "Why, I and I were not here then!"—Half-a-crown has been awarded to Edward Hill, 5, Ellingham Road, Stratford, E. 15.

**READY WITH AN EXCUSE!**

Office Manager: "Shove, you told me yesterday afternoon that you had an engagement with your dentist." Brown: "Yes, sir, I did." Manager: "Why, I saw you at a football match!" Brown: "Yes, sir. The dirt man-swinging man to me was my dentist!"—Half-a-crown has been awarded to Philip Heath, 6, St. Barnabas Street, Finsley, S.W. 1.

**HARD TIMES!**

Employer (paying salary): "These notes are rather dirty, Smith. I hope you are not afraid of microbes?" Smith: "No, not at all, sir. 'We microbes' could live on my salary!"—Half-a-crown has been awarded to Reginald Giles, 25, Letchford Lane, Street Grimsby, Lincolnshire.

**A BIT FINNY!**

Farmer (at bay at application): "What are you doing up there, my little cousin?" Boy: "It's apple all right, mister. You see one of my apples fell down, and I was tryin' to get it up again!"—Half-a-crown has been awarded to E. Peabody, 25, Apple Street, Nethelby, Birmingham.

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## "THE CRIMSON CLAW!"

(Continued from page 28.)

things, the thought of publicity was rather terrifying. "Please drop us all at China, Mr. Store, we're more at home there."

Two groans.  
"The Pekin Government has withdrawn awards of the Golden Flower, and appointed its officials of the Third Batou," he signed dejectedly.

The two elderly scientists were vastly amused at the claim's comical disparity.

"Seems you're 'in the soap' both ends of the world," Store chuckled. "If the Dragon behaves herself we'll be busy here in Frankfurt three days hence, so you'll have to swallow the European medicine first."

So, leaving the Dragon to plough its lonely way over Asia, this adventure ends. It began with the murder of a French detective in Lintchoue, it finished with riating in Eastern China that shocked the Western world, and gave it some idea of what it had escaped.

Ten million armed fanatics had been held together by one dominant personality. But the great yellow prison died suddenly, and, within a week, the old racial hatreds flared afresh and dissipated their force on international battles that concerned China alone.

THE END.

*(Readers can look forward to a really tip-top justice serial in "A LEADER OF THE LEAGUE!" The first instalment of this grand new serial appears in next Wednesday's issue of this paper. Don't miss it on any account.)*

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