

"GUSSY IN GAY PAREE!" SPARKLING LONG XMAS HOLIDAY
STORY OF TOM MERRY & CO. INSIDE.

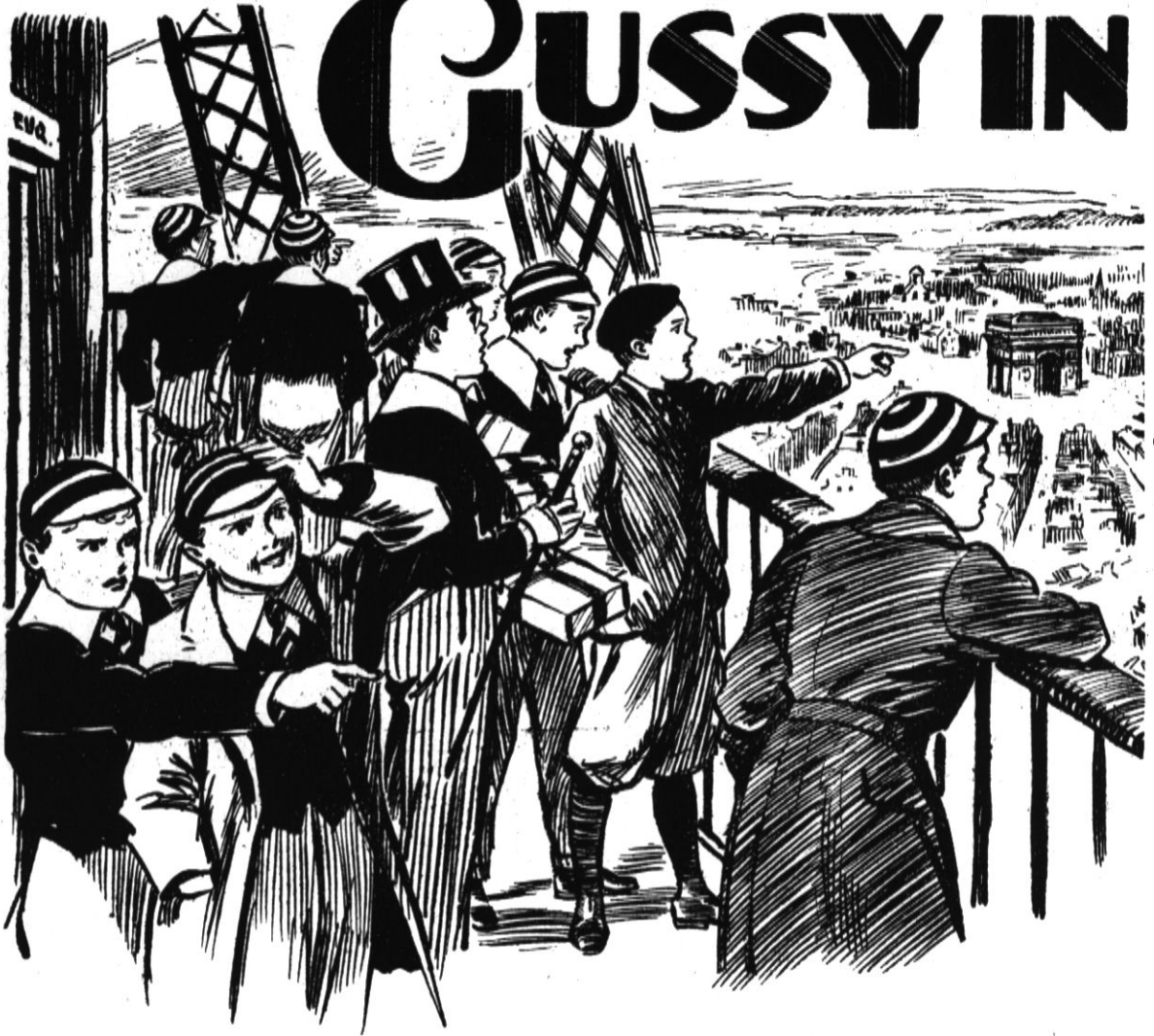
The GEM 2^d



BARELY SAVED!

PARIS POLITENESS PLEASURES THE ONE-AND-ONLY GUSSY—EVEN HIS TENOR SOLO COMES IN FOR APPLAUSE!

GUSSY IN



On the top platform of the Eiffel Tower the view was magnificent. Paris was displayed like a panorama round the St. Jim's Juniors—the view stretching from one end of the city to the other. "Ripping!" said Tom Merry.

CHAPTER 1.

St. Jim's Juniors in Paris!

TOOT!
 "Bai Jove!"
 Toot—toot—toot!
 "G'weat Scott! What is that noise?"

Toot—toot!
 Arthur Augustus D'Arcy sat up in bed and rubbed his eyes.

He did not wake up as usual in the Fourth Form dormitory in the School House at St. Jim's, though in the confusion of sudden awakening he imagined himself to be there for a moment or two.

He was in one of a row of beds in a large room with wide windows looking out on the Rue de Rivoli, in the heart of Paris.

He gazed round him in astonishment as the hooting still sounded in his ears.

"Bai Jove! It's you, Tom Mewwy!"
 Tom Merry chuckled.

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Arthur Augustus had been sleeping very soundly, and Tom Merry had adopted that method of awakening him, tooting the motor-horn close to his ears.

The method had answered perfectly. D'Arcy sat up, and groped for his eyeglass, which he proceeded to jam into one sleepy eye.

"Bai Jove! Has wisin'-bell gone, deah boys?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Weally, Tom Mewwy—"

"Rising-bell's gone," said Blake, popping out of bed. "But we haven't heard it, as we're some hundreds of miles from St. Jim's. Taggles could ring his loudest now, and it wouldn't make any difference to us."

"Bai Jove! I forgot, you know, that we're in Pawis."

"What's the time, Merry?" asked Figgins, sitting up in bed, with a portentous yawn.

"Eight o'clock!"

"Bai Jove! We're beastly late!"

"We are!" said Tom Merry severely.

"I'm jolly well not going to let you chaps get into bad habits, just because you're on a holiday in Paris. No late hours, and no sticking in bed half the morning."

"No fear!" said Digby. "Early to bed, early to rise—"

"Makes a man live till he jolly well dies," said Monty Lowther, swinging his long legs out of bed. "Anybody seen my shoes?"

"Well, they're big enough to be seen," remarked Jack Blake, glancing round. "Is that one of them? Oh, no, my mistake—that's Kerr's port-manteau!"

"Ass!"

"Where's the hot water?" asked Manners lazily.

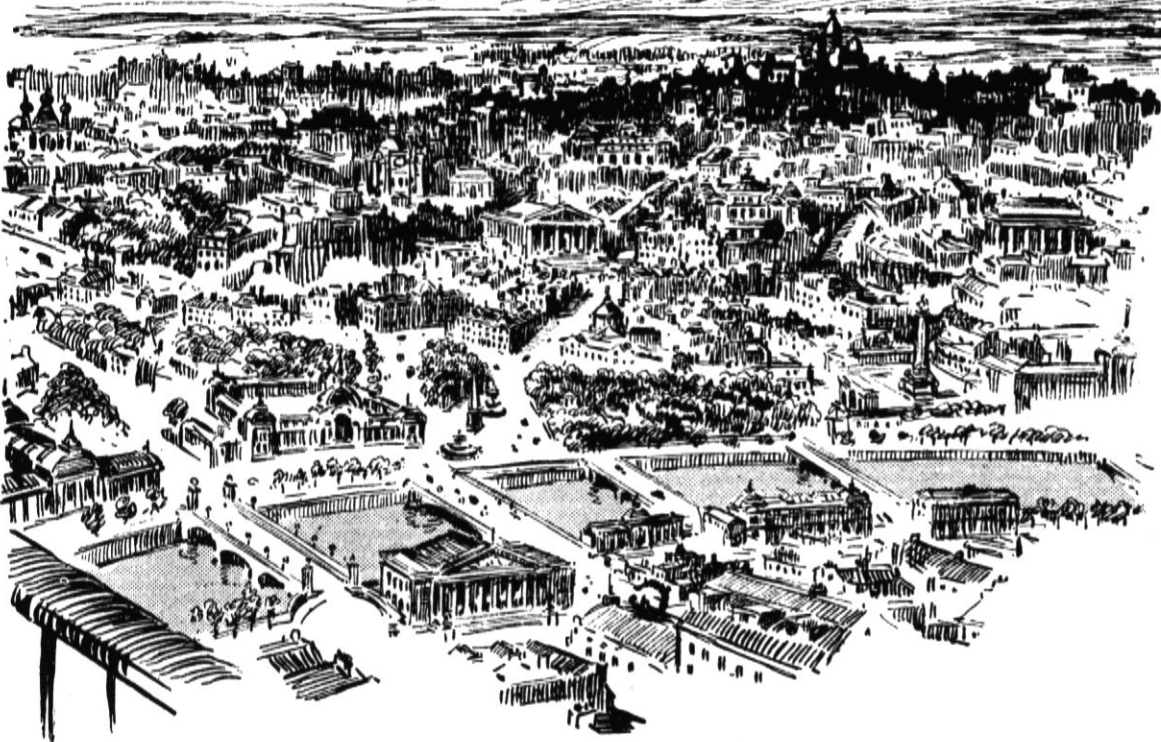
"Ring for the beastly garcon," said Blake. "When you want anything, you ring for the blessed garcon. He pops up like a jack-in-the-box."

Tom Merry touched the bell.

"Fatty's not awake yet," said Blake, with a glance at Fatty Wynn, who was

THE EIFFEL TOWER—A TRIP ON THE SEINE—THE PARIS ZOO—TOM MERRY & CO.
HAVE A GREAT TIME ON HOLIDAY IN FRANCE!

GAY PARIEE!



By **MARTIN CLIFFORD.**

still sleeping soundly, with a beatific smile on his face. No doubt he was dreaming of last night's supper, which had been a substantial one.

"Better wake him."

"Yaas, wathah!"

Tom Merry transferred himself and his motor-horn to Fatty Wynn's bedside. He blew a terrific blast close to Fatty Wynn's ear.

That blast would have awakened the Seven Sleepers, and it eventually awakened the Falstaff of the New House at St. Jim's.

Fatty Wynn started up from slumber in sudden alarm, throwing out his hands on either side of him, and there was a yell from Tom Merry as one hand caught him on the side of the face with a terrific smack.

"Oh!" gasped Fatty.

"Ow!" yelled Tom Merry.

"What's the row?"

"You ass!" roared Tom, sitting on the next bed and rubbing his face. "What the dickens do you mean by using my head as a punching ball?"

"Oh! I—I woke up," said Fatty.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Yes, I woke you," said Tom Merry.

"You woke me suddenly, then," said Fatty Wynn. "I always land out when

I'm woke up suddenly. I've hurt my knuckles."

"You've hurt my head."

Fatty Wynn turned over on his pillow.

"Don't wake me up again till it's time to get up."

"It's time to get up now, fathead!" said Figgins.

"Bosh! I'm tired," said Fatty Wynn.

"We've only been here a few hours so far, and I want a rest. We got here yesterday morning—"

"And you snoozed nearly all yesterday."

"Well, I was up in the evening."

"You've had enough sleep. We're going out to-day to see some of the giddy sights. We're going to look in at the restaurants, Fatty."

Fatty Wynn looked a little more animated at last.

Sightseeing in gay Pariee with Tom Merry & Co., Gussy finds himself the centre of all the fun—the laugh's on him every time!

"Well, that's all right. Let me have another half-hour, and I'll be with you."

Tom Merry laughed.

"Not another half-minute, my son. Up with you!"

"I jolly well won't!"

"Have him out, you chaps!"

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Gerroff! Leggo! Yah! Yaroo! Beasts!"

They took no notice of Fatty Wynn's expostulations. They tilted his bed up on one side, and Fatty Wynn rolled out, bedclothes and all.

He sat up in the midst of tangled bedclothes, with his fat legs sticking out of the tangle, and turned a red and wrathful face upon the juniors of St. Jim's.

"Beasts!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Fatty Wynn received no sympathy whatever. But as further repose was clearly impossible he took his morning tub, and dressed himself.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy was already busy at his toilet.

The swell of St. Jim's had not been long in Paris, but he had found an opportunity the previous evening of doing some shopping, and so, although he had brought little luggage, he was

able to shine forth that morning with his accustomed splendour.

He was the last to finish, and the others waited for him.

"Let's go down," said Fatty Wynn, who, now that he was once dressed, was eager to get down to breakfast. "It's no good waiting for Gussy. He may be an hour yet."

"I shan't be a minute, deah boys." "You'd better not," said Harry Noble, thoughtfully picking up a cake of soap and calculating the distance between him and D'Arcy.

"Weally, Kangawoo—"

"Buck up!"

"I have only to tie my necktie. Tom Mewwy, you are wathah a judge of colour, I know. Which of these neckties shall I weah?"

"Shove 'em all on, old chap!"

"I wegard that we mark as fwivolous."

"Oh, I'm going down!" said Fatty Wynn.

"Pway wait for me," said D'Arcy.

"Upon weflection, I will weah the pale blue."

He donned the pale blue, and they left the bed-room, and descended by the lift to the ground floor.

CHAPTER 2.

Fatty Wynn Feels Hungry!

UNCLE FRANK was seated at the breakfast table, perusing the "Daily Telegraph," when the juniors of St. Jim's came in.

The old gentleman looked up with a cheery nod and smile.

Uncle Frank was in Paris on business, and it had been his idea for the juniors to have a run over while he was there. Needless to say, Tom Merry & Co. had jumped at the idea.

Of course, there had been many volunteers for the party. It numbered ten, and there was one youth at St. Jim's who was determined that it should number eleven.

That youth was Arthur Augustus D'Arcy's brother, D'Arcy minor.

D'Arcy minor had declared his intention, both by words and by letter, of joining the party in Paris.

Most of the juniors smiled at the idea, but Tom Merry did not smile.

He knew Wally D'Arcy.

He would not have been surprised at any moment to see the tumbled hair and inky fingers, and broad grin of the hero of the Third Form at St. Jim's.

"Pleasant morning," said Mr. Fawcett, as he laid down his paper. "I am glad to see that you are not late abed."

"Late for us, sir," said Tom Merry. "I'm going to have them out at seven in future. I cannot allow Gussy to get into lazy habits."

"Weally, Tom Mewwy—"

"Here's the giddy waiter!" said Figgins. "Hallo, Hongri!"

They had named the waiter Henri, not knowing his name. D'Arcy had first applied the name to him, and the juniors took it up.

Henri came up with smiling, fat face and widespread palms.

"They're not deaf and dumb here, by any means," Figgins remarked; "but they do a jolly lot of talking with their hands."

Henri began to talk with both hands and mouth.

"Dejeuner?" he asked.

"Breaker," said Fatty Wynn.

"Breakfast, Hongri."

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"The boss is expecting a sit-down strike!"

Half-a-crown has been awarded to "A Reader," Bishops House, Reynolds Road, Beaconsfield, Bucks.

"Oui, oui, petit déjeuner," said Henri. "Cafe complet."

"I don't know what cuffy conplay is," said Fatty Wynn. "I want bacon and eggs and fishcake, and some marmalade to finish with. No good trying to get through a day without laying a solid foundation."

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Tell him we want bacon and eggs, Kerr, and none of his blessed French kickshaws."

Kerr grinned.

All the juniors knew French—English French, so to speak—but they found that their French was sadly wanting when it came to dealing with Frenchmen in France.

Blake had confided some of his sufferings while seaskit to the hotel proprietor, who was very sympathetic; but Blake discovered later that the Frenchman believed that Blake was telling him that his mother was ill.

After that Blake gave it up.

Kerr, who could do nearly everything, spoke French well, and it was unanimously agreed that he was to be the interpreter of the party.

He spoke to the waiter now, so quickly that his chums could not follow his meaning; but the waiter understood, and he outspread his hands comprehendingly and vanished.

"Do you weally undahstand all that, Kerr?" asked D'Arcy curiously.

"Ha, ha, ha! Yes."

"And does Hongwi?"

"Yes."

"It is vewy we markable. I weally considah that there ought to be a speed limit, same as for dwivin' motor-cahs."

"Well, that wouldn't be a bad weeze," said Figgins thoughtfully. "I don't believe they always understand each other, though. That's why they eke it out by wriggling and waving their hands."

"Yaas, wathah."

"Sure the chap understands about the bacon, Kerr?" asked Fatty Wynn.

"Ha, ha, ha! Yes, that's all right."

"It's an important point. These people begin the day on a roll and butter and coffee. Now, how could they expect to win the Battle of Waterloo on that?"

"How, indeed?" said Mr. Fawcett, with a smile.

"You want to lay a solid foundation," said Fatty Wynn, encouraged. "Whether it's for seeing sights, or doing lessons, or fighting battles, what you want is a solid foundation to work upon."

"Yaas, wathah!"

"I could get through dozens of the cuffy conplays, and feel as if I hadn't begun," said Fatty Wynn. "He's a long time."

"Why, it's not a minute yet!"

"It seems a long time; much longer than that. You're quite sure he understood about the bacon, Kerr?"

"Quite sure."

"It would be awful for him to turn up with nothing but rolls and butter after all this waiting."

"Minute and a quarter," said Tom Merry, looking at his watch.

"Your watch must be slow. I had a very light supper last night—only some cold beef and bacon, and a pie, and a pudding, and some of their blessed kickshaws. I always wake hungry in the mornings in December, too."

"Not at other times?" grinned Lowther.

"Well, I seem to get specially peckish at this time of the year. I always have a healthy appetite. I wanted to come to Paris chiefly to sample their cooking. I've heard a lot about it."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"What an awful long time that chap is!"

"Two minutes!"

"Two hours, you mean!"

"You don't want the bacon raw, I suppose?" said Figgins.

"Well, I think we might have something cold to start with, anyway. I'd better begin on the rolls. After all, I shall have room for the bacon, too."

And Fatty Wynn began on the rolls and butter.

Henri was really very quick with the breakfast, considering that it was a substantial one for ten persons, and the cook must have done his duty nobly. But the fat Fourth Former had made a decided clearance among the rolls by the time Henri reappeared.

Henri looked at the table in some surprise.

He had carefully placed ten rolls there, and now there were only three to be seen. Fatty Wynn eyed him hungrily.

"Mais," said Henri, "ze bread!"

"Eh?"

"I zink zat I place ze pain—ze bread!" said the puzzled waiter. "It is gone viz itself away! Zat is ferry curious!"

"Where's the bacon?"

"Je ne comprends pas."

"Oh, don't talk to me about your pa or your ma, either! I'm hungry! J'ai faim!" said Fatty Wynn. "I have hunger, as you put it in your lingo! J'ai faim—j'ai faim, beaucoup!"

"M'sieur?"

"J'ai blessed faim!"

"M'sieur?"

"They say these French are an intelligent race, and they don't even understand their own blessed language!" said Fatty Wynn, in disgust.

Henri, looking puzzled, planted down his trays.

Fatty Wynn had been expecting rashes of bacon, and he began to look dangerous till he discovered that the little dishes contained a mixture of bacon and eggs. Then he was mollified, but he grunted expressively when he discovered that there was only one of the little dishes for him.

"Is it possible that that duffer thinks this will be enough for me?" he asked, in wonder. "Is he off his silly rocker?"

"Ask him for more, then, before he goes!" grinned Tom Merry.

"Henri! Waiter! Garsong!"

"M'sieur?"

"Bring me half a dozen more!"



"Have him out of it!" exclaimed Figgins. "Gerroff! Leggo!" gasped Fatty Wynn, as the juniors took hold of his bed. Next moment it was tilted up, and Fatty rolled out amidst the bedclothes. "Yah! Yaroo! Beasts!" he yelled.

"M'sieur?"

"Here, waitong—I—I mean, garsong—bring me—apporter moi—cinq ou six encore!" spluttered Fatty Wynn.

"M'sieur?"

"Half a dozen!" roared Fatty Wynn.

"Some more encore—cinq—six—sept!"

"Oui, oui, oui!"

Henri grinned to show that he understood, and departed. Fatty Wynn grunted.

"Stupid people, these French!" he remarked. "I should think he might have guessed that one of those poky little dishes wouldn't be enough for a chap like me."

Fatty Wynn did not take long over his allowance of bacon and eggs. He had just finished it, and was ready for some more, when Henri arrived.

Fatty Wynn looked at him expectantly.

He became almost speechless when Henri deposited a plate on the table containing six or seven rolls of bread.

The fat Fourth Former of St. Jim's stared at them.

"Where's the bacon?"

"M'sieur?"

"Where's that blessed bacon?"

"M'sieur?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Tom Merry.

"It's your giddy French! He thought you were asking for half a dozen more rolls in place of those you scoffed."

Fatty Wynn spluttered.

"The ass! The crass ass!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Bacon!" said Fatty Wynn. "Eggs!"

Des œufs, fathead—lots of œufs!"

"Go it, Kerr!"

The grinning Kerr explained. Henri

waved his hands, and disappeared. He returned shortly with a tray containing sufficient bacon and eggs to satisfy even Fatty Wynn. The fat junior beamed.

"This is something like!" he remarked. "I shall be able to lay a solid foundation now!"

Arthur Augustus rose from the table.

"I weally cannot stay indoors while you lay a solid foundation, Wynn, if you are goin' to twavel through that lot!" he remarked. "You fellows comin' out?"

"Yes, rather!" said Blake and Digby, getting up at once.

"Wait a tick!" said Tom Merry.

"We're all coming!"

Uncle Frank had already left the breakfast-table, after seeing the juniors provided for. He had finished his morning meal—a much lighter one—and had gone to attend to his business.

He had cautioned the boys to be careful when they went out, and then left them to their own devices. He was a gentleman of experience, and he knew that they could take care of themselves, and that they would be better without a guide, philosopher, and friend of middle age to look after them. They wanted to spend the first morning in a walk round Paris, and Uncle Frank had reached a time when he preferred to do his sightseeing sitting down.

Fatty Wynn looked up from his fourth helping.

"I'm jolly well not coming till I've finished!" he said. "Don't you fellows wait for me, though!"

"Weally, Wynn—"

"We'll wait," said Figgins and Kerr

loyally. "We'll run against you fellows presently, I expect."

"Meet at the Eiffel Tower," suggested Tom Merry. "Turn up at the tower punctually at twelve o'clock—eh?"

"Right you are!" said the three New House juniors.

"Come on, deah boys!" said D'Arcy.

He had brought his silk hat down with him. Seven juniors put on hats or caps, and sallied forth, leaving Fatty Wynn to finish laying his solid foundation, and Figgins and Kerr to watch him doing it.

CHAPTER 3.

Gussy Buys Some Postcards!

TOM MERRY & CO. sallied forth from the Hotel Ste. Genevieve, in the Rue de Rivoli, in the highest of spirits.

The previous day they had been too tired by their journey to do more than just look round them, and this was their first real look at Paris.

It was a brilliant morning, very bright for the season—the clear, brilliant sunshine of Paris falling in a flood upon streets and squares and buildings, and showing up the cleanliness of the city, striking enough to the boys, who had just come from London.

Partly owing to the atmosphere, partly to the style of architecture, Paris strikes the newcomer as being as bright and clean as a toy city, though certainly some of the sights in the streets are far from pleasing to the English eye.

Arthur Augustus glanced round with

great admiration as he found himself under the long stone colonnade that runs for a considerable length in the Rue de Rivoli.

"Bai Jove, this is a wippin' ideah!" he remarked.

"What is?" asked Tom Merry.

"This colonnade! When it comes on to wain, a fellow can still do his shoppin' without dangah of havin' his toppah wuined."

"Jolly good!"

"Wemarkably polite these people are," Arthur Augustus further observed, as a gentleman in a crush of pedestrians stepped aside for him to pass, and raised his hat with a courteous smile as he did so.

D'Arcy raised his hat in return, and bowed, and the gentleman bowed, and they passed with a mutually high opinion of one another.

"Remarkable!" said Blake. "It must take up some time, too, if they keep it up to concert pitch all day."

"I like it," said D'Arcy. "You fellows might observe their mannahs and customs, and copy them with advantage. I've always done my best to impove you, but I must admit without vevy gweat success."

"Are you looking for a thick ear, Gussy?"

"Certainly not, Mannahs! I wogard the question as widiculous!"

"Well, you came jolly near finding one, then, without looking for it."

"Weally, Mannahs—"

Arthur Augustus was interrupted.

A man stopped in his path, and extended towards him a packet of picture postcards, with a genial smile.

D'Arcy shook his head.

"No, thanks, deah boy!"

But the man persisted. He followed the elegant junior, and insisted upon thrusting the packet into his hands. Then he waved his own hands, and smiled.

D'Arcy put up his eyeglass, and glanced at the packet of cards, and then at the man.

"Vevy well, deah boy, if you persist!" he said, and slipped the packet into his pocket, and walked on.

The man stared after him blankly and followed.

"Bai Jove, they are a polite wace, and no mistake!" said Arthur Augustus. "Fancy a stwangah givin' a chap a packet of pictuah postcards like that!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I see no cause for laughtah, Tom Mewwy! It was a vevy civil thing to do, and the man did not look wich, eithah, as if he could afford to make pwesents."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It was vevy decent of him, I considah—"

"Oh, Gussy, you'll be the death of us!" said Blake, grinning.

"Weally, Blake— Hallo, here is the chap again!"

The picture postcard merchant tapped D'Arcy on his sleeve and began to wave his arms about him like the sails of a windmill.

Arthur Augustus halted, and looked at him.

"Non, non," he said; "I don't want any more! It's vevy polite of you, and I wogard you as a weally decent chap, but I cannot wob you in this way."

And D'Arcy walked on.

The man, jabbering and gesticulating, pursued him. The chums were shrieking with laughter, and Arthur Augustus was looking decidedly puzzled.

"Tres francs!" bellowed the Frenchman excitedly. "Tres francs!"

"What is he saying, Tom Mewwy?"

"Three francs."

"What does he mean by that?"

"Ha, ha, ha! He wants three francs for the postcards!"

"Oh!"

"He's not giving them away, you ass; he's selling them!"

"Oh!"

"Give him three francs, or he'll have the whole Rue de Rivoli and the Place de la Concorde about our ears!"

Arthur Augustus felt in his pocket.

"Pway do not cackle in that widiculous way, you fellows! How was I to know that the chap was sellin' the beastly things? I don't want any, and I only took them out of politeness. I haven't any silver! Here, my man, wun somewhere and change this for me!"

He put a twenty franc note into the hand of the picture postcard merchant.

The man, who was a fellow of medium size, with keen, twinkling eyes and a black beard and a red nose, looked at the note and then at D'Arcy, and babbled out something in which Arthur Augustus only distinguished the word "changer."

"Well, go and get chango!" said D'Arcy.

The man babbled again.

"Changer!" exclaimed D'Arcy. "Allez! Changez. Bunkez-vous!"

The man grinned and disappeared in the crowd.

Jack Blake gave a roar.

"Ha, ha, ha! You champion ass, do you expect to see your seventeen francs again?"

"Weally, Blake—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I should wogard it as wotten to doubt a fellow's honesty," said D'Arcy with dignity. "I pwesume he will bring my change."

"Well, we'll see."

They waited by one of the columns of the colonnade for five minutes; there was no sign of the black-bearded man.

"Better move on," grinned Lowther.

"I have not received my change yet, deah boy."

"If you're going to wait for that, you'd better send for a camp-stool," said Manners. "That chap won't come back."

"I considah—"

"Ass! He's a mile away by this time."

"I wufuse to be called an ass."

Tom Merry took out his watch.

"We'll give him another two minutes," he said.

"Vevy well."

The two minute: elapsed. There was no sign of the picture postcard merchant. He was probably at a considerable distance by this time.

Tom Merry slipped his watch back into his pocket.

"Come on!"

"Bai Jove! I don't know whethah we ought to communicate with the authorities," said Arthur Augustus.

"Rot! You shouldn't have trusted a street postcard seller with twenty francs. It was your own fault, and you've no right to have him locked up."

"I was not thinkin' of havin' him locked up, deah boy."

"Then what—"

"I was thinkin' that he had pwobably met with some accident in goin' to get change."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Arthur Augustus cast a last look round, but there was no sign of the postcard merchant; and the chums went on their way, the swell of St. Jim's the poorer by seventeen francs.

CHAPTER 4.

A Sudden Recognition!

ARTHUR AUGUSTUS several times cast a puzzled look round him as he strolled down the Rue de Rivoli; with his chums.

The street was very busy, with endless omnibuses, cars, and other vehicles streaming east and west, and countless taxicabs buzzing along at an amazing speed. Something seemed to puzzle

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Arthur Augustu, and at last he ejaculated.

"What's the matter?" asked Tom Merry, looking round.

"The duffahs are all goin' the w'ong side of the woad!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus. "I weally wondah the gendarmes don't keep the twaffic in bethah ordah."

"The traffic's all right."

"My deah chap, can't you see that simply nobody keeps to the left—"

"They keep to the right in France."

"Oh!"

And when he came to look at it again he discerned that the endless confusion was only in appearance, caused by the rule of the road being opposite to that to which he was accustomed at home.

"Bai Jove!" said D'Arcy thoughtfully. "I am wathah glad I didn't bwing my jiggah, aftah all. This would take some gettin' used to."

They strolled down to the Place de la Concorde—once the Place de la Revolution, and the scene of guillotining in the old days of the Terror.

Many times Tom Merry and Blake had to clutch D'Arcy almost from under a whizzing taxi. There were taxis to right of them, taxis to left of them; they seemed countless, and they were all going at a terrific speed, so that it became an exciting task to cross most corners.

Arthur Augustus gave a start, as, stepping into the roadway, a taxi hooted and bore down on him. He jumped back again to the pavement, the cab missing him by a hairsbreadth. The taxi was empty, but it was going at a speed as if the driver were engaged upon a matter of life and death.

Arthur Augustus brandished his fist furiously at the driver.

"You uttah wottah!" he shouted. "I wish you would come within hittin' distance, you feahful ass! I should like to give you a feahful thwashin'!"

"My hat!" said Tom Merry. "He's coming!"

It was true! The taxi-driver had mistaken D'Arcy's furious gesture for a signal that he wanted the taxi, and he was whirling round and whizzing back to the spot where the swell of St. Jim's stood.

D'Arcy's eye gleamed behind his eyeglass.

"Bai Jove! So he is!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Will you hold my hat, Blake?"

"What for?"

"While I thwash that taxi-dwivah."

"You utter ass—"

"I decline to be called an ass!"

D'Arcy pushed back his cuffs. "The wottah made me jump, and thwew no into quite a fluttah. I am goin' to give him a feahful thwashin'!"

"Ass! You'd be collared by the gendarmes—"

"I should uttally wefuse to be collared by a gendarme."

The taxi drew up to the pavement, and the driver grinned at the swell of St. Jim's.

"M'sieur?"

"You wottah!"

"Oui?" asked the driver, apparently mistaking that word for the name of his intended destination and not comprehending it.

"You uttah ass!"

"M'sieur?"

"You feahfully impertinent beast!"

"Pardon, m'sieur—"

"You cheeky duffah—"

"Mais, je ne comprends pas."

ST. JIM'S JINGLES. No. 8.



PERCY MELLISH.

A CREATURE whom we all abhor
With stealthy step comes creeping,
And through the keyhole of the door
His crafty eyes are peeping—
Until a prefect passes by,
And kicks him forth with relish;
Subduing thus the sneak and spy,
Whose name, of course, is Mellish.

He slouches with an evil leer,
And all his recreation
Is spent in mean attempts to hear
His schoolmates' conversation.
To him the splendid summer sports
Have neither charm nor moral;
He shines in spreading false reports
And causing chums to quarrel.

The ruthless Levison and he
Are rascals of a feather—
Ensclosed in strictest privacy,
They plot and plan together.
And very few would ever guess
With what vindictive keenness
They hate the fellows who express
Contempt for all their meanness.

At times, when many a precious plot
Appears to be succeeding,
The wretched schemers catch it hot,
For mercy vainly pleading.
But each Fourth Former fain would
Smile,
So both the cads are battered,
And slink discreetly out of sight
With feat. . . gore-bespattered.

Though Levison contrives to face
The blows upon him showered,
His cronny proves, like all his race,
A whining, cringing coward.
And by the babel which arose,
From such a squirming victim,
One would imagine that his foes
Had boiled instead of licked him!

Within the Green Man's private room
This mighty man of valour
Sits smoking; and his cheeks assume
A strange and ghastly pallor.
He struggles with his cigarettes,
And scans a sporting paper,
But, inwardly, he much regrets
Each wretched midnight caper.

Three groans for Mellish, through
Whose ways,
Such scandals have arisen.
No doubt the cad will end his days
Within some friendly prison;
Where he may muse on former times,
Replete with so-called pleasure,
And, pondering o'er his countless crimes,
Repent of them at leisure.

Next Week: ERIC KILDARE.

"Bai Jove! You will compwehend a punch on the beastly nose, I think—"

Tom Merry dragged the swell of St. Jim's back in time. Arthur Augustus wriggled in his grasp.

"Welease me, Tom Mewwy!"

"Rats!"

"I shall lose my tempah—"

"Go hon!"

"I'm goin' to thwash this impertinent wottah—"

"Nothing of the sort; your mistake."

"Weally, Tom Mewwy—"

Jack Blake chuckled. The taxicab driver had settled the matter by buzzing off. He hurled back a word at D'Arcy as he left.

Tom Merry released the swell of St. Jim's.

"Chase him!" exclaimed Monty Lowther. "Put on a spurt, Gussy, and you'll soon catch up the taxi."

"Yaas, wathah!"

And Arthur Augustus started to run. It dawned upon him the next moment that Lowther was "rotting," and he turned back indignantly. The juniors roared. D'Arcy turned his eyeglass upon the joker of the Shell.

"Lowthah, I wegard you—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"What was it that impertinent dwivah said as he went off, Tom Mewwy?"

"Better ask him."

"It was somethin' like foo," said Digby. "I caught the word Anglais, and then there was the word foo."

"Foo!" grinned Blake. "Ha, ha, ha!"

"I see no cause for wibald laughtah. What was it the man said?"

"Only that the Englishman was mad!" said Manners, chuckling.

"Bai Jove!"

"Better go and look for him," said Lowther. "You'd find the taxi again among all that lot—I don't think."

"Weally, Lowthah—"

"Did we come out for a walk, or to watch Gussy quarrelling with cab-drivers?" asked Manners. "If Gussy wants to quarrel with cab-drivers, I think he ought to go into a cafe or a cabaret, and do it quietly."

"Weally, Mannahs—"

"I recommended Blake to put a chain on him before he brought him out," said Kangaroo reproachfully.

"I should uttally wefuse—"

"Oh, come on!" said Tom Merry.

"This way to the Eiffel Tower!"

"Bai Jove!"

"What's the row now?"

"Wally!"

"What?"

"It's my young bwothah!"

"Rats!"

"Bai Jove! It's my minah!"

Arthur Augustus made a sudden rush into the crowd. The juniors rushed after him, but D'Arcy stopped in a minute or so, disappointed.

"He's gone!"

CHAPTER 5. A New Friend!

TOM MERRY & CO. glared at the swell of St. Jim's.

"You ass!" said Tom Merry at last. "You're beginning to see things. It's the air of Paris getting into your head, or else it's the second cup of tea."

"Weally, Tom Mewwy—"

"He'll be imagining he sees the Head next, or Mr. Railton," said Monty Lowther.

"I tell you it was Wally."

"Where was he?"

"Ovah there," D'Arcy pointed. "He dodged behind that stone pillah as I wan towards him, and disappeared."

Tom Merry knitted his brows. "It would be just like that youngascal to follow us to Paris," he said. "But I won't believe it till I've seen him, anyway."

"I saw him, deah boy."
"More rats!"
And the party proceeded. Arthur Augustus kept a careful look-out for Wally—if it was really Wally—but he did not turn up again.

In the Place de la Concorde, Arthur Augustus halted to jam his monocle into his eye, and looked up at the obelisk. "Awfully like Cleopatwah's Needle on the Embankment, you know," said D'Arcy, with the air of a connoisseur in Egyptian monuments.

"It's the fellow to it," said Manners. "Oh, that accounts for the wesemblance, then!"

"Go hon!"
Tom Merry led the way to the Concorde Bridge over the Seine. He looked up and down, and round about the bridge.

"There ought to be a boat here, an omnibus-boat to take you down to the Champ de Mars," he remarked. "It will be fun going by river."

"What are we going to the Champ de Mars for, deah boy?"

"Eiffel Tower!"
"Oh, yaas! I want to go up the Eiffel Tower vevy much. I promised to send my Cousin Ethel a postcard with the Eiffel Towah postmark on it, you know."

"Here's the boat station!" exclaimed Kangaroo.

The Cornstalk led the way down to the river bank, down the stone steps, and straight to the floating landing-stage, where the Seine steamers embarked their passengers.

There is a splendid service of steamers on the Seine, much patronised by the Parisians, who make extensive use of the fine waterway Nature has provided for them free of charge. The landing-stage, bobbing up and down in the water, was crowded.

"Bai Jove, it's wocky!"
"I'll hold you, Gussy!" said Lowther, reaching out.

D'Arcy backed away.
"You will do nothing of the sort, Lowthah. I am assured that you are intending some beastly pwactical joke. I—"

A howl from behind Arthur Augustus interrupted him.

In retreating from Lowther he had backed upon a French youth, and trodden upon his toe, bringing all his weight to bear upon it.

The French youth, a good-looking lad of about sixteen, doubled up with pain, and the howls he gave rang over the landing-stage.

Arthur Augustus whirled round.
"Bai Jove, I'm sawwy!"
"Ow!"

"I'm awfully sowwy, you know, m'sieur!"
"Yow!"

"Did I hurt you?"
"Ha ha, ha!" screamed Blake. "Did he hurt him? Doesn't the chap look as if he was hurt?"

"I apologise most pwofoundly—"
"Of all the asses—" said Lowther.
"It was your fault, Lowthah—your beastly pwactical jokes—"

"That's right, lay the blame on me!" said Monty Lowther resignedly. "You'll say it's my fault next that you've got that smear of paint on your sleeve."

"Bai Jove, I—"
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"Go on with the apology."
"I remember you pushed me against a shop fwoot—"

"Look here, that chap's waiting for the rest of the apology; they have to be jolly long-winded ones in this country," said Kangaroo.

To their surprise the French youth grinned. He understood English; Kangaroo coloured.

"Ah, I accepze apology!" said the French youth. "It was zat I am hurt, but it is no mattair—n'importe."

"Ah, you speak English?" said Tom Merry.
"I have been to ze Anglettere."

"Perhaps you are an Englishman, though," said Monty Lowther blandly. The young Frenchman smiled and shook his head.

"Oh, no! You zink so because I speak ze English like yourself, but zat is not so. I am a Frenchman. My name is Auguste Cernay."

"Pleased to meet you, deah boy!" said Arthur Augustus. "I must beg of you to accept my pwofound apology—"

"It is vat you call all right."
"I am extremely sowwy—"
"It is nozing!"

"I am afraid I hurt your foot."
"Not at all! It is nozing. It is more pleasair zan ozzervise."

"My hat," murmured Tom Merry,



"What's up, Bill—scared?"
"Don't you know I walk in my sleep?"

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"they carry politeness to a jolly long extent! Fancy telling a chap it's a pleasure to have his hoof on your toe."

"Vevy good, deah boy!" said Arthur Augustus. "It was weally not my fault, but that of that ass Lowthah, but I apologise all the same."

"It is nozing!"
"I'm awfully glad to meet you, deah boy!" went on D'Arcy, introducing himself in turn. "My name is D'Arcy—Arthur Augustus D'Arcy."

The French boy looked at him.
"Ciell! Is it zat all ze English are named D'Arcy?" he exclaimed.

"I do not compwehend, deah boy!"
"I have already met an English monsieur zis morning, and his name is D'Arcy," said Auguste Cernay. "He lodges in ze pension viz me."

"Bai Jove!"
"You are strangers in Paris, is it not so—n'est ce pas?" said Cernay, with a smile.

"Yaas, wathah!"
"Is it zat you go on ze steamer?"
"Oui, oui!"

"I go likewise; I get off at ze Eiffel Tower."

"Bai Jove, so do we!"
"Ciell! Zen ve goes togezzel!" said Cernay, with a cheerful grin.
"Awfully delighted, deah boy!"

Uncle Frank had cautioned the juniors against picking up stray acquaintances, and they had promised to be very careful. But Auguste Cernay was evidently so genuine and frank and honest that they could not have any doubts about him.

To pick up a French friend like this, too, was a piece of luck for the boys, who were without Kerr, their interpreter, and who had to admit that their own French, though it looked all right on the exercise papers at St. Jim's, was a little rocky when it came to talking to Frenchmen in France.

"That will be jolly," said Tom Merry.
"I show you ze place," said Cernay, with a wave of his hand. "Ze tower—it is wonderful! Some say it is ze vat you call eyesore of Paris—but it is wonderful, all ze same."

The steamer came ploughing along, and the crowd on the landing-stage boarded it, the juniors marching on with the rest.

There were seats on deck, and the St. Jim's party and their new friend sat down in a row. Arthur Augustus was looking thoughtful. Lowther gave him a friendly dig in the ribs and asked him what he was mooning about.

Arthur Augustus jumped.
"Pway don't be such a wuff beast, Lowthah! You have thwown me into quite a fluttah. I was not moonin', eithah. I was thinkin' of what our young fwend Cernay was remarkin'."

Cernay was about a year older than Arthur Augustus; but that was D'Arcy's way.

"What was he remarking then?" asked Lowther.

"About another chap named D'Arcy."
"Heaps of French chaps named D'Arcy, I should think," said Lowther. "As a matter of fact, you're a beastly alien, Gussy!"

"I wefuse to be called an alien!"
"You have to admit that your name was made abroad," said Lowther argumentatively.

"My ancestahs came ovah with the Conqwewah," said D'Arcy, with dignity. "I pwesume they brougth their name with them. They licked your ancestahs at the Battle of Hastings."

"Well, they've been in England a long time, but that makes no difference. They were a lot of blessed aliens," said Lowther obstinately. "As a matter of fact, William the Conqueror and his whole gang were a lot of blessed aliens, who came over to England for what they could get."

"I cannot allow you to speak disrespectfully of my ancestahs, Lowthah."

"Rats!"
"I should be sowwy to make a general disturbance by thwashin' you now—"

"You would be sorry if you started!" said Lowther. "But you haven't told me why you're frowning yet."

"Oh! You see, Cernay says it's an English chap named D'Arcy."

"Yes, so he did."
"Well, it occurred to me that it might be that young wascal Wally. I know he's in Pawis, you know."

"No fear!"
"I am quite sure of it, deah boy. I shall twy to find out fwom Cernay if it is my minah. He had no wight to come to Pawis, but if he is here, it's my duty to look aftah him."

And D'Arcy, feeling the troubles of

a family man heavy upon him, looked quite serious.
Lowther chuckled.
Meanwhile, Auguste Cernay was chatting away nineteen to the dozen, pointing out to the juniors of St. Jim's and describing the various places of interest on the banks between which the Seine steamboat was gliding.

CHAPTER 6.
On the Seine!

AUGUSTE CERNAY proved an invaluable acquisition for the juniors of St. Jim's.
It seemed that he was in Paris himself on a holiday, and was going round to see some of the sights when he fell in with Tom Merry & Co.
Nothing, as he explained to Tom Merry, could have been more fortunate. He was himself very fond of company, and was desolated at having to go round alone, and at the same time he was glad of an opportunity of doing the honours of Paris for the English visitors. He had been treated with much politeness by the people in London, and he was glad of an opportunity to repay the obligation.

To all of which Tom Merry replied with somewhat "rocky" French that he was equally enchanted to make the esteemed acquaintance of Monsieur Cernay, and that he, too, regarded the accidental meeting at the Place de la Concorde as an unimagined stroke of luck.

Cernay was all smiles, evidently happy to do the honours of Paris. He was equally evidently convinced that Paris was the greatest and finest city in the world, and, indeed, the capital of the universe, as the Parisians sometimes claim.

The juniors were privately of opinion that Paris was very clean and bright, but not quite up to old London in many respects; and Kangaroo hinted that Melbourne could knock spots off it in some ways.

But they did not say so to Auguste. He had the simple, childlike faith of a Frenchman in his native land; it did not even occur to him that anybody could differ. And Tom Merry would not have told him that Paris was not

the finest city in the world, any more than he would have told a child that his rocking-horse was not the finest rocking-horse in the world.

The steamboat glided along by the Quai D'Orsay, and the eyes of the juniors were turned towards the curious yet graceful structure of the Eiffel Tower in the distance.

The network of interlaced iron was certainly curious, and Cernay was proud of it in one way, if not in another.

"It does not improve ze landscape," he remarked, with a Gallic shrug of the shoulders. "Zat is so. But it is big—vere vill you see vun biggair—eh?"

"Nowhere," agreed Tom Merry.
"Zen ze view from ze top—superb!"
"Yes, it must be."

The official came along for the fares, and Tom Merry & Co. discovered that the fare was only twenty-five centimes—that fare being doubled on Saturdays and holidays—Dimanches and fetes, as the notices on the stations had it.

The motion of the steamboat was easy and pleasant, and the trip gave the juniors a good view of the Seine and its traffic.

Although nothing like the Thames for size and for traffic, it was a big and busy river, and a very interesting sight.

They disembarked at the Champs de Mars, and as they ascended the steps from the river bank, the Eiffel Tower loomed up over their heads, soaring into the clouds.

D'Arcy jammed his eyeglass into his eye, and took a survey of it from the Pont d'Iena.

"Bai Jove!" he remarked. "It's awfully big, you know. I should say that it was much biggah than the Monument in London."

"Ass!"
"Weally, Lowthah—"
"It's nearly five times as high as the Monument."

"Well, I said it was biggah, didn't I?"

Lowther snorted.
Tom Merry looked at his watch and looked round for Figgins. They had agreed to meet Figgins & Co. at the Eiffel Tower, but it was early yet.

"Zat you ascend ze tower?" asked Auguste Cernay.

"Yaas, wathah!"
"I have been up before, but I love to go again. Zis way."

The juniors entered the grounds of the great Paris Exhibition, now closed, and made their way to the south-western corner, at which a notice said that the lift was working. They took a ticket each, paying ten francs each for the same, which Lowther remarked was a jolly lot for going up a beastly tower. He asked the lady in the bureau whether she could not make a reduction for quantities; but as the young lady understood no English, she only smiled.

"Where's the beastly lift?" asked Arthur Augustus, turning his eyeglass round.

"Zis way."
"Merci!" said D'Arcy, who was gradually dropping into the French "Thank you!"

They walked into the little waiting-room adjoining the lift-shaft, D'Arcy taking the room for the lift, as visitors to the tower will do sometimes. He sat down on one of the seats, and waited for it to move.

"We are not going up," he remarked.
"Ha, ha, ha!"
"Weally, Tom Mewwy—"

"Did you expect the whole tower to go up?"

"I natuwallly expected the lift to wise," said D'Arcy, with dignity. "I believe that is what lifts are supposed to do."

"This is a waiting-room, ass!"
"I wefuse to be called an ass!"

There was a whirring and a creaking, and the lift came down. The door was opened, and the passengers crowded into the lift. There were a dozen more besides the juniors from St. Jim's.

"Bai Jove, we're off at last!" said D'Arcy, as the attendant clanged the gates shut.

"Yes, rather!"
"Bai Jove!"
"It's all right; there's no danger."

"I did not think there was any dangah, Digby. I have left my cane on the seat in the waitin'-woom."

"Go hon!"
"Well, you won't see it again, that's"
(Continued on the next page.)

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one comfort," remarked Lowther. "You've nearly poked my eye out with it several times."

D'Arcy tapped the liftman on the shoulder.

"Pway stop, deah boy!"

CHAPTER 7.

The Eiffel Tower!

THE liftman stared at D'Arcy.

The lift went on. The swell of St. Jim's pointed downwards excitedly.

"Pway stop! I have forgotten my cane!"

"M'sieur?"

"Go down again!"

"Je ne comprends pas."

"Descend, you duffah—descendez!"

The man grinned.

"You ass!" said Tom Merry. "Do you think he's going to descend for your beastly cane? Wait till the lift goes down again."

"Imposs."

"Hallo! Here we are!"

"Premier etage," said the attendant.

The lift stopped.

"First stage, mes amis," said Cernay.

"Good!"

The juniors poured out on to the first platform of the tower. Arthur Augustus stopped with one foot in and one foot out, to argue with the liftman.

"I must weally have my cane, you know."

"M'sieur!"

"Are you goin' down now?"

The man pointed upwards.

Another attendant gently shoved D'Arcy off the lift floor, and the gates closed, and the grinning liftman disappeared upward.

"Bai Jove!"

"The lift will be down again presently," remarked Kangaroo consolingly, "then you can go down and look for your cane."

"It may be taken by somebody by mistake."

"Yes, I shouldn't wonder."

"Is there another lift, Tom Mewwy?"

"Yes."

"Good! Where?"

"In the south-eastern pillar of the tower."

D'Arcy frowned majestically. The Eiffel Tower lifts are in the legs of the tower, or pillars, of which there are four, at a considerable distance from one another. To use another lift D'Arcy had first to descend to the ground, and then walk across to the opposite extremity of the tower.

"Weally, Tom Mewwy, I wish you would be sewious about a sewious mattah," he said "My cane may be lost."

"You shouldn't forget it," said Digby.

"I did not forget it on purpose, Dig."

"Well, go down the steps for it," suggested Manners. "You can do that without waiting for the lift. There is a staircase here."

"Bai Jove, you know, I nevah thought of that!"

And Arthur Augustus made for the staircase, and disappeared, and the juniors strolled round the extensive platform of the "premier etage" of the Eiffel Tower.

The gigantic structure seemed still more gigantic when they were upon it. It was quite a walk round the first story.

"Hallo, there's a restaurant here," remarked Lowther. "Lucky Fatty isn't

here yet, or there would be a jolly long halt for refreshments."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Zis is vero you buy ze presents for ze infants at home," said Auguste Cernay. "Zey are all dear—tres chier—but what would you have? You buy ze picture carte also, ici, and you post him in ze lettre-box—ze boite. Zen you have ze Eiffel Tower postmark on ze lettre."

"Good!"

The juniors all bought picture post-cards, and stamps, too—timbres—and posted them in the "boite."

They strolled round the platform, looking at the various stalls, and resisting with difficulty the pressing invitations to purchase; and they wondered where Arthur Augustus was all the time.

He reappeared at last.

There was a gasp, and he emerged from the staircase, and sank into a seat. They gave him a grin for welcome.

He was breathing hard, and the perspiration was thick upon his aristocratic brow.

"Tired?" asked Tom Merry sympathetically.

The swell of St. Jim's sniffed.

"Bai Jove, I am uttably exhausted! I did not weally believe there were so many steps in the world, you know."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It is no laughin' mattah. I am exhausted, and have been thrown into quite a fluttah. It was decidedly wotten."

"Did you find the cane?"

"Yaas; an attendant was minding it, and I gave him ten fwancs."

"Well, somebody's benefited, so it's all right."

"It's not all wight, Lowthah. Goin' down wasn't so bad, but comin' up the stairs again was simply feahful."

"Why did you come up the stairs?" asked Tom Merry. "You could have waited until the lift was coming up again."

"Bai Jove, you know, I nevah thought of that!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Weally, deah boys—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Never mind," said Tom Merry. "Come and have some ginger-beer, and you'll feel all right!"

Arthur Augustus rose.

"That is weally not a bad ideah, deah boy."

"Where's the buffet, Cernay?"

"Zis way!"

They gathered round a buffet. A smiling attendant shook his head, and waved his hands at the mention of ginger-beer. He evidently did not know what it was, even after D'Arcy had put it into French—D'Arcy's French—as "la bierre de jinnaire." Even then, strange to state, the man was at a loss. Cernay came to the rescue.

"He have no beer of ginger," he said. "Zere is lemonade, and zere is orangeade, and zere is beer and wine."

"Well, we'll bar the beer and wine," said Tom Merry. "Orangeade sounds all right."

"Yaas, wathah!"

The attendant mixed glasses of orangeade, and they sucked the refreshing liquor through straws, and pronounced themselves much better.

They walked round the platform again, and Arthur Augustus stopped at nearly every stall to purchase.

Most of the stalls were attended by women, and Arthur Augustus did not think it polite to pass on without answering them when they spoke; and

having stopped to talk, what could he do but purchase something?

In five minutes he had two large models of the Eiffel Tower under his arm, three card boxes, tied with ribbon, in his left hand, and a couple of parcels in his right.

He gave Lowther his cane to carry, and would have given the others some of the parcels, but they declined with thanks.

"What the dickens are you buying the blessed things for?" Tom Merry asked.

"Weally, Tom Mewwy, I suppose a chap must be polite."

"Well, if you're going to keep on being polite to this extent, you'd better hire a porter, or a pantechnicon van."

Arthur Augustus sniffed. His purchases grew and grew until, when they stopped at the lift again to go up to the second story, he was weary and heavy-laden.

After some reflection, he left all his purchases upon a seat, and went into the lift without them. Cernay tapped his arm.

"It is good—verry good of you to trust ze honesty of ze French people so mooch," he said, "but zere are—vat you call?—rokes—"

"Eh? Oh, wogues, you mean?"

"Oui, oui, oui! Zere are rokes every-where, and ze things may be stolen."

"Good! I wathah hope they will be, you know."

"You pay ze money for zem," said Cernay, looking puzzled.

"Yaas, wathah; and I'd pay for somebody to steal them."

Cernay shook his head. He did not understand, but the things were left where D'Arcy had placed them. D'Arcy was only too anxious to get rid of the lumber.

They ascended to the second stage, and found it a rather smaller edition of the first. The view from the railing round it was splendid. It was a clear day, and they could see Paris stretched out below them.

"Is it not grand? Magnifique—n'est ce pas?" he cried.

And the juniors agreed that it was.

CHAPTER 8.

Another Feed for Fatty!

LOOKS like a blessed toy city, doesn't it?" murmured Lowther, out of the hearing of the enthusiastic Cernay.

"You could put three or four of these into London, and never notice they were there."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, size isn't evewythin'," remarked D'Arcy. "The place is vevy clean, though it isn't vevy large. It's wathah hard to believe that those gardens down there are weal. They look like stage carpets. I wathah think that the French are a little too neat sometimes."

"Ciel! Is it not grand?"

"Ripping!"

"Yaas, wathah."

"But it will be plus grand—much more grander—from ze top," said Cernay.

"We'll go on, if Gussy doesn't want to buy up all the curiosity shops," murmured Manners.

"Weally, Mannahs—"

"Oh, go it—blow some more francs!"

"I am wunnin' short of fwancs, as a mattah of fact."

"I should say so."

But although D'Arcy was running short of francs, he managed to make a good many purchases, being unable to

resist the winning smiles and the wheedling voices of the French sales-women.

He had a dozen cardboard boxes and parcels by the time the juniors were ready to ascend to the third and last stage of the great tower.

He took them up with him this time, greatly bothered to know what to do with them.

It was a different lift that carried the juniors to the top. On the top platform—troisième étage—the view was magnificent.

Paris was rolled like a panorama round them—the great city and the distant suburbs—the view stretching from one end of the city to the other—from Bercy to the Bois de Boulogne; from St. Ouen to Mont Parnasse.

And everything was so neat, and clean, and tidy that the juniors had a curious feeling that they were looking upon a toy model of a city.

"Ripping!" said Tom Merry.

"Magnifique!"

"Yaas, wathah!"

Monty Lowther looked at his watch.

"Time for some grub, you chaps.

We can't go any higher, unless we go by aeroplane. Hallo! Who's that coming out of the lift?"

"I'd know those legs among a thousand," said Manners.

"Figgins!"

Figgins and Kerr stepped out of the lift. The fat Fourth Former was not to be seen.

"Hallo, Figgy!"

"Oh, you're here!" said Figgins.

"Yes. Where is Fatty?"

Figgins chuckled.

"He insisted upon stopping on the first stage. There's a restaurant there, and he said he was hungry."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Figgins, deah boy, allow me to pwesent you to a new fwiend, Monsieur Auguste Cernay. Monsieur, this is Figgy—I mean, Figgins."

"It is viz great pleasure zat I meet ze respected Figgins," said Auguste Cernay, shaking Figgins' big hand, which Figgy held out to him.

"Tres glad to meet you," said Figgins, in mingled English and French. "It is a bien honour to make your acquaintance."

"Bai Jove! I—"

"Here, Kerr, pitch it to him in French!"

"What-ho!" said Kerr.

And Kerr pitched it to him, as Figgins expressed it, in French, gabbling away at a rate that Auguste Cernay could not outdo.

Cernay gabbled away at the same time, waving his hands as well, and so getting in a little extra, as it were. What it was all about the other fellows had only a faint idea; but Kerr and Cernay appeared to be mutually satisfied when the performance was over.

"Bai Jove!" Arthur Augustus murmured to Tom Merry. "Don't you weally think there ought to be a speed limit in jabbewin' in Fwench?"

And Tom Merry laughingly agreed.

"I say, it's no good our waiting up here for Fatty," said Kangaroo. "He

won't leave the restaurant till there's a famine there. Let's get."

"Right you are!"

So they descended to the second platform, and then to the premier stage, and there, in the restaurant, they found Fatty Wynn.

Fatty was sitting at a table all to himself, and the table, as a novelist would put it, groaned under the goodly viands.

There was a happy smile upon the face of Fatty Wynn.

He had had a late breakfast, and he was having an early lunch; but he appeared to have an excellent appetite, to judge by the way he was wiring in.

He looked up with a smile at the juniors.

"Hungry?" he asked.

"Well, getting peckish," said Blake.

"Is there anything left for us?"

"Heaps," said Fatty Wynn. "I haven't had much so far—only cold chicken and what they call rosbif and some potatoes saute, and cauliflower, and an escalope de veau—they call it that, but it's jolly good veal in English—and some—"

"My hat! Where have you stacked it?"

"Look here, Lowther—"

"Pway allow me to pwesent you to a new fwiend, Fatty."

"Just a minute, Gussy."

Even courtesy could not make Fatty leave his plate till it was cleared. Then while it was being changed by the waiter, he rose, and was introduced to Auguste Cernay.

Cernay looked at him with great



Just as Arthur Augustus stepped into the roadway, a taxi, tearing along as if the driver were engaged on a matter of life and death, hooted and bore down on him. D'Arcy gave a start and jumped back to the pavement again, the cab missing him by a hairbreadth.

interest. He had never seen a human being put such a dejeuner out of sight before.

The juniors sat down and lunched. Auguste Cernay was the guest of the party, and he accepted the hospitality of the English party with much grace.

Although Fatty had had such a good start, he was not finished before the others, and when he was finished, he showed a strong indisposition to move.

"You haven't been to the top of the tower yet," said Figgins.

Fatty mumbled something.

"I suppose you want to go to the top. You want to be able to tell the fellows in the New House at St. Jim's that you've done it."

"Ye-es."

"It's not a question of walking, you know—you can go up in the lift."

"Ye-es."

"Bai Jove! You ought to go, Fatty."

"Yes, yes; but you see, you fellows can tell me all about it instead," said Fatty. "I'd rather not make any exertion just now."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, it's time we were moving," said Tom Merry.

"Oh, I say, not just yet!"

"Rats! You don't want to spend the rest of your life on the premier stage of the blessed Eiffel Tower, do you?" said Manners.

"I don't feel quite up to walking."

"You should have eaten only enough for six, then."

"Look here, Manners—"

"Rats!"

"Bai Jove, we ought to be movin'," said Arthur Augustus. "I was goin' to show you fellows the Bastille, you know."

"It's at the other end of the city—what there is of it," said Tom Merry.

"Better have a look round this end first. The Trocadero and the Champs Elysees. This is the aristocratic quarter, Gussy, and it will suit you better."

"Yaas, pewwaps there is somethin' in that."

"If you don't mind I'll stay here a bit," said Fatty Wynn. "The view is splendid, you know."

From where he sat, Fatty Wynn had a view of several people lunching at the tables, and of nothing else. But perhaps he considered that view splendid.

"Stuff!" said Figgins.

"Oh, really, you know—"

"Get up!"

"I'm fatigued."

"Well, come and walk it off, then."

"Now, look here, Figgins—"

"Take his other arm, Kerr."

"Certainly."

"Oh, shut up! Chuck it! Look here—"

Fatty Wynn's chums took no notice of his remonstrance. They jerked him from his seat and marched him out of the restaurant, grumbling.

Tom Merry, who was in charge of the funds of the party, settled with the waiter, and the whole party followed.

They descended to the ground and left Eiffel Tower. There was a thoughtful expression upon Fatty Wynn's face now. He stopped and looked back at the tower and nodded his head.

"It's a ripping place," he said.

Auguste Cernay beamed upon him.

"Ah! You admire ze tower!" he exclaimed. "You zink it is ripping?"

Fatty Wynn nodded emphatically.

"Yes, rather. Compare it with the Tower of London, for instance—"

"What!" ejaculated Blake, forgetting Cernay for the moment.

"Compare that lump of jagged iron

with the Tower of London! Are you off your rocker?"

"I mean what I say," said Fatty Wynn obstinately. "The Tower of London is historical and romantic, and all that—but a chap gets jolly hungry while he's going over it, I jolly well know that. Now, this place has a ripping restaurant—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You can depend on getting a feed here, if you can pay for it—"

"Oh, my only aunt!" said Tom Merry. "Fatty's judging the building by the feed he can get in it! It beats Westminster Abbey on those lines!"

"Well, if a chap's hungry—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

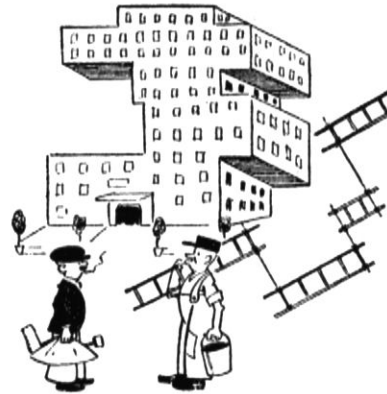
And Fatty Wynn was marched off, Figgins and Kerr keeping hold of his arms and keeping him going at a good rate, in spite of his protests. And a stroll along the river led the party to the Avenue d'Antin, along which they walked to the Rond Point of the Champs Elysees.

CHAPTER 9.

D'Arcy Minor!

THE juniors spent some pleasant hours exploring the West End of Paris, their new friend proving a great acquisition in guiding and explaining.

They walked right up the Champs



"Yus, they keep on making fresh shapes, George, but I ain't been caught yet!"

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Elysees as far as the Place de L'Etoile, where the great avenues branch off in every direction. At the Avenue du Bois de Boulogne they packed themselves into three taxicabs, and had a drive in the Bois; and a pleasant drive it was, and they were greatly delighted with the wood.

And they had the advantage of learning that they had to pay big supplements on the cab fares for going beyond the city borders in the cab—a lesson which Tom Merry determined should make him more careful in the future.

They walked back to the Place de L'Etoile, Fatty Wynn declaring all the time that he was on the point of dropping down in an expiring state.

"That's a lesson not to overeat!" said Kangaroo.

Fatty Wynn looked indignant.

"It isn't that!" he exclaimed, with emphasis.

"What is it, then?"

"I'm getting hungry."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look here—"

"We'll have tea somewhere presently," said Tom Merry. "We ought to turn up in the Rue de Rivoli soon. We don't want to go back the way we came, though."

"Our friend Cernay will direct us on a new route."

Cernay reflected for a moment.

"Certainement! Follow me!"

"I'm hungry!"

"All right, Fatty! I'll buy you a bun as we go along!"

Fatty Wynn grunted.

They turned out of the Place de L'Etoile and walked down the Avenue Macmahon towards the Avenue des Ternes. More than once they turned their heads to look back at the huge Arch de Triomphe, soaring high in the great Place.

Tom Merry had proposed ascending it; but, on hearing that there was no lift, the juniors had looked very doubtful.

After the walking they had done, they did not feel very much inclined for mounting the endless steps to the top of that great monument of Napoleon's victories.

They turned their backs on it, therefore, and walked on to the Avenue des Ternes, where Cernay told them a bus would take them back to the Rue de Rivoli by a new route.

The buses seemed few and far between. As the juniors stood waiting at the corner, Fatty Wynn uttered a sudden exclamation.

"Look there!"

"Bai Jove! Is it Wally?" asked Arthur Augustus, who was thinking of his minor at that moment.

Fatty sniffed.

"No, it isn't! There's a restaurant there!"

"Oh, rats!"

"I was thinking we might have some tea."

"Bosh!"

"I'm hungry!"

"Yes, you must be!"

"Voici!" exclaimed Cernay. "Le voiture!"

"Here's the bus, Fatty!"

The omnibus drew up, and the juniors mounted to the top.

There was nearly room for all of them on top of the bus, only one of the juniors having to stand. Fatty Wynn was the last up, being slowest in his movements, and he found no seat left for him.

Auguste Cernay jumped up at once.

"Zat you take my seat, my friend!"

But a Welshman could be as polite as a Frenchman.

"Not at all, old chap!" said Fatty Wynn.

"Ciel! I insist!"

"Not a bit of it!"

"I beg you—"

But Fatty Wynn shook his head.

"Better for Fatty to stand," said Blake. "If the conductor objects to anybody standing, you don't understand French, Fatty, you know."

Fatty Wynn chuckled.

"Trust me!"

The omnibus rolled on through the streets of the Faubourg St. Honore. The conductor came up and began to collect the fares.

He stopped when he came to Fatty Wynn, and began to talk and gesticulate.

Fatty Wynn shook his head.

"No speak French!" he said.

Jabber, jabber again, and waving of hands.

"Do you speak English?" asked Fatty calmly.

"Non, non!" shrieked the conductor, who had evidently been asked that question before, and knew what it meant. "Mais, vous descendrez!"

"No; I can't sing a song here!"

"M'sieur, vous—vous—"
"Eh?"
The Frenchman shrieked.

Fatty Wynn shook his head slowly from side to side.
Tom Merry, remembering that "pour-boire" was the open sesame in France, slipped a five-franc piece into the conductor's hand.

The man looked at it, and looked at Tom Merry, and looked at Fatty Wynn, and then descended the steps.

"You're all right, Fatty!" said Tom, laughing.

"Am I?" said Fatty. "My legs are beginning to ache! One of you School House chaps ought to stand! No, Cernay, I won't take your seat; I'll take yours, Lowther!"

"Your mistake," said Monty Lowther blandly; "you won't!"

"I'll take yours, Gussy."
"Wats!"
"As leader of the party," said Figgins solemnly, "Gussy ought to consider Fatty as his guest, and treat him accordingly."

"Bai Jove, you're wight, Figgy! Pway take my seat, Fatty!"

Fatty Wynn grinned and settled down into Arthur Augustus' seat. The swell of St. Jim's stood up, holding on to a handrail.

From his coign of vantage, as it were, D'Arcy had a good view, and he gave a sudden jump as he caught sight of a figure standing at the corner of the Rue du Faubourg St. Honore and the Rue Royale.

"Wally! Bai Jove!"
Tom Merry looked quickly.
"My hat! You're right!"

There he was—D'Arcy minor, of the Third Form at St. Jim's, with a cap on the back of his head, and a cheeky smile on his face, as usual. He had caught sight of his major on the top of the bus, and he grinned at him.

Then he saluted D'Arcy in a way that could hardly be considered as properly respectful in a younger brother. He placed his thumb to his nose and extended all the fingers of his hand, at the same time closing his left eye.

Arthur Augustus simply gasped.
"Wally! You young wascal! Stop the bus, Tom Mewwy, and I'll—"

"Ha, ha ha! He's gone!"
The bus rolled on, and Wally disappeared in the crowd.

CHAPTER 10.

A Letter From Wally!

"BAI Jove!" said Arthur Augustus, with a deep breath. "I trust you will credit now my statement that Wally is in Pawis, deah boy!"

"Secing's believing," said Manners.

"Well, Tom Mewwy has seen him."

"Fact," said Tom Merry. "It was Wally, right enough."

"My hat! The cheeky young bouncer! He must have bolted from St. Jim's!"

"Yaas, wathah! He said he would come, and a D'Arcy always keeps his word," said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

"I will descend here. You fellows need not come."

"But—"
Without waiting to argue the point, Arthur Augustus scuttled down the steps and jumped off the bus while it was still going. He staggered, and went down on his hands and knees, and his silk hat

LAUGH THESE OFF!



—with Monty Lowther.

Hallo, Everybody!

I hear Gore of the Shell was quite furious when he accidentally tore a stamp. So he gave it a licking.

Latest: A gramophone business in Wayland has failed. Wound up.

Come on, now. If there is a Chinaman sitting in a dentist's chair, what time is it? Tooth hurty. Two-thirty.

Blake says he knows a man who travels in refrigerators. He must find it chilly.

"So you sing, dance, play any instrument, speak four languages, mimic, conjure, write shorthand, and work a typewriter," said the music-hall agent to the actor. "Well, what don't you do?"

"Eat," replied the actor briefly.

Story: The gangster slipped over the window sill and presented his gun at the business man. At that moment the phone rang.

"Be careful what you say," rapped the gangster.

The business man took up the receiver and said:

"I may be late to-night. I am held up at the office."

Like gangster stories? A dentist in America recently shot two hold-up men. He was very quick on the draw.

Mr. Selby was heard to state that the Third Form may not be very inventive, but they certainly seem to have discovered the secret of perpetual commotion.

Digby says many traffic problems would soon be solved if vehicles were made to move sideways. We may yet hear of the taxi-crab.

True story: "I think I'd like to buy you a birthday present, sir," said Wally D'Arcy to Mr. Selby.

"Indeed?" exclaimed Mr. Selby in surprise.

"Yes, sir," said Wally.

"What about a nice briar pipe?"

"But I already have a briar pipe," said Mr. Selby.

"I don't think so, sir," replied Wally;

"at least, not since I accidentally dropped it out of the window!"

Then there was the actor who accepted a part without any wages, on condition that the seven-course dinner he had to eat in the third act was real.

Try this: "Aren't you afraid you will catch cold on such a night as this?" asked Dame Taggles of a newsboy in Wayland.

"No, ma'am," came the reply. "Selling papers keeps up the circulation."

Chin, chin, chaps

rolled off. He had a miraculous escape from being run-over by five or six taxis at once, but a friendly hand helped him to the pavement, and another rescued his topper.

Arthur Augustus distributed a handful of small coins among the newsboys who had rescued him, and rushed off in search of Wally.

The chums on top of the receding bus had watched him breathlessly, and as soon as they saw he was safe Tom Merry jumped up.

"Where are you going?" asked Lowther.

"After Gussy! He'll never find Wally, but he'll get into some bother if he goes alone."

"Let him!"

"Rats! I'm going to look for him. Cernay, old fellow, I'll see you again at our hotel. You'll come to dinner?"

"Viz pleasure, my friend Merry."

"You'll look after Cernay, Blake?"

"Right you are."

Tom Merry ran down the steps. Monty Lowther and Manners ran after him. Wherever the Terrible Three went they always went together. The bus rolled on past the great church of the Madeleine without the Terrible Three.

A silk hat bobbing among the crowd guided Tom Merry and his chums, and in a few minutes they ran down the swell of St. Jim's.

Tom Merry clapped a hand on his shoulder.

"Bai Jove! Is that you, Tom Mewwy?"

"Yes, ass!"

"I wufuse to be called an ass! You were quite safe on the bus," said D'Arcy.

"Howevah, pewwaps you are wight to stick to me. I am goin' to look for Wally."

"Do you think you'll find him, duffer?" asked Lowther.

"I wufuse to be called a duffah, Lowthah! He was standin' at that cornah!"

"He's not standing there now," said Manners.

"Bai Jove! No, he's gone!"

They halted at the corner, where the Faubourg St. Honore Street meets the Rue Royale. D'Arcy minor certainly was not in sight. The Third Former of St. Jim's had probably seen his major descend from the bus, and had made himself scarce in consequence.

"Bettah look for him, deah boys."

"Oh, go ahead! You're as likely to find him as a needle in a bundle of hay, but go ahead if you like," said Tom Merry resignedly.

"Weally, Tom Mewwy—"

"Buck up!"

They hunted up one street and down another, but D'Arcy minor was not to be found. The early dusk was falling now, and Monty Lowther suggested getting back to the Rue de Rivoli.

"Yaas, I suppose it is no good hangin' about," said Arthur Augustus. "I am vewy anxious about Wally, though."

"Wally can look after himself, you know."

"Yaas; but—"

"As a matter of fact, Gussy, not to put too fine a point on it, Wally is more able to look after himself than you are."

"Weally, Lowthah—"

"This way," said Tom Merry. "I'm beginning to feel like Fatty Wynn—that a good dinner is the proper caper."

"We will keep a good look-out for Wally as we go home."

"Oh, all right!"

The four juniors walked down the Rue Royale, and turned round by the

Ministry of Marines into the Rue de Rivoli.

Arthur Augustus insisted upon keeping a keen look-out for Wally, and his look-out consisted in peering into every possible and impossible corner for the elusive Third Former of St. Jim's.

The buildings they were passing, like most buildings in that quarter of Paris, had arched ways opening into inner courtyards, and D'Arcy stopped at every entrance, and peeped into the interior, where the doors, being open, gave him a chance.

He surprised several concierges by turning his eyeglass upon them, and peering past them into the hidden courts behind.

"I wathah think we will return to the hotel, now, deah boys," he remarked. "It's no good lookin' for Wally any more."

And the juniors walked up the Rue de Rivoli to the Hotel Ste. Genevieve, where they found their friends already arrived and at dinner.

Auguste Cernay dined with the chums and Uncle Frank, with whom he was soon on very good terms. Mr. Fawcett had been a little anxious at first when he learned that Tom Merry & Co. had chummed up with a chance acquaintance; but he was reassured when he talked to Auguste.

As it happened, too, Mr. Fawcett had had business dealings with Cernay's father, and so knew something of his people. Cernay was soon a general favourite with the English boys. He was talkative and excitable, but bubbling over with good temper and politeness, and his flow of spirits never slackened.

He took his leave of the juniors at last, after inviting them to dinner the following evening at his quarters, an invitation which they cheerfully accepted. Then he whizzed off in a taxicab and disappeared.

"Nice kid," said Tom Merry. "I like him."

"Yaas, wathah! I shall be vewy glad to accept his invitation to dinnah, too."

"So shall I," said Fatty Wynn. "I wonder what the grub will be like?"

"I wasn't thinkin' of the gwub. I was thinkin' that it is extremewy pwob that we shall find my minah in his house."

"Possibly."

"I wogard it as vewy pwob. You see, Cernay is stayin' in a pension—"

"Eh? What's a pongshong?" asked Digby.

"I didn't say pongshong."

"Oh, you mean pawshaw!"

"Ahem!" said Lowther. "He really means a pawngshawng."

"Rats!" said Kerr. "It's a pahshah."

"Bosh!" said Manners cheerfully.

"You mean, of course, a pan-seong."

"Rubbish!"

"Bosh!"

"Rats!"

"Well, call it a pongshong, it doesn't mattah," said D'Arcy mildly. "Cernay is living in a pension, as they call the boarding houses over here. Now, that is just the place Wally would go to, you know. He wouldn't join our party, because he knows Uncle Fwank would feel bound to pack him off to England. He wouldn't go to the hotel because that would be too pwominent, and, besides, he can't have vewy much cash. A pension is just the place for him, and he could easily get one recommended to him by a chap in England. Young Jameson of the Third has stayed in a pension in Pawis, I wemembah, with his people, duwin' a vacation. I wemembah Wally tellin' me."

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"Blessed if I know what to do with him if we find him," said Tom Merry. "If he's left St. Jim's without the Head's permission, he ought to be sent back."

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Oh, yaas! I will command him to go."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I fail to see any reason for unscemly mewmivment in that remark, Blake."

"Well, I think I can see him going when you command him, that's all," grinned Blake.

D'Arcy looked thoughtful.

"Well, as a mattah of fact, he nevah does show me the respect due to an eldah bwothah," he remarked. "He is wathah a young wascal. Pewwaps it will be necessary for me to give him a fearful thwashin'."

"Not in Cernay's quarters, I hope," said Tom Merry, laughing.

"Bai Jove, no! It would be wotten bad form to kick up a wov in another fellow's quartahs."

"You will have to try your eloquence on him, that's all," said Tom Merry. "If he won't go we'll promise him a ragging when we get back to St. Jim's. Besides the pleasure of seeing Cernay again—and Wally, of course—it's a good wheeze to have dinner in a French pension—you will see what it's like, you know. You can't see France simply by staring at the monuments and getting a crick in the neck."

"That is vewy twue. I pwopose that we go to the opawah this evenin' to heah some of the music of Pawis."

"There's a farce at the Palais Royal," said Lowther, who preferred fun to music, either operatic or classical.

Mr. Fawcett broke in quietly.

"I must ask you to consult me before selecting a theatre to go to," he said.

"Paris theatres, as a rule, are not suitable places for boys. You can go to the Theatre Francaise, or to the Opera, or to the Opera Comique, or the Odeon."

"Wight-ho, my deah sir!" said D'Arcy. "Of course, we shouldn't think of goin' without askin' your permish. Pawis is a wathah peculiah place in some respects."

"It is a fine city," said Mr. Fawcett.

"But there are national differences between French and English people, and their notions of some matters are as wide apart as the poles. You must not make the mistake of hastily despising anything that does not agree with English ideas, even if it is something that appears wrong to you, and harmful. Only don't mix in anything here that you would not mix in in London, if your parents were with you."

And that evening to the Theatre Francaise they went, and found stage French more easy to understand than street French, and more in accordance with the French they had learned in England.

They saw a comedy of Moliero's, and though they lost much of the meaning,

they followed the play quite well enough to enjoy it.

They had two adjoining boxes to themselves, and they stayed to the finish, without yawning their heads off, as many English members of the audience did.

Then, tired enough, for the hour was late, they returned to the Hotel Ste. Genevieve, tumbled into bed, and slept the sleep of the just.

Arthur Augustus was the last in bed, as he always had a few little ceremonies in connection with his hair, his teeth, and his clothes to go through. He was just settling into a peaceful slumber,



"I am assured that you are intendin' some pwactical joke, A sudden howl from behind interrupted him. In retros"

when there was a tap at the door, and the garcon came in.

"M'sieur!"

Nobody moved. The garcon stopped beside D'Arcy's bed.

"M'sieur!"

"Go away!"

"M'sieur!"

"Allez!"

"M'sieur!"

"Va!"

"M'sieur, une lettre!"

"Bai Jove! A beastly lettah for me." "Une lettre, oui, m'sieur."

D'Arcy grumbled, and sat up in bed. He took the letter, and the garcon vanished, leaving the light burning.

The swell of St. Jim's sleepily opened the envelope. He started, and became

a little wider awake as he recognised the handwriting of his worthy minor.

"Bai Jove, it's swom Wally!" The letter ran as follows:

"Dear Gus,—I'm here, you see. I'm digging in a pension now. I'd rather join your crowd at the hotel; but no larks! Are you going to make it pax? If so, put a notice in the 'Petites Annonces,' column of the 'Paris Daily Mail,' and I shall see it. Say 'Pax-Gussy,' and that will do.—WALLY."

"The young wascal!" "Turn that blessed light out!" came a sleepy voice from Kangaroo's bed.

gathered round the breakfast-table in the dining-room on the ground floor.

Mr. Fawcett had gone out, but Henri looked after the juniors in excellent style.

Arthur Augustus read the letter out to the juniors, and there was a general grin over it.

"Like his check," said Lowther. "Awful nerve," said Figgins. "Yes, rather!"

Arthur Augustus looked thoughtful. "Pway do not chawacterwise the actions of a D'Arcy as cheeky," he said.

"It seems to me a wathah diswespectful epithet. How-ovah, I shall not make it pax with the young wascal. I shall not put an advert in the 'Pawis Daily Mail.' I shall go to Cernay's this ovenin', and collah him."

"What are you going to do this morning?" asked Kangaroo.

"Well, we saw the West End yesterday," said Tom Merry. "Let's have a look at the East End to-day."

"Yaas, wathah!" "We can get a bus outside for the East and save walking," said Fatty Wynn. "Trust Fatty to think of that."

"Well, you see—"

"I am goin' to show you fellows the Bastille," said Arthur Augustus. "You wemembah weadin' in the beastly histowy books at St. Jim's about the mob pullin' down the Bastille at the beginnin' of the Gweat Wevolutioin. I am wathah cuwious to see it."

"How are you going to see it if they've pulled it down?"

"I suppose there is some-thin' left."

And breakfast being over, and Fatty Wynn half persuaded and half dragged away from the table, the juniors set out to see the Bastille.

They had, of course, read about that famous fortress—relic of the Dark Ages, on the border of Paris—whence, in the days of the monarchy, French kings had been able to overawe their subjects.

The guns of the Bastille had commanded the Faubourg St. Antoine, and the dungeons of the Bastille had been a dark terror to the whole country. For long centuries it had stood there, a menace to all men who dared to think freely or to speak freely what they thought.

Many a hapless Frenchman had vanished behind those dark portals, never to reappear in the living world. And the cup of its iniquity being full, the place had been wrenched down stone by stone by the mob of Paris in the year 1789, and the crash of the falling Bastille had given the signal for freedom to all France. The history of that grim fortress the juniors knew well, and they were curious to see the place where it had stood.

They boarded the bus, and climbed to the top, and rolled eastward down the great Rivoli Street, past the Pont Neuf, and the Chatelet, and the Hotel de

Ville, till the Rue de Rivoli gave place to its continuation, the Rue St. Antoine.

D'Arcy tapped the conductor on the arm when he came up for the fares.

"A la Bastille?" he asked.

"Oui, m'sieur."

"Good! Where do you get off?"

"M'sieur."

"Ou descendrez?"

"A la Place de la Bastille, m'sieur."

"Merci beaucoup."

Arthur Augustus looked round for the Place de la Bastille. The omnibus rolled out of the Rue St. Antoine into a great square, with a monument in the centre.

"Bai Jove! I suppose this is the place."

"A place within the meaning of the Act?" asked Lowther.

"Pway don't be funny, deah boy. This is a holiday, you know."

They descended from the omnibus, and Arthur Augustus looked round for the Bastille. They let him look.

"Bai Jove!" said Arthur Augustus, when he had swept the whole square from the Garo de Vincennes to the Boulevard Beaumarchais with his eyeglass. "I weally do not see the Bastille."

"Look again, old chap!"

"I weally think I had bettah inkuiah."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"What are you caeklin' at, Tom Mewwy?"

"Oh, inquire away!"

Arthur Augustus raised his silk topper to a gendarme, who politely touched his hat in return and looked at him.

"Pway where is the Bastille?" asked Arthur Augustus.

The gendarme smiled and shook his head.

"Pardonnez moi! Ou est la Basteey?"

The man lifted his eyebrows and shrugged his shoulders.

"La Basteey," repeated D'Arcy, giving the word the best pronunciation he could. "La blessed Basteey."

Another shrug.

"Vous ne comprenez pas?" asked D'Arcy.

"Oui, oui, m'sieur, je comprends," said the gendarme, smiling.

"Ou est-il, done?"

A shrug again.

"What the dence does that man mean?"

The gendarme pointed to the column in the centre of the square.

D'Arcy put up his eyeglass and looked at it. It was the famous Column of July—de Juillet—but D'Arcy was not acquainted with it.

"Yaas! Well?"

"La Bastille."

"Eh?"

"La Bastille, m'sieur."

"He pwetends that that beastly monument is the Bastille, deah boys."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Weally, Tom Mewwy—"

"My dear ass—"

"I decline to be called an ass—"

The gendarme smilingly pointed to the column again and passed on.

The chums of St. Jim's chuckled merrily.

"I uttably fail to see the cause of this wibald laughah!" said D'Arcy, with a frigid look of great dignity.

"My dear duffer, that column is all there is left of the Bastille," said Tom Merry, laughing. "The mob yanked it down in 1789."

"I pwecsumed that the wuins were left."

"They didn't leave a bone," said Tom Merry, "and a jolly good thing, too."



"Wathah," said Arthur Augustus, backing away. "I—"

"Wats!"
 "Turn it out!"
 "I've just had a lettah—"
 "Blow your letter!"
 "It's swom Wally—"
 "Blow Wally—"
 "Weally, Kangawoo—"
 "Oh, blow!"

Arthur Augustus switched off the light.

CHAPTER 11.

Gussy Canno' Find the Bastille!

BREAKFAST the next morning was a little late for the juniors. They had had a tiring day and evening, and they wanted to rest after it.

It was about ten o'clock when they

They used up a lot of the stones in building the Contorde Bridge, where we took the boat yesterday."

"And that column—"

"Oh, that's not to commemorate the Bastille—that's to commemorate another revolution, I forgot which," said Tom Merry. "It's rather difficult to keep count of them. There's a line marked on the ground here somewhere to show just where the Bastille stood when it was standing; but they've built some of these shops and cafes over part of the site. The last time there was fighting here was in 1871. That was in the Commune. They had the ends of all these streets barricaded, and held out a long time against the Government troops."

"Bai Jove, that must have been jolly excitin'!" said D'Arcy. "They seem to be vewy excitable chaps."

"Stand round me and keep the people from pushing," said Manners. "I want to get a snap of that column. It's put up there to commemorate something or other, I suppose, so I may as well take it."

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Will you stoop down here for me to rest the camera on top of your head, Gussy?"

"Certainly not!"

"Well, I ought to have a wooden support of some kind—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Weally, Mannahs—"

"Keep the people from shoving, then, anyway."

"Wight-ho!"

The juniors stood round Manners like a wall and diverted the traffic on the path, much to the surprise and indignation of a good many pedestrians.

There was much muttering and exclaiming and waving of hands, and the juniors came near to being shoved into the road altogether when Manners finished his snapping.

"It's all right."

And the juniors of St. Jim's allowed the pedestrians to use the path again, and rolled on their way round the Place de la Bastille.

Fatty Wynn suddenly called a halt.

"Here you are, you chaps."

"Eh? What is that?"

"A restaurant! I'm hungry!"

And Fatty Wynn led the way in.

CHAPTER 12.

D'Arcy Loses His Topper!

FIGGINS and Kerr followed the fat Fourth Former, and they reappeared in a couple of minutes, leading Fatty Wynn by the ears.

Fatty was protesting loudly, but the company paid no heed to his protests.

"Not time for feeding yet," said Figgins cheerfully.

"I'm hungry."

"Oh, that's only a fancy of yours!"

"Look here, I jolly well ought to know whether I'm hungry or not!" exclaimed Fatty Wynn indignantly.

"Well, you ought, but you don't," said Kerr. "You're not going to have anything more to eat till deuxieme dejeuner, so that's flat."

"Look here—"

"Rats!"

And the unfortunate Fatty had to give in.

From the Bastille the juniors walked down to the river and crossed it at the Pont d'Austerlitz, Austerlitz Bridge.

"Where are we going?" asked Fatty Wynn.

"Jardong des Plong," said Figgins.

"Eh!"

"Jardah des Plah," said Digby.

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"Of course," remarked Blake, "you mean the Jawdaw des Plaw."

"Bosh!" said Lowther. "The Jawdawng des Plawng."

And they walked on to the Jardin des Plantes.

The Zoo of Paris was open, and the juniors went in. They walked up and down the paths, looking at the various bipeds and quadrupeds, and admired the crocodiles, and the whale's skeleton, and other show pieces of the Jardin, and arrived at the bear-pit.

"Bai Jove! It's vewy like the Zoo in Wegent's Park," Arthur Augustus remarked.

"You didn't expect it to be like the gym at school, did you?" asked Lowther.

"Wats!"

"Nice, good-tempered-looking chaps,"

Special Announcement

YOUR STAMP OUTFIT

Is Now Ready

Send in your Gift Voucher and Remittance At Once

Your Stamp Outfit is waiting. This week gift token No. 8 appears and readers who started collecting tokens from No. 3 will be able to complete their Token Vouchers which together with cash remittance should be sent in immediately. Do not delay. All outfits will be sent out in strict rotation and if you want yours quickly you must apply AT ONCE.

Readers who started to collect tokens from No. 4 must wait one more week until they have collected the necessary six tokens.

Send Voucher and Remittance to:

The Gem Stamp Outfit Dept.
(G.P.O. Box No. 184a),
Cobb's Court, Broadway,
London, E.C.4.

said Tom Merry, looking down at the bears in the pit.

There were two Polar bears there, one of them swimming in a little pool, and the other walking round looking up at the visitors above, expectant of biscuits.

Close by was a stall where bread, biscuits, and cakes were sold to be given to the bears. The juniors loaded themselves with bread and cake, and lined up round the top of the pit.

Both bears came just beneath the juniors, looking up, as they saw the cargo of comestibles the juniors carried in their hands and under their arms.

They were indeed good-tempered-looking beasts, and evidently on the best of terms with the visitors at the Jardin des Plantes.

"Here you are!" said Figgins. "Hold these cakes for me, Fatty, while I pelt them."

"Right you are, Figgy!"

Figgins tossed roll after roll to the nearest bear, who, made expert by long practice at that sort of game, caught them in his mouth and devoured them as fast as they were thrown.

Meanwhile, Fatty Wynn was not feeding the bears; he was feeding Fatty Wynn.

The cakes were nice, and Fatty thought it a sin to waste them, and he was wiring them almost as fast as the bears.

"By Jove, they're going quickly!" said Figgins, as he turned round for a fresh supply.

Fatty Wynn did not reply; he could not, his mouth was too full.

Figgins glared at him.

"Why, you horrid, greedy waster, you're eating them yourself!"

"Gug-gug-gug—"

"You—you—you—"

"Groogh!"

Figgins took away the rest of the cakes before Fatty could demolish them, and pelted the bears with them.

Arthur Augustus was feeding the bears with nice white rolls.

He jabbed one on the end of his cane, and leaned over the low stone parapet to entice the bear to climb the pole in the pit.

The white bear rose on its hind legs and started climbing the pole to reach the roll. But when the beast got to the top, it could not quite do so.

Arthur Augustus leaned over farther and farther, and Monty Lowther made a sudden grasp at his legs, which startled D'Arcy almost out of his wits.

He gave such a sudden start that his silk hat fell off, and dropped into the pit just in front of the other bear.

Monty Lowther dragged the swell of St. Jim's back from the parapet.

"You ass!" shouted D'Arcy.

"Where would you have been if I hadn't saved you?" demanded Lowther severely.

"You uttah ass! I was in no dangah!"

"Is that what you call gratitude?"

"You—you wottah! Where's my hat?"

"Your hat?"

"Yes, wathah! It fell off."

"Can you speak bear language?"

"Of course not, you ass!"

"Then it's no good asking for your hat. Bruin doesn't understand English. He's a French bear, I suppose."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Arthur Augustus whirled round and looked into the pit. There was his silk topper. He sprang upon the parapet.

Tom Merry and Kangaroo seized him just in time, and whirled him off it.

"You ass—"

"Pway welcase me, deah boys."

"What are you going to do?"

"I'm goin' down for my toppah."

"And how would you get out again?" demanded Tom Merry.

"Never mind that; I must wescue my toppah."

"Blow your topper!"

"Weally, Kangawoo—"

There was a sound of a crunch from below, and shrieks of laughter from the St. Jim's juniors.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Bai Jove!"

"The hat's gone!" gasped Tom Merry.

The second bear had been pawing over the hat, evidently under the impression that it was thrown down for him to eat. He had not liked the look of it at first; but perhaps his residence in France had infected him with French politeness. At

(Continued on page 18.)

The Editor's Chair

Let the Editor be your pal.
Drop him a line to-day,
addressing your letters:
The Editor, The GEM,
Fleetway House, Farring-
don Street, London, E.C.4.



HALLO, Chums! It seems hardly a year ago that I was preparing the last Christmas number of the GEM. I was reminded of this fact the other day when I started the pleasant task of making up the 1937 Christmas issue, which will be in your hands next Wednesday. The star feature of the programme is a great cover-to-cover story of the chums of St. Jim's. Martin Clifford has never written a more thrilling yarn, and in my opinion it is easily the best of the year. It bears the title:

"THE GHOST OF THE RUINED CHATEAU!"

and deals with the further adventures of Tom Merry & Co. in France. As you have read in the current story, the juniors set out to spend a Christmas holiday at the home of their French chum Cernay. The journey to Proly in the provinces proves the most adventurous and exciting the juniors have ever undertaken.

The train in which they are travelling is a few miles from their destination when it suddenly clatters to a halt. The juniors then discover that it cannot go any farther owing to a bridge being weakened by floods. They decide to

walk the remaining distance, but in a strange land, late at night, with snow falling fast, it is not to be wondered at that Tom Merry & Co. miss their way.

They head for a flashing light seen in the distance—and find themselves at a dark and desolate ruin. It is an old chateau, and the juniors are astonished to hear strains of music coming from somewhere inside. When they enter there's no sign of anyone!

It is nearing midnight, so Tom Merry & Co. make a fire, and camp in the old ruin. But it isn't long before eerie groans are heard! Then a ghostly figure in monk's robes, with a death's head, makes its appearance! Plucky as they are, the juniors rush in terror from the chateau into the snow and darkness again.

This is the start of their Christmas holiday, and further thrills follow fast for the chums of St. Jim's. What is the mystery of the ruined chateau and its ghostly guardian? That problem baffles the juniors.

Readers cannot fail to be enthralled, from first line to last, by this powerful Yuletide yarn—the yarn of the year bar none!

CHRISTMAS FEATURES.

The supporting programme—as the film people have it—is first-class, and

full of fun and interest. Monty Lowther—undaunted by the ghost of the chateau, it seems!—has a number of Christmas jokes and wisecracks he is itching to get off his chest, and the St. Jim's Rhymester, in his latest jingle, is full of praise for popular Eric Kildare. In addition to more illustrated jokes, there is a spirited Yuletide message from Tom Merry; while Gussy, Fatty Wynn, and one or two others have some amusing things to tell readers about the best of all "blow-outs"—the Christmas dinner.

This grand number will be sure to sell out quickly, chums, so take my tip and order in advance.

IMPORTANT NEWS NEXT WEEK.

Last Wednesday I mentioned that I shall have some important news for readers soon. Well, in next week's issue you will hear all about it. The news concerns a big change in the old paper. The GEM will be better and brighter, with special new features. I won't say any more now, but don't forget, look out for the announcement in the Christmas number.

All the best, chums!

THE EDITOR.

PEN PALS

A free feature which brings together readers all over the world for the purpose of exchanging topics of interest with each other. Readers wishing to reply to notices appearing here must write to the advertisers direct. Notices for publication should be accompanied by the coupon on this page, and posted to The GEM, Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

Miss D. Halse, 1517, Cote St. Luc, Montreal, Quebec, Canada; girl correspondents; age 12-14; sports, reading, writing; Africa, China, Japan, England, and Scotland.
N. Garrahan, 7536, Christopher Colomb Avenue, Montreal, Quebec, Canada; stamps; British Empire.

E. Walsh, 67, Walnut Street, Salford, 7, Lancs; stamps; pen pals anywhere.
B. Cloutman, "Wayside," Dorchester Road, Weymouth, Dorset; age 12-14; cricket and Rugby; Northern England.

Miss B. Hicks, 37, Tubbs Road, Harlesden, London, N.W.10; age 16-25; fashion sketching, light car racing, films, schools broadcasts, and dance bands and crooners; Paris, New York, Hollywood.

B. Joels, 4, Glencairn Drive, Glasgow, S.1; age 11-13; stamps and sports; any part of the world.

W. Philpott, 15, Stanley Houses, Mundy Street, Hoxton, London, N.1; sports, America.
R. Egoston, 6, Athlunkard Street, Limerick, Ireland; age 15-18; stamps; British Dominions.

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M. Lall, Marican, Penang Free School, S.C.D., Penang; age 14-19; stamps; British Empire.

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J. Laffin, 24, Rutledge Street, Eastwood, N.S.W., Australia; age 14-15; stamps, snaps, postcards, writing, literature; Gibraltar, Malta, Trinidad, Scotland, Newfoundland, Barbados, Falkland Islands.

Miss B. Sweet, 79, St. Levian Road, Keyham, Devonport; girl correspondents; age 12-14; overseas.

A. R. Sema, 100, China Street, Rangoon, Burma; age 18-20; stamps, coins, sports.

D. Bird, 20, Ocean View Avenue, Windward Road P.O., Kingston, Jamaica, B.W.I.; pen pals anywhere, except U.S.A.; stamps only.

G. Featherstone, 60, Bleackin Road, Barnsley, Yorkshire; age 16-20; stamps, films and sports; Canada, Newfoundland, Africa and Crown Colonies.

J. K. Agyeenan, 73, Commercial Street, P.O. Box 152, Cape Coast, Gold Coast, West Africa; age 15-18; football, swimming; any part of the world.

R. Noonan, Ripley, Boreenmauna Road, Cork, I.F.S.; pen pals; age 16.

E. Fry, 134, Fulbourne Road, Walthamstow, London, E.17; age 16-19; swimming, dancing and cycling; overseas.

Moses R. Levine, 4510, St. Urban Street, Montreal, Quebec, Canada; stamps; anywhere.

R. Parks, 26, Carnaby Road, Sheffield 6, would like to hear from a reader age 17-20, living at March, Cambs, interested in rambling, conjuring, collectings. All letters answered.

R. Morris, 4, Railway Row, Wolverhampton, Staffs; autographs, stamps, cigarette cards football, cricket and old "Magnets"; pen, friends anywhere, especially U.S.A.

S. Bird, 20, Queen Victoria Avenue, Windward Road, P.O., Kingston, Jamaica; age 16-18; swimming, boating, reading, etc.; anywhere.

Miss M. Mayo, 3, Winsford Road, Fallowfield, Manchester 14; girl correspondents; age 11-13; sports, dogs.

R. S. Ashton, Trevano, 54, Lache Park Avenue, Chester; pen pal; under 14; boxing.

K. Cooke, 141, Sydney Road, Manly, Sydney, N.S.W., Australia; age 9-14; stamp collecting; St. Helena, Kenya, Jamaica or Rhodesia.

M. Provera, Box 139, Gordonvale, North Queensland, Australia; pen pals; stamps; British Empire, except England and Australia.

B. Cattanack, 27, May Street, E. Fremantle, W. Australia; age 13-16; stamps; Canada, U.S.A., New Zealand.

F. Wilson, 20, Gordon Avenue, South Cessnock, N.S.W., Australia; age 14-17; stamps; Africa, Canada, New Zealand, Ceylon, Malay States, U.S.A., and Europe.

D. Groat, Albert Street, Osborne Park, W. Australia; age 16-17; stamps, scouting; Canada, England.

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PEN PALS COUPON

4-12-37

all events, he finally made up his mind to eat the hat.

His strong jaws closed on the silk topper.

There was a crunch, and Arthur Augustus gave a wail as he looked at the remnant of his topper in the jaws of the polar bear.

"Bai Jove! My toppah!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Arthur Augustus looked on in anguish. The bear took a big bite at the hat, and then another, and finally ejected it, apparently not liking the flavour.

"Seems a pity to lose it," said Lowther meditatively. "Do you think we could hold Gussy by his ankles, Tom, and lower him into the pit to pick up his hat?"

"Ha, ha, ha! Yes, if Gussy likes."

"It is not worth while wescuin' the toppah now," said D'Arcy. "I am goin'—"

"We haven't finished here yet."

"It's all right! I'll wun off in a taxi to find a hattah's, and wejoin you at the entrance, deah boys!"

And off went Arthur Augustus D'Arcy in search of a new topper.

CHAPTER 13.

At the Pension!

TOM MERRY & CO. did not see Arthur Augustus again till they returned to the Hotel Ste. Genevieve.

The swell of St. Jim's had taken the opportunity of doing a little more shopping, and his chums returned in some anxiety about him, and found him trying on a succession of neckties.

He looked round as they came in.

"Oh, so you're back, deah boys?"

"Yes, you ass!" said Tom Merry wrathfully. "We missed you."

"Yaas, wathah! I thought I would like to do a little shopping."

"We thought you had got run over."

D'Arcy turned his eyeglass upon Tom Merry.

"Weally, Mewwy, deah boy, I am surprised at you! As a mattah of fact, I was beginnin' to feel wathah nervous about you fellows."

"Ass!"

"I decline to be called an ass! To change an obnoxious subject, how do you think this necktie suits me?"

"Beastly!"

"This one, then?"

"Rotten!"

"Well, this one—"

"Outrageous!"

"Bai Jove! You are not even lookin' at them! I wegard your wemarks as uttahnly iwivolous!"

The juniors were home in good time to prepare for the visit to Auguste Cernay's quarters. The pension where he dwelt was situated in one of the avenues branching off the Place de L'Etoile, within sight of the Arc de Triomphe.

Mr. Fawcett had been called away that evening on business, and could not go; but the juniors knew the way well enough, and if they had not, the taxi-driver could have found it for them.

At a quarter to seven three taxis were called up outside the hotel, and the juniors marched out and entered them. It was D'Arcy's first opportunity of sporting his evening clothes, and he had come out resplendently.

He sank into his seat, with a sigh of sweet content.

"A fellow feels so much more comfy when he's decently dressed," he remarked. "There is somethin' vewy comfortable in a dress shirt."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"There is nothin' to cackle at in that wemark, Blake!"

"There is something to cackle at in that dress shirt, though!" said Blake.

"Bai Jove! What's w'ong with the shirt, deah boy?"

"It's got a duffer in it!"

"Weally, Blake—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The taxis rolled off.

Paris was lighted up, and the juniors looked with interest upon the busy

streets as they rolled on. At night the outdoor life in Paris struck them more than ever. The cafes and the restaurants were crowded, and hundreds of tables along the streets were occupied, in rows under awnings.

Arthur Augustus' eyeglass was never idle for a moment.

"I wondah what time these people spend at home!" he remarked.

"Not much, apparently," said Tom Merry. "That's where you score by living in a colder country. A fireside is a necessity, and a fireside means home."

"Yaas, wathah!"

"This must be a jolly thirsty country," Blake remarked. "About every third shop sells drinks. Wherever you look there's 'Biere' or 'Vins Fins' or 'Cafe.' I wonder where they put it all!"

But the lights of shops and restaurants faded away as the cabs rolled along the Champs Elysees.

Along that magnificent and well-lighted drive they went at the usual pace of French taxicabs. They were in no great hurry, but it was useless telling that to a Parisian taxi-driver. They shot along like arrows.

"Bai Jove! Here we are!"

The vehicles halted in a row.

Tom Merry looked out.

The side of the avenue was formed of huge, white buildings some seven or eight stories in height; the huge, imposing structures that gave distinctive character to the Etoile quarter. A large, lighted hall stood open to all corners.

"Good! Here we are!"

The juniors alighted and dismissed the taxis.

They were shown into a large, well-lighted saloon, where a stout dame received them graciously enough, and Kerr was called upon to talk French again. His chums listened in great admiration as he babbled away at express speed.

There was an exclamation at the door,

PEN PALS

(Continued from previous page.)

Eugene Preston David, 100, Route De Say Zoong, Apt. 2, Shanghai, China; age 13-17; stamps; S. Africa, Canada, New Zealand, Newfoundland, and other British Colonies and Dominions.

Miss Mary Bamford, 64, Camborne Ave., Ealing, London, W.13; girl correspondents; age 15-17; general topics; overseas, especially America, Africa, Canada, India, or Australia.

Chan Chang Villa, Tubuan Road, Kuching, Sarawak; pen pals; snaps, magazines, and stamps; anywhere.

Miss M. Wickramasinghe, "Green Lands," Dalugama, Kelaniya, Ceylon; girl correspondents; age 14-17; stamps, postcards, snaps; Australia, Canada, Ireland.

P. Darbyshire, 2, Sycamore Ave., Grimsby, Lines; pen pals; anywhere, especially Europe and Denmark.

E. W. Foskett, 174, Court Lane, Dulwich, London, S.E.15; pen pals; exchanging match-box tops; overseas.

Miss Holt, Edny's Hill Nurseries, off Barkham Road, Wokingham, Berkshire; girl correspondents; age 14-16; horses, swimming, music, and outdoor sports.

Miss P. Foster, 88, Gosberton Road, Batham, London, E.W.; girl correspondent; age 15-16; interested in anything; overseas.

Miss B. Maxwell, 81, Normandy Blvd.,

Toronto, Ontario, Canada; girl correspondents; riding, dancing, singing, and outdoor sports; anywhere except Ontario.

Miss M. Walden, 22, Glenville Road, Yeovil, Somerset; girl correspondents; age 18-21; any topics; Scotland, Ireland, and overseas.

Miss J. Cartor, "Highfield," Summerleaze Park, Yeovil, Somerset; girl correspondents; any topics; Scotland, Ireland, and overseas.

J. D. Blackshaw, 2, Denison Street, Penhurst, N.S.W., Australia; age 12-14; stamps, cricket, football; England, America, Africa.

Miss K. J. Serecombe, 22, Wyther Park Hill, Leeds, 12, Yorkshire; girl correspondents; age 15-17; stamps, sports, cricket, swimming; U.S.A., Australia, South Africa.

Miss N. Bradshaw, 280, Wallaton Road, Beeston, Notts; girl correspondents; age 14-16; Canada or Australia.

D. Frankel, 137, Mill Way, Mill Hill, London, N.W. 7; stamps, general topics; British Empire preferred.

H. Stafford, 36, Clun Street, Sheffield, 4, Yorks; stamp collecting; overseas, especially Canada.

F. D. Ljwellyn, 13, Brighton Road, East Ham, London, E., would like to correspond with a club for cynics.

R. D. Ingram, 63, High Street, Shanklin, Isle of Wight; age 12-16; stamps; British Empire.

Miss J. Martyn, 228, Thames Street, Oamaru, New Zealand; girl correspondents; age 13-20; sports, drawing of ships, stamps; anywhere.

James Poor, Caster Bay Road, Nilford,

N.Z. Auckland, New Zealand; stamps and radio; Papua, Iceland, Morocco. All letters answered.

Miss N. Hughes, 50, City Road, Walton, Liverpool, 4; girl correspondents; age 15-17; film stars, piano accordions, guitar, tap dancing.

S. Strong, 13, Leith Road, Wood Green, London, N.22; age 14-16; exchanging magazines and topics of interest; Australia or Gold Coast.

Miss A. Scott, Avon House, 16a, West Cliff Road, Bournemouth, Hants; girl correspondents; age 8-12; preferably foreign.

Miss M. Silvester, Woodbury Cottage, East End Road, London, N.2; girl correspondents; age 17-18; sports, films, autographs; Scotland, Wales, Europe.

Miss G. Rayner, 5, Clissbury Road, Tottenham, London, N.15; girl correspondents; age 18-20; films, cycling; Dominions and overseas.

J. Fleming, 30, Newby Terrace, Barrow-in-Furness, Lancs; exchanging stamps and general news and newspapers; British Dominions.

V. H. Wallis, 27a, Oxenford Street, East Dulwich, London, S.E.15; age 13-16; stamps; America, Asia, Africa.

K. A. Field, 32, Fort Road, Newhaven, Sussex; age 15-17; stamps, films, newspapers, radio, maps, etc.; U.S.A., Canada.

T. O'Callaghan, 18, Elgin Road, Ballsbridge, Dublin; age 10-15; stamps; Kenya, South Africa, British Empire.

J. R. Rowland, 9, Scrooby Road, Bircotes, nr. Doncaster; pen pal in France.



Cernay, with his arm linked in Wally's, came into the saloon. The scamp of the Third seemed inclined to bolt for it, but the French youth kept a tight hold on his arm. "Wally!" exclaimed Gussy, surveying his minor through his eyeglass. "So I've found you at last!"

and Auguste Cernay rushed in to greet his English friends.

Cernay's greeting was enthusiastic and impressive.

"It is zat I am happy to greet you viz me!" he said. "You will also be pleased to meet an English garcon who is viz ze house—chez nous?"

D'Arcy looked eager. "Is he here, deah boy?"

"Oui. I have toll him zat ze English friends come to ze dinner chez moi, and he very much pleased. He is ze name as you, mon ami."

"D'Arcy?"

"Oui, oui."

"What is his Christian name?" asked Arthur Augustus anxiously.

Cernay shook his head.

"Je ne sais pas, mon ami."

"You'll soon see if it's Wally," said Tom Merry. "Why not confide in Cernay, and got him to make sure of Wally?"

"Bai Jove, that's a good ideah!"

Cernay looked at them inquiringly.

"Vous cherchez—you seek somevun?" he asked.

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Somevun ici—here?"

"Yaas. My minah—my youngah bwothah, you know."

"Votro frere?"

"That's my minah—a cheeky young wascal. He's wun away fwom school and come to Pawis. I thought the chap here might be young Wally."

"Ciel!"

"If he sees me he'll dodge off!"

"Oui, oui, je comprends."

"Could you manage to bring him in, deah boy, before he sees me?" suggested the swell of St. Jim's anxiously. Cernay chuckled.

"Zat would be good shoke."

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Mais, but you not want to hurt him?" said Cernay. "I sink zat he is sinking somevun looking for him, from vat he say, and he not vish to be found."

"Oh, I only want to look aftah him!"

"All in ze friendly way—hein?"

"Oui, oui. Yaas, wathah!"

"Zen I fetches him in."

"Good!" said Blake. "We'll soon see if it's the young scamp now."

"Vous excuserez moi—one moment," said Cernay.

"Go ahead, deah boy."

Auguste Cernay left the drawing-room.

The chums of St. Jim's waited expectantly. There were several other persons in the room but Cernay was apparently not acquainted with them all.

One stout gentleman, with a German cast of face, was seated at the piano, dabbling over the keys, while he waited for dinner to be announced.

D'Arcy distinguished the melody of the "Funeral March of a Marionette," a composition he was fond of, but which he hardly recognised as the German gentleman tapped it off.

"Zis way," said Cernay's voice at the door.

"But—"

They knew the voice that uttered that "But." It was that of the scamp of the Third Form at St. Jim's.

"Wally!" murmured Figgins.

"Come in, mon ami."

And Cernay, with his arm linked in Wally's, came into the saloon. Wally looked at the group of juniors, and seemed inclined to bolt for it. But Cernay kept tight hold of his arm and marched him on.

D'Arcy put up his eyeglass and surveyed his minor severely.

"Wally! So I've found you at last!"

CHAPTER 14.

Arthur Augustus Sings!

WALLY chuckled. Arthur Augustus had expected his minor to be overwhelmed, but it was not easy to overwhelm the scamp of the Third Form at St. Jim's.

He simply chortled.

D'Arcy's frown grew more severe.

"Weally, Wally—"

"Oh, come off, cocky!" said Wally cheerfully. "None of your rot, you get here!" How on earth did you get here?"

"Weally, Wally, I twust you will—"

"Oh, don't you begin, Gussy!" said Wally, in a tone of remonstrance. "Keep all that for the School House at St. Jim's."

"Did you wun away fwom school?"

"Not much."

Arthur Augustus looked relieved.

"Bai Jove, I am glad to heah that, at all events! I was vewy much afraid that you had left St. Jim's without askin' the Head's permish."

Wally grinned.

"So I did, Gus!"

"What! You said you didn't wun away!"

"I didn't; I walked!"

"Weally, Wally—"

"You young ass!" said Tom Merry.

"You've bolted!"

"What-ho!"

"You'll get into a fearful row when you get back."

"Not half! I'm not going back till

the gov'nor has interceded with the Head, and made it all right for me," explained Wally.

"Weally, Wally, you cannot expect the gov'nor to do anythin' of the sort."

"I shan't go back till he does—you see!"

"I shall be compelled to take you by force, Wally!"

"Rats!"

"If you say wats to me—"

"And many of 'em!" said Wally cheerfully.

"I am sowwy, but I see that there is no wesoource for me but to give you a feashful thwashin', and—"

"Going to kick up a row in another fellow's quarters?" asked Wally, with a grin.

"Bai Jove! N-no! But you must come with us when we go, Wally!"

"More rats!"

"I weally do not know how to deal with this youngstah!" said Arthur Augustus, looking round. "He does not treat me with the gwopah respect due to an oldah bwothah!"

"Horrid!"

"Yaas, wathah! I am afwaid I did not give him enough thwashings in his early youth. Powwaps that is the cause. But, as a mattah of fact, I wathah think it's in the family. I have a lot of twouble lookin' aftah my oldah bwothah, too. Now, Wally, I must insist upon your joinin' our party at the hotel."

"More rats!"

"You can join us on parole!" said Tom Merry, laughing. "Not to be detained, you know, against your will."

"Oh, that's all right, then! That will do, especially as Cernay is leaving Paris to-morrow, and there's nobody here near my age."

"Leaving Paris?" asked Tom Merry, glancing at Cernay.

The French lad nodded.

"Oui, oui! I am returning to the provinces to spend my holiday until Christmas. I wish much zat you could come to ze Chateau Cernay with me, and spend ze Noel'ches moi."

"I wish we could," said Tom Merry; "but I'm afraid we're booked for home for Christmas. It would be jolly!"

"Zen, when you leave Paris, come and stay vis me a few days before Christmas," said Cernay. "I will speak vis mon pere, and he will write to you. What?"

"It's awfully good of you."

"Mon pere, he write in any case," said Cernay. "You will see somezing of French country life, as well as ze life of ze capital."

A bell buzzed.

"Zat is for dinner."

"And not before I'm ready, either!" Fatty Wynn murmured in an undertone to Figgins. "We've been here an hour or more, I think."

"Ten minutes, you ass!"

"It seems like ten hours!"

But when Fatty Wynn took his place at the table d'hotel, his face beamed with a smile of satisfaction.

He could see that there was going to be a good dinner, and he was not disappointed. The dinner was superb.

How many courses there were, Fatty Wynn did not count; but he did his duty manfully at each, from the hors d'oeuvre to the dessert.

It was a long innings for Fatty, and a good innings, and by the time he was finished he was feeling at peace with the world and himself.

When they adjourned to the saloon, Fatty Wynn sank into a comfortable cushioned seat, and did not move or speak for an hour, at least.

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"Bether these moths!"

Half-a-crown has been awarded to Miss R. Upham, 6, Sandhurst Road, Mile End Lane Stockport.

There was a large company, and they were all gay and good-humoured, and Auguste Cernay's English friends were made much of.

The German gentleman played the "Funeral March of a Marionette" again. Blake confided to Digby in a whisper that it sounded to him like the funeral march of a coke hammer, but everybody seemed pleased.

Then a charming mademoiselle sang in French, and another in Italian; and finally it came out that Arthur Augustus D'Arcy had a tenor voice, and was accustomed to use it.

So D'Arcy had to sing.

It was then that Fatty Wynn was observed to stir for the first time.

Arthur Augustus was looking over the music to find a song to suit himself, as he explained that he had brought no music.

"Is Gussy going to sing?" asked Fatty Wynn, turning a look of alarm upon the swell of St. Jim's.

"Yes, rather!"

"Oh lor!" said Fatty.

Arthur Augustus went ahead with the confidence of a chap who knew that he possessed an exceptional tenor voice.

He found a song to suit him. It was a tenor solo from one of Verdi's operas, and D'Arcy had inflicted it upon the juniors of St. Jim's many a time and oft.

He jammed it on the piano, and the German gentleman, who had kindly offered to accompany him, ran his fingers over the keys.

Blake looked hopelessly at Tom Merry.

"My hat!" murmured Tom softly.

"It's 'La Donna'! Wait for the top note!"

"The French are a very polite nation," murmured Lowther. "This is where their politeness will be put to a test."

"Yes, rather!"

The company were all attention as the melody of "La Donna" rippled over the ivory keys.

D'Arcy started:

"La donna e mobile,
Qual piume al vento,
Muta d'accento,
E di pensiero!"

"Good for the first lap!" murmured Blake. "Only, wait for the top note!"

"Sempre un amabile,
Leggiadro viso
In piano in riso,
E menzoniero!"

La donna e mobile,
Qual piume al vento,
Muta d'accento—"

That is where D'Arcy balked. The faces in the room were as grave as those of a bench of judges as Arthur Augustus D'Arcy struggled manfully with his note.

"Go it, old hoss!" murmured Wally. "Put your beef into it!"

And D'Arcy did.

The second verse went off a little more easily, till D'Arcy came to the finish—the really difficult passage.

The juniors, as it were, lay in wait for it. D'Arcy came to it, and tackled it gallantly.

Up and down that long and difficult run his voice harked away merrily, sometimes a tenor, sometimes a bass, now a baritone—first in one key and then in another. The German gentleman was thumping away merrily.

When D'Arcy did it at a junior concert at St. Jim's, he generally got more laughter than the funniest turn on the programme. But French politeness stood the strain, even of D'Arcy's top notes.

There was a murmur of appreciation when he finished, because he had finished, perhaps. D'Arcy bowed to his acknowledgments.

He dropped into a seat beside Blake.

"Bai Jove," he said, "the appweciation of music in Pawis seems to be vevy keen. I will give them anothah tenah solo pwsently."

"No you jolly well won't!" said Blake.

"Weally, Blake—"

"You keep off the grass!"

"My deah chap, the way they listened shows they're awfully musical."

"It doesn't, ass; it shows they're awfully kind-hearted!"

"Look here—"

"Rats!"

"I shall thwash you when we get back to the hotel!"

"All right; anything but top notes!" said Blake heartlessly.

To which Arthur Augustus replied only with a sniff.

But it was a very pleasant evening, in spite of the tenor solo, and the juniors were very pleased with everything when they bade their host good-bye.

They carried off Wally with them to the hotel, and Mr. Fawcett, though he looked very grave at first, promised to help to make the young scamp's peace with the Head.

Uncle Frank was told of Augusto Cernay's invitation, and nodded approval. The next evening came the letter from Cernay's "pere." And when the juniors had finished their round of the sights of Paris, Uncle Frank saw them off at the railway station for the Chateau Cernay for the Christmas holiday.

"It's early for a Christmas holiday," Tom Merry remarked, "but when we get back we shall be scattered far and wide in all corners of the country, so my idea is to have a Christmas party together here while we've got the chance."

"Yaas, wathah! I wegard that as a good wheeze!"

And the chums agreed that it was.

THE END.

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THE GREAT CHRISTMAS PUDDING COMPETITION!

WHAT HAPPENED LAST WEEK.

The idea of a Christmas pudding competition is taken up keenly in the Remove at Greyfriars. The prospect of eating the puddings at the end of the competition proves attractive to many fellows—particularly Bunter!

Harry Wharton & Co. club together to make a pudding, and the ingredients are bought at Mrs. Mimble's school shop. While Nugent, Hurree Singh, and Bunter mix the ingredients, Harry Wharton and Bob Cherry go to the Red Cow, in Friardale, to get some brandy for their pudding. The village inn is, of course, out of bounds to Greyfriars fellows, and, unfortunately for the two juniors, Carberry, the prefect, catches them there. He jumps to the conclusion that they are pub-haunting, and takes them straight away to Dr. Locke, the Head.

(Now read on.)

Before the Head!

DR. LOCKE was surprised. A tap at his study had caused him to lay down his pen, and in response to his "Come in!"

Carberry, the prefect, marched in, followed by Harry Wharton and Bob Cherry of the Remove.

The Head adjusted his pince-nez and looked at them.

"Excuse me, sir," said Carberry, in a tone of great humility. "I am sorry to disturb you, but I thought it my duty to bring a matter of the greatest importance before you at once."

"You may go on, Carberry."

"Hearing that Greyfriars boys had been seen in the vicinity of the Red Cow in Friardale village, I paid the place a visit to see whether there was any truth in it, and found Cherry waiting outside. He was waiting for Wharton, who had gone into the place."

The Head raised his eyebrows.

"Is it possible?"

"Yes, sir. Wharton came out in a few minutes, and he had a bottle of brandy in his pocket."

"A—what?" gasped the Head.

"A bottle of brandy, sir. Wharton has it in his pocket still. I thought I ought to bring the matter to your knowledge at once."

"You did quite right, Carberry. It is certainly a most serious matter. Wharton is the last boy at Greyfriars I should suspect of such conduct."

"Thank you, sir," said Harry quietly. "I hope you will never have reason to change your opinion, sir."

"I must change it if what Carberry states is correct. I hope there is some mistake, however. Was Cherry waiting for you outside the public-house?"

"Yes, sir."

"And you came out while Carberry was there?"

"Yes, sir."

"With a bottle of brandy? Place it on the table."

Harry Wharton did so. The Head seemed hardly able to believe his eyes as he gazed at the bottle.

Carberry grinned in his spiteful way.

"I may add, sir," he said, "that I've long suspected Wharton of this. THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 1,555.

By Frank Richards.

(Author of the grand long yarns of Greyfriars appearing every Saturday in our companion paper, the "Magnet.")

He has covered up his tracks with great cunning; but I always thought I should unmask him at last."

"You must not speak like that, Carberry—not yet, at all events. I still hope that Wharton may be able to make some explanation. There was a case once at Greyfriars of a Sixth Form prefect sending a junior for liquor."

Carberry winced. The Head little knew how near his remark went to Carberry himself.

Dr. Locke looked earnestly at Wharton.

"Were you sent for this by a boy in a higher Form, Wharton?" he asked.

"No, sir."

The Head's brow grew very stern.

"Am I to understand, then, that, as Carberry suspects, you fetched this liquor for your own purposes?" he demanded.

"Yes, sir, I fetched it for our own

Who wins the Remove Christmas Pudding Competition? The judges claim the prize—to compensate them for being nearly poisoned!

purposes," said Wharton. "I would have explained to Carberry what we wanted it for, but he jumped to the conclusion that I was acting in a blackguardly way, and probably he would not have believed my explanation if I had made it. We're having a Christmas pudding competition in the Remove, and—"

The Head stared at the junior.

"What can that have to do with the matter in hand?"

"Everything, sir. We purchased most of the ingredients for Study No. 1's pudding at Mrs. Mimble's; but, of course, she does not sell brandy. I volunteered to fetch some from the village, while Nugent and Hurree Singh stoned the raisins and mixed the ingredients. Bob came with me, and waited outside the Red Cow while I fetched the brandy."

"Do you mean to say, Wharton, that you intended to put a whole bottle of brandy into a Christmas pudding?"

"Well, I don't know about putting in the whole bottle, sir," said the junior cautiously. "I believe in putting in plenty of brandy to give it a rich flavour—"

"I should have kept him within bounds, though, sir," said Bob Cherry. "Butter is the stuff you really want a lot of in a Christmas pudding."

"Of course, this yarn is lies from beginning to end, sir," said Carberry.

"I don't think anything of the sort,

Carberry," said Dr. Locke acidly; "and you have no right to speak in such a way. Did anyone else know that you were going to fetch brandy for the Christmas pudding, Wharton?"

"The fellows in Study No. 1, sir."

"Carberry, kindly fetch the other occupants of Study No. 1 here at once." The prefect quitted the room. A painful wait ensued—the Head looking into the fire and the juniors staring at the carpet.

Carberry returned in a few moments with Nugent, Hurree Singh, and Bunter. The first two were looking curious, and the latter scared. The Head fixed his eyes upon them.

"Nugent, did you know that Wharton had gone to Friardale to fetch a bottle of brandy?" he asked.

Nugent turned a rather scared look at Harry. The latter smiled.

"Don't keep anything back, Frank," he said. "Dr. Locke only wants to know the truth, and there's no harm in it."

"Yes, sir," said Nugent.

"What was he fetching it for?" "As a flavouring for the Christmas pudding we are making, sir."

"Were you all aware of that?"

"Oh, yes, sir! Though for my part I would rather have put in an extra pound of mixed peel, and kept down the brandy."

"I say, you fellows, I told you some harm would come of it," said Billy Bunter, blinking nervously. "It would have been much better to spend the money in treacle. Treacle is the thing to make a Christmas pudding rich, and I knew all along that if Carberry got hold of the brandy we should never see it again. I know he drinks whisky, as a rule, but a fellow who drinks whisky will drink brandy, and—"

Harry Wharton trod on the toe of the incautious Bunter, and the fat junior yelped with pain. Carberry had turned rather white. Dr. Locke gave him a very curious glance.

"Oh, really, Wharton, you've hurt my toe, and—"

"Silence, Bunter! Boys, this matter it at an end. I am quite certain that Wharton fetched the brandy for the purpose he has stated, and I acquit him of any bad intentions. But I must say that he has acted in a very foolish manner, open to a very serious misconception."

"I have no objection to a Christmas pudding being made in Study No. 1, or to its being flavoured with brandy, but I certainly cannot allow a bottle of brandy to be in the possession of a junior."

"I think the housekeeper had better take charge of it, and allow you as much as she thinks necessary, Wharton."

"I am quite agreeable to that, sir. I—I wish I hadn't gone to the Red Cow now; but I never meant any harm, sir."

"I am sure of that; but I hope you will be wiser in future. If you had been a little more patient, Carberry, and a little less suspicious, I think you might have avoided troubling me with this matter at all. You may go."

"Thank you, sir," said the juniors together.

THE EFFORTS OF THE GREYFRIARS CHUMS TO PRODUCE A PRIZE-WINNING PUDDING WILL KEEP YOU IN FITS OF LAUGHTER!



In the grasp of three strong pairs of hands Herbert Henry was helpless. Bob Cherry up-ended the huge basin, and brought it down like a bonnet on the head of Mrs. Mimble's hopeful son. Squelch! Raw Christmas pudding smothered the head and shoulders of Herbert Henry.

They left the Head's study. Carberry followed them with a face like a demon. In the passage, when the door was closed, he turned upon them with a snarl.

"You young cads!" he growled. "You've lied yourselves out of that and—"

"We haven't lied, and you know it!" said Harry Wharton angrily. "It is you who have made a fool of yourself, and all through being a rotten, suspicious cad!"

"So you can put that in your pipe and smoke it!" said Bob Cherry.

And the chums of the Remove marched off, leaving Carberry gritting his teeth with rage.

Making the Pudding!

THE heroes of the Remove grinned as they made their way to Study No. 1. Carberry certainly had made a fool of himself, and he stood lower in the Head's eyes than before his attempt to blacken the Removites.

Harry Wharton had come safe through the ordeal, but he felt that he had had a narrow escape. A head-master of a more suspicious or less sympathetic nature might easily have given more credit to the prefect's view of the matter.

"The Head's a brick!" Harry Wharton remarked, as they entered Study No. 1. "And, as a matter of fact, we were playing the giddy ox in going to the Red Cow, Bob."

"You were, you mean," grinned Bob. "I only came with you."

"Well, I was, then; and I mean to be a bit more careful. But the trouble is that we have lost the brandy now, and we—"

"Mrs. Kebble will allowance us to the proper amount."

"H'm! Yes; only I believe in putting in plenty to give the stuff a flavour. Still, it can't be helped. I know Mrs. Kebble can make ripping puddings, so I dare say she knows. If the allowance she gives us is small, we must keep down the other ingredients in proportion."

"Well, I don't know about that. I believe in putting in plenty of butter."

"I say, you fellows, we don't want the pudding a lump of grease, you know. Treacle's the thing to give it richness."

"Plenty of peel!"

"The differentfulness of the honourable opinions is great," observed Hurree Singh. "It will be necessary to reach the honourable compromise-fulness."

Harry Wharton knitted his brows in thought.

"Something in that," he remarked. "We can't all carry out our own views, and it will be necessary to be reasonable. Better allow Inky, as an independent and disinterested party, to allowance the stuff."

"I shall have terrific pleasurefulness in doing so, my worthy chums."

"Keep off those raisins, you greedy cormorant!" exclaimed Nugent, giving Billy Bunter a cuff. "That's about the tenth time I've caught you scoffing them!"

"Well, so long as you have plenty of treacle, a few raisins more or less don't matter, Nugent."

"Oh, do ring off the treacle! You make me tired!"

"Well, if you put in plenty of treacle you—"

"Shut up! Let's get to work, chaps, or we shan't have the mixing done before bed-time."

During Harry's absence, his chums had commenced the work of mixing the

famous pudding, and had got it well in hand.

A huge basin had been borrowed from below stairs, and the ingredients had been shot into it—flour, breadcrumbs, sugar, spices, currants, with a liberal allowance of water, and the whole was being industriously stirred up with a cricket-stump.

Nugent had declared that his mother always put in some cold tea, and the teapot had been emptied into the pudding accordingly. Billy Bunter had expressed a doubt about the tea-leaves, but Nugent remarked that a few tea-leaves wouldn't be noticed in a rich pudding.

And the pudding was certainly going to be a rich one. Although the mixed peel, the butter, and the treacle were kept within bounds by Inky's eye, the quantities of the ingredients were pretty large.

The basin was nearly full of pudding, and it became rather hard work to keep the cricket-stump going in the sticky mess.

The juniors took it in turns, and slaved away industriously. Nugent began to pour in the raisins, which made the mass thicker than ever.

"We shall have to have a little more water in," Nugent remarked doubtfully, looking at the mass.

"Botter thin it with treacle," said Billy Bunter.

"I was thinking of butter," remarked Bob Cherry. "In a case like this, half a pound of butter is the best thing."

The juniors, after an argument, compromised on cold tea, and cold tea was accordingly added with a liberal hand. It thinned down the pudding, and they had to agree that it gave it a richer colouring.

"The brandy would have done that,"

Harry Wharton remarked. "Still, I think it's going to be a success, and I rather fancy we shall get the prize in the competition."

To which the chums concurred heartily. As a matter of fact, each of them had a secret idea for improving the pudding, but said nothing about it, so far.

A good many fellows had looked into the study in the course of the operations, and inquired after the progress of the pudding. They looked in great admiration at the sticky mass.

They were all cordially invited to the feed, which was to be the wind-up of the competition, and it was explained to them that everybody who came to the feed was supposed to put something in the pudding. Skinner said he had an old football he had done with, and Stott generously offered a broken bike-pump.

Both offers were refused, as were likewise offers of cycle oil, carbide of calcium, and brilliantine from other humorous juniors.

Most of the Remove played up well, however. There was quite a crop of threepenny-pieces and sixpences, all of which were carefully washed in boiling water before being added to the pudding.

The mixture being pretty well advanced, Harry Wharton went along to the housekeeper's room to ask for the allowance of brandy, and was considerably disappointed by the smallness of it. As he remarked, when it was poured in, it hardly added a sniff to the compound.

But that could not be helped, and certainly there were enough other ingredients to make up for any deficiency of liquor.

"I think that will about do for to-night," said Nugent at last. "We'll give it a last mix to-morrow, and get it boiled. Russell and Desmond are boiling theirs to-morrow. The cook is doing it for them, in the kitchen."

"She'll do it for us, too," said Bob Cherry. "We should have to borrow a saucepan, and I don't see how we could get it on the grate; and, besides, we couldn't keep the fire in all day. You have to boil a Christmas pudding a whole day, you know."

"I thought about four hours," said Wharton.

"I was thinking about twelve hours myself," said Nugent.

"Fah, lot you chaps know about it!" exclaimed Bunter. "A Christmas pudding has to be boiled over a moderate fire for exactly nine hours."

Harry Wharton laughed.

"Well, we certainly don't agree," he said. "Suppose we leave it to the cook. She's pretty certain to know how long to boil a Christmas pudding!"

"Good! Now let's go and get a niff of air after this fearfully hard work."

"I'll stay and give the pudding a bit more mixing, if you like," said Bunter.

"H'm! Don't get taking any of the fruit out of it, you fat villain!"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"I wouldn't trust you with 't if it were cooked, but I suppose even you can be relied on not to eat raw pudding," said Nugent. "You can give it another mix if you like."

"I'll lock the cupboard, or he'll scoff all the materials we've got left over," Bob Cherry remarked.

"If you think I can't be trusted with a few pounds of peel and raisins, Cherry, you had better say so, and—"

"Well, I've said so, haven't I?"

Bob Cherry locked the cupboard, and the Removites quitted the study. Billy Bunter blinked indignantly and went on

stirring the pudding. It was a labour of love with him. He did not like work, but mixing a pudding was more like a pleasant recreation than work to the fat junior.

He had been at work some time when he became aware of a face looking in at the door. He blinked round at the face.

"Is that you, Skinner? What do you mean by startling a fellow?"

"It's me, Master Bunter," said Herbert Henry, the hopeful son of Mrs. Mimble, coming into the study. "No offence, Master Bunter."

"What do you want?"

"I was thinking you—you might like a little help in mixing the pudding," said Herbert Henry, with greedy eyes roving round the study.

"Well, you can take a turn if you like," said Bunter. "Don't get scoffing any of the fruit. I can't stand a fellow who's always eating, and you're a greedy young monkey."

"I'm always willing to help you, Master Bunter, because you're the nicest fellow at Greyfriars," said Herbert Henry.

"Well, that's all right. Mix it round steadily and don't make any bubbles, you young fathead! And when any threepenny-pieces or sixpences come to the top, mix 'em down again."

Herbert Henry's eyes glimmered.

"Threepenny-pieces and sixpences, Master Bunter?"

"Yes. Everybody who comes to the study is supposed to shove in a threepenny-piece or a tanner," said Billy Bunter. "I don't see why you shouldn't, like the rest."

"I haven't any money, Master Bunter."

"Well, mix it up and don't jaw!" said Bunter, who rather liked the idea of having someone under his orders.

"I'll read the 'Magnet'!"

And Billy Bunter sat down in the armchair. Herbert Henry grinned and waited till Bunter was buried in the school story. Then he grabbed up a fistful of the pudding, and chewed it in search of threepenny-pieces and sixpences.

Herbert Henry was not a cleanly young gentleman. He was not an honest one. He was a young rascal, and Bunter's simplicity gave him a chance. He had come to the study in the hope of cadging or purloining some of the materials of the Christmas pudding, but he preferred cash. Money was tight with the heir of the house of Mimble, and threepenny-pieces and sixpences were very welcome to him.

Bunter looked round once or twice. Each time Herbert Henry was solemnly mixing the pudding, and Bunter suspected nothing.

But each time that Bunter's look was turned away again, Herbert Henry carried on his work of investigation after the immersed coins.

His prospecting for the money was highly successful. As he chewed the raw pudding, coin after coin came to light, to be transferred to his trousers pocket. Bunter suspected nothing.

About a quarter of an hour passed thus, till Herbert Henry began to think that he had realised most of the cash in the pudding. But Nemesis was on the track of the young rascal.

The door was pushed open, and Bob Cherry looked in, and he gave a gasp as he saw Herbert Henry clawing a handful of pudding and jamming it into his mouth. Bob Cherry stared and gasped, and then he gave a roar and bounded into the study.

"You horrid little beast!" Herbert Henry jumped, dropped the

cricket-stump, and bolted for the door. Bob caught him by the neck, and sent him sprawling on the carpet with a swing of his arm.

The terrified young rascal squirmed past the indignant junior like an eel, and squirmed out of the doorway, and picked himself up to run. But Wharton, Nugent, and Hurree Singh were behind. The nabob's dusky hand closed on Herbert Henry's collar.

"Stop him!" roared Bob Cherry.

"I've caught him stopfully," purred the nabob. "The resistfulness is vainful, my worthy young rotter friend—Ow!"

Herbert Henry, in his terror, had kicked out savagely, and the nabob caught it on the shin. The unfortunate Inky staggered against the wall with a gasp of pain, and Herbert Henry bolted.

But there was no escape for him. Harry Wharton swung him round with a grasp on the shoulder, and heaved him into the study. He knocked against Bob Cherry, who flung him into a corner, where he sat gasping. The chums of the Remove came in, and Bob Cherry closed the door.

Herbert Henry Catches It!

HARRY WHARTON looked at the terrified Herbert Henry crouching in the corner, and then at Bob Cherry inquiringly. Billy Bunter was looking on in amazement. Bob Cherry's eyes were blazing.

"What's the matter, Bob?" asked Harry. "What has young Mimble been doing?"

"I say, you fellows, it's all right. He's been mixing the pudding, and I've been keeping an eye on him, you know. It's all right!"

"You young owl!" growled Bob Cherry. "He was clawing up the pudding to find the coins mixed in it!"

"Oh, really, Cherry, I didn't see him!"

"I saw him, though!"

"The horrible young rotter!" exclaimed Harry Wharton, in utter disgust. "He ought to be skinned for such a dirty trick!"

"And he's going to be!" growled Bob Cherry.

"The skinfulness should be terrific," murmured the nabob, rubbing his injured shin. "The beastliness of the young rotter is great."

"Got anything to say for yourself?" demanded Bob Cherry, jerking Herbert Henry to his feet. "My hat, he's shedding threepenny-bits!"

The coins were clinking round Herbert Henry. His rough usage had tumbled some of them out of his pockets.

Proof of his guilt was not wanted further. The coins were all sticky, just as they had been abstracted from the pudding.

"The young rascal!" said Nugent. "Search his pockets, and get the tin back before we sling him out!"

"If—if you please—" gasped Herbert Henry.

"Yes, we look pleased, don't we?" said Bob Cherry. "Give us the rest of the money, you young thief!"

"If you please, I—I—I—"

"Shut up, and hand over the tin!"

Herbert Henry sullenly handed it over. To make sure they searched him, and discovered a good many coins he had overlooked. The money was piled on the table, and made the respectable total of nearly five shillings.

The chums of Study No. 1 looked grim. It was not so much the theft—though that was bad enough—but the utter detestableness of the trick. They looked at the pudding—a short time

ago the pride of their hearts—with great aversion.

"The young thief!" said Wharton. "We'd better take him to the Head. What he wants is to be sent to a reformatory."

"Ow!" roared Herbert Henry. "Don't tell anybody! Don't! Ow—ow!"

The juniors eyed him in disgust. "Shut up, you cowardly little beast!" said Bob Cherry. "If you were a Greyfriars chap, you'd be expelled for this, and, as it is, you will get off with a hiding."

"Ow—ow! Don't tell! Ow!" "The pudding's wasted," said Bob Cherry. "He's eaten half of it, and we couldn't touch the rest after this. Lucky we laid in plenty of materials—enough to make another one."

"We'll let him have this one, instead of taking him in to the Head," said Nugent, with a grin. "What do you think?"

"Good wheeze!" exclaimed Bob heartily. "Hold the young beast while I crown him!"

Bob Cherry lifted up the pudding-basin. It was more than large enough to fit over Herbert Henry's head.

The culprit squirmed and wriggled in terror.

"Oh, don't—don't!" he roared.

He made a frantic attempt to escape. But three strong pairs of hands grasped him. Bob Cherry upended the huge basin, and brought it down like a bonnet on the horrified head of Herbert Henry.

Squelch!

There was a gasping cry from the culprit under the squelching pudding.

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

Bob Cherry jerked off the basin.

Herbert Henry's face and hair had disappeared under a sticky, clinging mass of sloppy Christmas pudding.

"Ow—ow—m-m-m-m-m!" he moaned.

"Outside," said Bob Cherry. "You can't stop that stuff about this study. Get out, will you?"

"Ow-w-w-w!"

"Outside!"

Herbert Henry was gently assisted to the door by the application of four boots. He staggered blindly into the passage, and blundered along to the stairs.

"Great Scott! Who's that?"

It was Wingate of the Sixth who uttered the exclamation. Herbert Henry dodged by, and the captain of Greyfriars made a grab at him. His hand slid through a sticky mass of pudding, and Herbert Henry escaped!

He blundered on down the stairs.

"Stop him!" shouted Wingate.

Blundell and Bland of the Fifth were at the foot of the stairs. They saw the strange object coming down, and heard Wingate's shout from the landing, and they closed up to stop the flight of Herbert Henry.

The latter, almost beside himself with alarm, ran right at them. Blundell grasped him, and his hand slipped, as Wingate's had done, and Herbert Henry drove his head full against Bland's waistcoat.

Bland sat down on the lowest step and gasped. Blundell made another grasp at Herbert Henry; but the desperate fugitive eluded him, and darted out of the open door into the quad.

"Stop him!" yelled Bland. "The villain's spoiled my waistcoat! Stop him!"

"After him!" shouted Blundell.

Bulstrode, Skinner, and Stott, and several other Removites who were in

the Hall, ran out in pursuit of the fugitive.

Bland contemplated his waistcoat in despair. Bland was rather particular about his clothes, and his waistcoat was certainly ruined.

"What on earth is it?" exclaimed Blundell. "My hand's as sticky as anything."

"It's pudding of some kind."

"My aunt! So it is—Christmas pudding! What on earth is that kid going about with Christmas pudding on his napper for?"

"Blessed if I know! But if I catch him, I'll teach him to keep his filthy pudding off my waistcoat!" groaned Bland.

"Ha, ha, ha! It does look a sight, old chap! Hallo, you kids! Have you caught him?"

"No!" growled Bulstrode. "I made a grab at his top-knot; but he's got it greased, or something—my fingers slipped off him."

"Ha, ha! It's Christmas pudding. Anybody know who he was?"

Nobody knew. The sticky pudding had masked the features of Herbert Henry. The search had to be given up, and Bland went away to clean his waistcoat, though, as he pathetically said, it would never be the same waistcoat again.

Herbert Henry was cleaning his head about the same time, and feeling extremely sorry that he had ever entered Study No. 1, or departed from the path of honesty.

Meanwhile, the chums of the Remove had cleaned out the basin, and started mixing the fresh pudding. And though they were not quite able to make up for lost time, the new pudding was well advanced by the time they had to retire to bed.

Surreptitious Movements!

THE hour of eleven boomed out from the clock-tower of Greyfriars, and Bob Cherry sat up in bed in the Remove dormitory.

"You fellows asleep?" he asked in a low voice.

There was no reply, save an unmusical snore from Billy Bunter's bed. The deep breathing round him showed that the Remove were asleep. Bob Cherry put one leg out of bed and shivered, then the other, and shivered again.

But he was resolute. He stepped out and cautiously and silently drew on his clothes and a pair of rubber shoes. He glanced up and down the dormitory. All was still and silent, and the junior crossed to the door.

A few moments more and he was stealing downstairs to the passage on which the Remove studies opened, on the first floor of the old building.

The place was very cold and very eerie at that late hour. But Bob Cherry went on firmly, and reached Study No. 1, and opened the door. All was dark within. He went in, closed the door, and turned on the light.

"I can't let a good pudding be ruined for the sake of a little trouble," he murmured. "What a Christmas pudding really wants to give it richness is plenty of butter, and if the other fellows don't see reason now, they will when the time comes to eat the pudding. The proof of the pudding is in the eating, and I can tell them afterwards, and they'll own up that I was right."

And Bob Cherry unlocked the cupboard, took out a couple of pounds of butter he had in readiness there, and deposited the mass into the Christmas pudding.

Then he plunged in the cricket-stump and began to stir. The butter gradually



Bob Cherry came into the study, and he was just in time to see Herbert Henry clawing up a handful of pudding and jamming it into his mouth. Bob gave a roar and bounded into the room. "You horrid little beast!"

dissolved and was mixed up with the rest of the pudding, and the whole mass assumed a decidedly greasy appearance.

But that did not trouble Bob Cherry. He was the slave of a theory, and in that state of mind no one is inclined to listen to reason. The greasiness of the pudding only made it look more excellent in his eyes. He stirred it up with growing satisfaction.

"It works a great deal more easily," he murmured, "and it will go down a lot more easily, too. Curious how obstinate chaps are when they don't know anything about the matter."

And giving the pudding a final stir, Bob Cherry extracted the stump and put it away. He turned out the light and left the study. No one awoke when he re-entered the dormitory, and he snuggled back into bed with a consciousness of having deserved well of his chums in spite of themselves. He was asleep in about three seconds, and he did not wake again until the rising bell was clanging.

When he rubbed his eyes in the dim light of the December morning, while the clang-clang of the bell rang from the direction of the chapel, he noticed that Frank Nugent was already out of bed and half-dressed.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob Cherry, staring at his chum. "Were you up before the bell started, Frank?"

Nugent coloured a little.

"Yes, I'm up early this morning." And he finished lacing his shoes and left the dormitory, while the rest of the Remove were getting out of bed.

"Skating, I suppose," said Harry Wharton. "It's freezing again this morning."

But Nugent had not gone out skating

at that early hour. He went downstairs and slipped quietly into Study No. 1. He grinned as he closed the door and pulled up the blind.

"Those innocent kids haven't any idea," he murmured. "I'll tell them after they've eaten the pudding, when they will admit that it was an improvement."

And Nugent emptied a huge packet of mixed peel into the Christmas pudding, plunged the stump in, and stirred away energetically. He noticed that the pudding worked very easily, but he was too busy working in all the chopped peel to think about anything else. He had finished his task and slipped out of the study before the Remove came down.

After breakfast the juniors went out into the crisp air of the Close. It was still freezing, and a slide had been made almost the length of the Close in the direction of the Cloisters.

While the Lower Fourth were disporting themselves on the slide, Billy Bunter was otherwise occupied. The fat junior blinked round to make sure that he was not observed, and then stole quietly into Study No. 1.

To take the jar of treacle out of the cupboard, uncover the pudding and empty the treacle in was the work of a few moments.

Then, with a grin of satisfaction, the fat junior thrust in the cricket-stump and stirred away.

"I'm sorry those fellows wouldn't listen to reason," he murmured. "It's no good arguing with obstinate people. I'll tell them about it afterwards, and they'll have to admit that I was right."

And Billy Bunter then industriously worked the treacle into the pudding till it was all absorbed.

The contents of the basin were beginning to assume a somewhat peculiar appearance now, as was not surprising in the circumstances.

Among the chunks of orange, lemon, and citron peel were floating lumps of treacle and butter, and where the ingredients had mixed the compound was not what could be called exactly inviting.

But Billy Bunter was blind to that. He worked on till he heard footsteps in the passage, and then he hastily put away the cricket-stump and covered up the pudding. He felt that he had done his duty to the study.

Bob Cherry and Harry Wharton came in. Billy Bunter was groping in the cupboard, and as he brought out his hand with a cake in it, the juniors had no suspicion of the work he had been engaged in.

"Hungry again, Bunter?" grinned Bob. "It's nearly a quarter of an hour since breakfast, I think."

"Well, I felt I could do with a snack," said Bunter, and he hastily left the study with the cake under his arm.

Wharton uncovered the pudding, and Bob Cherry spread a newspaper on the table, and then a pudding cloth over it.

The cook had told the juniors that if they gave her the puddings before morning school, she would put them on the fire, and have them done some time that day, and so there was no time to lose.

Bob Cherry had borrowed a pudding cloth of the good-natured dame, and it only remained to get the famous pudding tied up and delivered into her hands.

"Pop it down in the middle of the cloth," said Bob. "Then you draw up the four corners round it, you know."

"Right you are!"

Wharton "plopped" the pudding upon the cloth by inverting the basin over it. It was rather a flabby-looking mess, and the captain of the Remove looked at it suspiciously.

"Looks thinner than it did last night," he remarked.

"Oh, it works thinner, I expect!"

"It seems rather greasy."

"All the better for the digestion, you know."

"Seems to niff of treacle, too."

"Oh, that's sheer fancy!"

And Bob Cherry hastily gathered up the four corners of the pudding cloth round the valuable pudding, and tied them across, and then gathered up more corners and pinned them together.

Harry Wharton was still looking at it doubtfully. He didn't know exactly what it was, but he felt that there was something wrong with that pudding.

"A bit sloppy, isn't it, Bob?" he remarked.

"Oh, that will be changed in the boiling!"

"Do they boil harder, then?"

"I think so. Anyway, this will be all right. You can't expect to see a pudding firm before it's boiled, you know."

"H'm! I suppose not. How greasy the cloth is."

"That will prevent it from sticking to the saucepan."

Harry laughed. Bob Cherry certainly had an answer for everything. The pudding was tied up safely at last, and Bob carried it out of the study and down to the lower regions presided over by the cook.

The cook looked at the pudding with a curious expression. She may have been surprised by the squeaky state of it, but she made no remark.

Bob Cherry went upstairs again, and met Russell of the Remove coming down with a pudding in his hand.



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"Got it ready, you see," said Russell, with a grin. "Have you taken cooky yours?"

"Yes; and I thought she looked pleased with it," said Bob Cherry, in the innocence of his heart.

"She's bound to be pleased with this," said Russell. "Perhaps it doesn't feel so firm as it might, but that will be made up in the boiling. That young villain Wun Lung wanted to help me make it, and suggested putting Worcester sauce in it to give it a flavour. I took him by the pigtail and slung him out, you know. Blessed if I know what they wanted to shove that heathen into my study for!"

And Russell went down with his pudding. A few moments later, Bob Cherry passed Desmond, also bound for the regions below, with a huge pudding.

"Faith, and I rather think this will be a success," Desmond remarked. "Better hold the trial this afternoon, I suppose, as it's a half-holiday?"

"Yes, rather. We shall be pretty keen after a run on the skates, and able to do the puddings justice," grinned Bob Cherry.

"Faith, and I hear Mrs. Mimble is making some ripping Christmas puddings," said the Irish junior. "She's selling them at two shillings each, a great deal cheaper than it costs us to make them."

"Oh, it's the fun of the competition, you know. Of course, you can't make these things as cheaply as you can buy them, but look at the extra quality!"

"Faith, ye're right intirely! There's something in that," agreed Micky.

And the three puddings went on to boil. They were the only three that reached the stage of completion.

Many Removites had taken up the idea, but most of them had finished up by eating the raisins, currants, peel, etc., in a raw state. Others had had to give up the idea through the failure of funds. Some had visited the tuckshop to purchase materials, and had weakly squandered the cash in tarts and lemonade and hot drinks instead.

But, as Skinner pointed out, three puddings would be enough for a feed all round for the Remove. They were big enough, though there were a few doubting Thomases who hinted that they might not be good enough. But upon these, of course, the amateur pudding-makers cast only the glance of scorn.

The Trial!

HARRY WHARTON & CO. were thinking more about Christmas puddings than about lessons during morning school.

As for Billy Bunter, he was revelling in the anticipation. He had some doubts about the study pudding at first, but since he had succeeded in adding plenty of his favourite ingredient, he was satisfied in his mind. He was looking forward to the trial of the puddings eagerly. After the trial was to come the feast.

Bob Cherry, Nugent, and Bunter had each his little secret to keep. At times there was a curious grin on the face of Wun Lung, too, as if he had thoughts in his mind that were somewhat amusing.

Immediately after morning school the Famous Four presented themselves at the kitchen to inquire after the progress of the pudding.

They were followed by Lacy, Desmond, and Russell, all equally anxious to learn how their puddings were getting on.

The smiling cook assured them that they were making satisfactory progress.

They had not been boiling all the time, but they were being looked after, and she would see that they were boiled enough. And they would be ready about half-past three.

"Right-ho!" said Harry Wharton. "We're much obliged to you, cook, for taking all this trouble about our puddings."

"Not at all, Master Wharton," said the cook. "The puddings have had all that cooking can do for them, so if you're satisfied with the way you've made them, they will be all right."

And as the juniors were quite satisfied on that point, of course everything was bound to be all right!

After dinner they skated and exchanged catcalls with the ariens on the frozen river, while they were waiting for the puddings to come up. It was a half-holiday, and it was agreed that the puddings should be tested as soon as they were brought upstairs.

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Billy Bunter did not take part in the skating. He watched the head of the kitchen stairs like a detective watching a suspected dwelling, or a cat watching a mouse. He was anxious about those puddings.

The school clock was ringing out the half-hour when the skaters, hungry and flushed with exercise, came pouring into the house.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob Cherry, slapping Bunter on the shoulder. "Are the puddings up yet?"

"No, Cherry, and I wish you wouldn't biff me like that. You might make my spectacles fall off, and if they— Here they come!"

"What, the spectacles?"

"No, ass, the puddings!"

The puddings were, indeed, coming. They were carried into Study No. 1, where the trial was to take place. Three huge puddings, set on three huge dishes, and a number of plates, knives and forks lent by the cook for the occasion.

The chums of the Remove crowded round the table. The pudding-makers were all there, as well as a number of fellows who had constituted themselves tasters and judges for the contest.

"I say, you fellows, which is which?" asked Bunter, blinking at the steaming puddings, from which the cloths had been removed.

"That's all right," said Bob Cherry. "Cooky says blue dish is ours, pink dish Russell's, and green dish Desmond and Lacy's."

"Ours looks jolly rich, doesn't it?" said Nugent.

"Seems to me to smell of treacle," said Hazeldene.

"Oh, that's your fancy!"

"Fancy or not, it's jolly greasy."

"Start with Study No. 1 pudding!" said Lacy. "All the judges can take a bit and taste it. The makers are out of it, of course."

"Right-ho! Carve away, Wharton!"

Harry Wharton plunged a knife into the steaming pudding. There was no denying that it was sloppy, and Skinner suggested using a spoon instead of a knife. Skinner's suggestion was received with a chuckle by the judges, and with freezing silence by the makers of the pudding.

There were six judges, and so Study No. 1 was pretty full of juniors. Each of the judges received a plate with a small slice of pudding on it, and was invited to taste it.

Skinner was the first to taste, and he made a decidedly wry face.

"No likee?" murmured Wun Lung.

"It's horrid! Tastes of rancid butter!"

"Simply reeks of treacle," said Stott.

"And it's nearly all peel," said Trevor. "Why didn't you put the fruit in in equal proportions? That's the proper way."

The chums of Study No. 1 looked at one another. They were all growing crimson.

"It's all rot!" said Bob Cherry. "That extra butter makes it all right. It would have been a failure without the extra butter."

"What extra butter?" demanded Wharton. "Do you mean to say that you put in extra butter after we had finished the mixing?"

"Well, you see, I—I—"

"That's it!" exclaimed Nugent, tasting the pudding. "I can taste the butter myself now!"

"Rot!" said Bob Cherry warnily. "I knew, of course, that it wanted more butter; so I put it in last night!"

"You ass! That's why it hasn't been improved by the extra peel I—I—I—"

"Eh? You put the extra peel in after all?"

"Well; yes, before breakfast this morning. You see, I knew it needed it, and it would have been all right, if you hadn't shoved in that filthy butter!"

"I say, you fellows, this is horrid! The pudding's not fit to eat!" said Billy Bunter indignantly. "It's all because of Cherry and Nugent fooling about with the pudding. I took the trouble to mix in the treacle this morning—"

"You did what?" roared Bob Cherry and Nugent.

"I wish you wouldn't shake me like that, Bob Cherry. You might make my glasses fall off, and if they get broken—"

"You put that rotten treacle in?"

"It wasn't rotten treacle; it was jolly good treacle. If you hadn't mucked the whole thing up with your butter and peel, the pudding would have been perfect."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Harry Wharton. "You've improved the pudding between you till it's uneatable!"

"Well, of all the asses—" began Nugent.

"Of all the dummies!" said Bob Cherry.

"Of all the blessed lunatics!" said Billy Bunter.

"Oh, get on to the next pudding!" said Hazeldene. "This one is poisonous and it won't take the prize, anyway!"

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Even Wun Lung was making a wry face over the pudding, though he could eat anything as a rule. Study No. 1 pudding was unanimously condemned, and was thrown aside in a way not very complimentary to its makers and its improvers.

"Tly othel one," said Wun Lung. Desmond and Lacy's pudding was the next one tried. The judges tried it, and looked at one another; and tried it again, and looked at one another once more.

Micky Desmond began to look a little excited.

"Faith, and is it findin' fault ye are with our iligant pudding, bedad!" he exclaimed.

"There's something wrong with it," said Hazeldene. "You've forgotten to put any sugar in."

"Faith, and sure I—"

"And any spices either," grunted Trevor.

"Sure, and I—"

"Taste it yourself!"

Micky Desmond tasted it himself, and his face was a study. Lacy looked caggers at him.

"You—you utter Tipperary ass!" he exclaimed. "I attended to everything else, and I trusted just those two details to you, and you go and leave them out!"

"Faith, and it's sorry I am intirely, but I remember now that I forgot!" stammered Micky. "Sure, and the iligant pudding's spoiled now intirely, so it is!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

It was Study No. 1's turn to laugh, and laugh they did. Most of the judges joined them, and the study rang with merriment. Lacy was looking annoyed, and Micky Desmond dismayed.

"Of all the chumps," said Lacy, in measured tones. "Of all the howling asses—"

"Faith, and I've admitted I forgot intirely!" said Micky. "A fellow can't do more than own up!"

"That won't make the pudding eatable, ass!"

"Throw it away!" said Ogilvy. "Russell's stuff will have to take the prize! However bad it is, it can't be as bad as Wharton's or Desmond's."

"Faith, and I—"

"Come on, try the other one! Carve your pudding, Russell, old man!"

"Right you are! Hand over the plates!"

Russell began to cut slices of his Christmas pudding. It was certainly a nice-looking pudding—at all events,

BUNTER THE FREAK FOOTBALLER!

All that stands between Billy Bunter and a handsome tip from his Uncle is a place in the junior football eleven. But the fat Removite doesn't give up hope—he knows a thing or two. The result is that all Greyfriars is amazed to see Harry Wharton jumping to—



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nicer-looking than the others. It had a rich smell, though there was something in that which was not wholly pleasing as the juniors sniffed it. But certainly Ogilvy seemed to be right when he said that it could not very well be worse than the other two.

The plates were handed to the judges, and Hazeldene was the first to taste the third pudding. The next moment he jumped up, and plate and slice of pudding went with a clatter to the floor.

"Ow! He's trying to poison us! Ow!"

"What on earth's the matter?"

"Ow, ow!" yelled Hazeldene. "It's poisonous!"

"Rot!" exclaimed Russell, as the other judges hesitated to taste. "It's a ripping pudding, and I made it with my own hands from a recipe my mother sent me from home! If you say my pudding's poisonous, I'll jolly well punch your head, Vaseline!"

"Taste it yourself!" yelled Hazeldene.

"Of course I'll taste it!"

And Russell defiantly shoved a goodly quantity of the pudding into his mouth, and closed his jaws on it.

"Gr-r-r-r!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Bob Cherry.

"Isn't it nice?"

"Gr-r-r-r!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" "Gr-r-r-r!" Where's that Chinoo? I'll scalp him!"

Wun Lung was squirming towards the door. Russell rushed towards the Celestial. Harry Wharton caught him by the shoulder and pulled him back.

"Hold on, Russell—"

"Lemme go! Gr-r-r!"

"Hold on! What's Wun Lung got to do with it?"

"He put in the Worcester sauce, after all!"

And Russell broke loose and sprang after the Chinoo. Wun Lung went scudding down the passage, his pigtail flying behind, and Russell scudded after him, bent on summary vengeance.

The study rang with laughter.

"Worcester sauce!" gasped Bob Cherry. "Oh, my only hat! Worcester sauce—and about a gallon of it to judge by the taste!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The juniors were still shrieking over it when Russell returned, his looks showing that he had not succeeded in catching the elusive Celestial. His expression evoked a renewed yell of laughter.

"But I say, you fellows," squeaked Billy Bunter, "the puddings were all rotten—who takes the prize?"

"Yes, there's the prize," said Ogilvy. "The puddings were all too bad for the prize to be awarded, and I suggest that the cash be divided equally among the board of judges, to reward them for their trouble and for being nearly poisoned by the Christmas puddings."

This was unanimously agreed to by the judges, but there was a yell of dissent from everybody else in the study. It was Harry Wharton who found a solution to the difficulty.

"As the prize cannot be awarded in the circumstances," he said, "I suggest expending it in some of Mrs. Mimble's Christmas puddings, so that we shan't miss the feed, after all."

"And I second the motion!" exclaimed Bunter promptly. "I say, you fellows, I never heard Wharton say a more sensible thing in his life!"

And Harry Wharton's suggestion was adopted without a dissenting voice. The great Christmas pudding competition was over, and the Christmas puddings were quietly buried in the garden.

(The chums of Greyfriars won't be with us next week, but the following Wednesday, there will be a sparkling story of their Christmas holiday adventures. Don't miss it.)

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