

GREAT YARNS OF ST. JIM'S and GREYFRIARS!

THIS WEEK'S BEST
SCHOOL STORIES!

THE ARTFUL DODGER!

By Martin Clifford.

THE GREYFRIARS SAILORS!

By Frank Richards.

And MANY OTHER STAR
ATTRACTIONS!

The GEM 2^D



**BAGGY'S
HAD
ENOUGH!**



HOW'S YOUR LUCK THIS WEEK?

Read what the stars foretell,
by PROFESSOR ZARRO.

YOUR future is foretold by the stars! What do they suggest for you during the coming week?

Here is a horoscope for all readers, specially prepared for the GEM, covering the period Wednesday, February 16th to February 22nd. Look for your horoscope in the section in which your birthday falls.

January 21st to February 19th.—A week for making changes. Try to get away from everyday routine—strike out into new studies, sports, and hobbies. Monday and Tuesday should bring meetings with new friends or acquaintances. Friday is your best day, especially favourable in anything where money is concerned. Sunday brings the unexpected—and there are indications that it may be a surprise invitation.

February 20th to March 21st.—When this coming week is ended, you will be able to look back on it with a feeling of "something attempted, something done." There are signs that you will be called on to put forth special efforts in connection with your work on Thursday or Friday. Mid-week brings a chance to help a friend out of a difficulty; don't fall him. Monday should produce a surprise present, but it is unlikely to be in the form of money.

March 22nd to April 20th.—Rather a muddled week, this, though your affairs will sort themselves out towards the end. After the week-end, make sure to assert yourself, for there are tendencies that you may be "put upon" by others. Family life plays a big part in your concerns during the next seven days, but this influence of relatives will be all to the good and will bring much happiness. Entertainments, rather than sport, form the most pleasant recreations in your spare time.

April 21st to May 21st.—I don't think I've ever seen such wonderful indications for achievement in sport as you Taurans are promised by the stars this week. You should score all the goals, win all the tiddley-winks, and beat all comers in whatever games you play! Travel is indicated for the week-end, so perhaps it would be as well to overhaul your bike or start saving up for your fares. Money, unfortunately, is likely to be scarce—but, as the GEM office-boy would say, it always bloomin' well is!

May 22nd to June 21st.—You have a chance this week to take on a fuller and more interesting life. You will meet people who will be grand friends if you make the first advances. There are signs, however, that you may find trouble through someone "sneaking" on you! Teachers and employers show unexpected interest in you, and will offer help and useful advice.

June 22nd to July 23rd.—Don't plan ahead this week,

because every day will tend to bring changes and upset. Sunday is a danger day, with events turning out amiss if you try to achieve anything ambitious. Avoid petty quarrels; they may grow into bigger ones. Monday, however, makes up for everything in your week; you will find it brings unexpected good luck in everything you do.

July 24th to August 23rd.—To-day—Wednesday—you may be surprised by an unexpected good turn from someone you had not thought friendly towards you. After to-day, the keynote of the week is adventure. Not the full-blooded kind, but unexpected incidents occurring in the course of your everyday life. Outdoor occupations this week are more favoured than indoor ones.

August 24th to September 23rd.—A chance of earning extra pocket-money will be given you soon, but it may not be an obvious one, so keep alert. Saturday is an interesting day, especially favourable to anything where your friends join in with you. At work or in school, hard work brings worthwhile results. Plenty of signs that hobbies will prosper, so keep your eyes open for that "one-in-a-million bargain," you stamp-collectors!

September 24th to October 23rd.—Japers come into their own this week, and there are lively times ahead for all you Librans, as people born in this period are called. Quick wits will be needed during the next seven days, but clumsiness may lead to trouble. Let that be a warning to the George Grundy and Horace Coker clan! Tuesday brings a meeting with old friends, and is in every way your best day this week.

October 24th to November 22nd.—There's danger in not minding your own business this week, even though you may feel compelled to interfere in other people's affairs. You will be surprised by the amount of money you have to spend; it will probably be augmented by a present. Friday will prove a grand day for doing things you have been putting off lately, or for finishing odd jobs.

November 23rd to December 22nd.—Don't grumble if things seem to be going wrong at the start of the week; the end will make up for everything. Progress at work or in school, together with an old problem solved. The week-end holiday will bring a memorably enjoyable time.

December 23rd to January 20th.—A pleasant week and a busy one; you will never find time lying idle, and therefore won't be bored. Saturday has the best possibilities, but be active. Playing footer, for instance, will bring much more pleasure than watching a game. Writing letters brings good results

BIRTHDAY INDICATIONS.

WEDNESDAY, February 16th.—A year of big achievements mixed up with minor difficulties lies ahead of you. Friendships mean more than ever; jealousies may interrupt holiday plans. May is the best month.

THURSDAY, February 17th.—You have got quick wits, which will play a big part in your affairs this year. For those at work, promotion; in school, prizes will be won. A thoroughly successful year.

FRIDAY, February 18th.—Round about Easter time, you "strike it rich"! Not necessarily money, but getting something you've always wanted. Steady progress is indicated. In sport, a good period.

SATURDAY, February 19th.—You make your own difficulties this year, but, as a compensation, you can easily unmake them without aid from others.

Money prospects bright. August is a very lucky month.

SUNDAY, February 20th.—Setbacks in the next month or two will be put right later. Possibility that slight illness may upset plans. A relative or close friend will point the way to a big success later in the year.

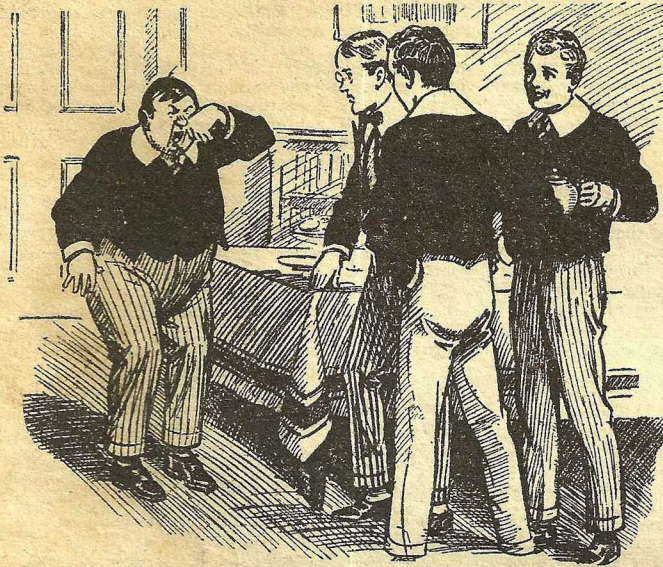
MONDAY, February 21st.—Increased responsibilities are indicated, but you will enjoy them. Money problems will be solved during the coming year. These next few spring months see you shining at sports.

TUESDAY, February 22nd.—A very successful year is promised, though the change for the better will start in a small, almost unnoticeable way. Change of home, work, or school indicated. Lonely folk find loyal friends.

WHEN THE FOURTH AT ST. JIM'S BECAME A FORM OF SWOTS—TO
ESCAPE A HEAD'S FLOGGING!

The ARTFUL DODGER

By
**MARTIN
CLIFFORD.**



"Boo-hoo!" said Baggy tearfully. "My father's been run down by a motor-car—terrible fatality. I've just had a letter from him." "You've got a letter from your father telling you that he's been killed?" exclaimed Blake. "Yes," said Baggy. "I—I mean——"

CHAPTER 1.

The Head Comes Down Heavy!

"THE Head!"

A whisper of alarm ran through the St. Jim's Fourth.

Morning classes were in progress at St. Jim's, when the door of the Fourth Form Room opened, and the majestic figure of the Head was framed in the doorway.

Mr. Lathom, the master of the Fourth, gave the Head a blink over his spectacles and coughed.

Dr. Holmes advanced into the Form-room.

There was a kind and benevolent expression on his face. Judging by appearances, there was no cause for the alarm that had seized upon the whole of the Fourth Form at the sudden appearance of their headmaster.

Nevertheless, the Fourth were dismayed.

There was no cane under the headmaster's arm; no frown upon his august brow. This sudden visit did not mean a Head's licking for any member of Mr. Lathom's class. But the juniors knew what it did mean.

Really, it was worse than that.

It was one of the visits of inspection and examination which the headmaster of St. Jim's occasionally made to the Form-rooms. Only occasionally; but on each occasion the visit brought

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*A flogging is the promised "reward" for the boy who fails in the Head's special Latin exam—and the fat and fatuous Baggy Trimble can be sure of his "prize" in advance . . . unless he can dodge the exam!*  
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dismay in the Form-room honoured by the great man's visit.

For these visits were made without warning beforehand; there was no chance of getting ready for them.

Only by constant and steady attention to school work could a fellow hope to face the Head on such occasions without the prospect of trouble.

Constant and steady attention to school work was a very praiseworthy and desirable thing, as any St. Jim's man would have admitted freely. But it was rather infrequent at St. Jim's.

Certainly, there were "swots" in the school who could have faced a Board of Examiners at a moment's notice, and come through the ordeal with flying colours.

But they were few.

Other fellows—just ordinary fellows—would have preferred to know when the Head was coming. Then they could have mugged up sufficient knowledge, for the occasion, to bring a pleased smile to his face. But the Head, no doubt, was "wide" to that, so to speak. He chose to make these little calls by surprise.

"Good-morning, Mr. Lathom!" said the Head pleasantly.

"Er—good-morning, sir!" said the Form-master.

Very likely Mr. Lathom was no better pleased than his pupils. No Form-master ever really liked a headmaster "butting" into his Form-room. Dr. Holmes, probably, had not liked it in his own early days as a Form-master. But in a Form-master's career, as in every other, there were

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certain happenings that are not liked, but have to be tolerated.

So Mr. Lathom suppressed his personal feelings, whatever they were, and looked as pleased as he could.

"Good-morning, my boys!"

"Good-morning, sir!" answered the Fourth Form in tones of enthusiastic welcome.

Their tones did not express their feelings.

But even Trimble, the most obtuse fellow in the Form, could understand that it was no use pulling a long face when the Head butted in. Even Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, who was very particular upon such points, admitted that a little "gammon" was allowable at such a time. It was only common sense to placate the Head at the kick-off, so to speak.

"And how are we going on?" asked the Head pleasantly.

He did not expect any answer to that question.

It was merely the usual formula.

The Fourth Form were droning through Virgil, and Mr. Lathom, a very easy-going gentleman, was taking things easily, as he generally did.

Fellows who had forgotten their prep the previous evening tried hard not to catch his eye—and generally succeeded.

Fellows who could not escape construe did their best, and if their construe was good, they received commendation; if it was bad, as it often was, a few words of censure.

The Fourth, indeed, sometimes wondered why a cane lay on Mr. Lathom's desk—it was so seldom used.

The worst happening, in the case of the worst construe, was a hundred lines; and Mr. Lathom did not always remember to ask for the lines he had imposed.

So life was taken rather easily in the St. Jim's Fourth, as a rule.

But with the Head matters were different. These visits of inspection were made to ascertain the progress of the St. Jim's fellows, and the Head, with all his kindly benevolence, was likely to be short and sharp with fellows who were not up to the mark.

Baggy Trimble made himself as small as possible. It was three or four days since Baggy had done any prep at all, and he had accumulated a quantity of lines which he hoped Mr. Lathom had forgotten. If the Head asked him to display his knowledge of the great Latin poet, P. Virgilius Maro, the prospect was appalling.

But Trimble was by no means the only uneasy fellow, though doubtless the most uneasy.

Blake, Herries, Digby, and D'Arcy were only too conscious of the fact that they had spent the time that should have been devoted to prep, the evening before, in boxing with Figgins & Co. of the New House.

Lumley-Lumley remembered that he had been in Tom Merry's study—instead of working in his own. Mulvancy minor recalled—with regret—that he had been fighting Bates of the Fourth instead of preparing Virgil. And Julian and Kerruish and Reilly had been ragging in a Shell study.

The Head had really chosen an unlucky time to call on the Fourth. It is true that his calls always came at unlucky times.

With a gracious word or two, the Head borrowed Mr. Lathom's book, and proceeded to take the class instead of the Form-master. Mr. Lathom faded into the background, looking as pleasant as he could in the circumstances.

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"Now, where are we?" said the Head in the same pleasant way.

He glanced at Mr. Lathom's book, and he glanced at the class.

"Blake!"

"Yes, sir!" murmured Jack Blake; and all the rest of the Fourth breathed more freely.

"You will begin, Blake, at 'conticure omnes,'" said the Head agreeably.

Blake began, and stumbled. After the boxing match with Figgins & Co. Blake had taken a hasty glance at the section of the Æneid which ought to have been prepared. That hasty glance might have seen him through—with Mr. Lathom. He quickly discovered that it would not see him through with Dr. Holmes.

"That will do," said the Head curtly when Blake floundered. "D'Arcy, you may go on."

"Bai Jove!"

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy did his best. His best was not, to judge by the Head's expression, very good.

"Figgins!"

Figgins was worse than either Blake or Gussy.

The Head's benevolent face was growing grimmer; the Fourth Form growing more and more apprehensive. Mr. Lathom in the background frowned and coloured. He would have liked his class to make a good show before the Head. So far, his class had made anything but a good show.

"Trimble!"

"Oh dear!" gasped Baggy Trimble.

In his dismay, the fat Baggy uttered that ejaculation quite aloud, and the juniors could see that the Head heard it.

"Trimble!" repeated the Head in a deep voice.

"Oh, yes, sir!" stammered Baggy.

"Go on from 'infandum, regina!'"

Baggy Trimble blinked at him helplessly. Even Baggy remembered something of his lessons, and had a vague idea that regina was a queen. But what did "infandum" mean? Was it an infant, by any chance? Baggy hoped that it was, as he made the plunge.

"The—infant of the queen—" stammered Trimble.

The look on the headmaster's face stopped him.

Baggy was still blissfully ignorant of the meaning of "infandum." But he could see now that it did not mean an infant.

A pin might almost have been heard to drop in the Fourth Form Room. The juniors waited with bated breath.

"Trimble!" said the Head at last.

"Oh dear! I mean, yes, sir," groaned Baggy.

"Is—is— isn't that right, sir?"

"Are you serious, Trimble?"

"Eh! Oh! Yes, sir!" Undoubtedly Trimble looked serious—very serious indeed. It was a serious moment!

"You are not attempting to play off a foolish jest on your headmaster, Trimble?" thundered Dr. Holmes.

Trimble quaked.

"Oh, sir! No, sir!"

Baggy looked in anything but a jesting mood.

"Then you are ignorant, Trimble, of the meaning of so common a word as 'infandum!'" exclaimed the Head.

"'Infandum,' sir!" gasped Trimble. "It's 'infandum!'" Baggy was losing his head a little.

Dr. Holmes' expression was really terrific now.

"Trimble! Are you absolutely ignorant of Latin grammar?" he boomed.

"Yes, sir—I—I mean, no, sir."

"Are you not aware that the nominative case is 'infandus,' and the accusative case 'infandum'?"

"Oh! No—yes! Quite so, sir! Oh, yes!"

"Are you not aware that the word should be translated 'terrible,' or 'fearful,' or 'unspeakable'?"

"Yes, sir, now you've told me—I—I mean—yes, sir! Oh, yes!"

Dr. Holmes was not looking at all benevolent now. He gave Trimble a grim look, and the Fourth Form gave him grim looks also. Evidently the Head was disposed to judge the Fourth by Trimble as a sample; and Trimble was really not a fair sample. Nobody else in the Form, certainly, would have dreamed of perpetrating a construe like Trimble's. It was unfortunate that the Head had picked on Trimble so early.

"S-s-s-hall I go on, sir?" groaned Baggy.

"You need not go on, Trimble."

"Oh! Thank you, sir!"

"It is futile for you to continue, Trimble, when you are obviously in a state of hopeless ignorance."

"Oh, sir!"

"I am surprised at this," said the Head. "I am shocked!"

And from that point the Head went on, taking every fellow in the Form in turn, and putting him through his paces. His intention had not been quite so wholesale when he had entered; but Trimble had done it. Now the Head was in a grim and searching mood, and not a man escaped. Some of the fellows handed out quite a good construe—most of them stumbled—some of them were very bad, though nowhere near Trimble's limit. First lesson should have been over—but the Head carried on through the time belonging to second lesson—Mr. Lathom waiting in dignified silence.

It was a ghastly experience for the Fourth.

It was a cold day, but the Fourth Form were perspiring by the time the Head was through.

It was not till the end of the time that should have been devoted to second lesson, that Dr. Holmes stopped. He really could not carry on any longer, as morning break came next.

He closed Mr. Lathom's book with a sounding snap.

"Mr. Lathom!" he said.

"Sir!"

"I cannot say that I am satisfied with this class."

"Indeed, sir!"

"I shall not encroach upon your authority in your Form-room, Mr. Lathom, by inflicting any punishments," said the Head.

The Fourth Form were glad to hear that, at all events.

"But I must take note of the remarkable backwardness of the class," said the Head. "I must take measures. I am afraid that this Form is very slack."

He turned to the class again.

"Boys! I am deeply disappointed with you. I am afraid that many of you have taken a thoughtless advantage of your Form-master's kindness of disposition, and have failed to benefit by his instruction as you should have done. The ignorance of the Fourth Form is appalling!"

"Oh, my hat!" murmured Figgins.

"Bai Jove!"

"Appalling!" repeated the Head, in a deep voice. "There must be a change—a great change. I shall appoint a special examination of the Fourth Form in Latin grammar. It will take

place on Saturday, and I shall conduct it personally. You have a week in which to prepare for this special examination. Any boy who fails to obtain a certain proportion of marks will be flogged!"

"Oh!"

And the Head sailed majestically from the Form-room.

The juniors gasped as he went.

The Head had come down heavy this time.

Mr. Lathom dismissed his class for the morning interval, and the Fourth streamed out of the Form-room; but they did not pour into the quad with their usual cheery faces and merry voices. The Head had, so to speak, knocked the stuffing out of the Fourth, and they needed time to recover from the visitation of their headmaster.

CHAPTER 2.

Surprising!

TOM MERRY raised his eyebrows.

He was surprised.

Manners and Lowther, his chums in the Shell, shared his surprise.

Classes were over for the day, and the early dusk was thickening over St. Jim's. The Terrible Three of the Shell had walked down to the school



"It's all right, warden, I'm only playing with a few bricks."

Half-a-crown has been awarded to F. Merritt, 23, Rosebery Road, King's Avenue, London, S.W.2.

shop after Mr. Linton had dismissed the Shell, and they had returned to the School House with a parcel each. That was a sign, which those who saw might read, that there was to be a tea of unusual plenteousness in Study No. 10—in fact, a study spread.

Manners had had a remittance that day, and he had debated whether to expend the same on a new supply of films for his camera, or upon a study brew—and the matter had been put to the vote. Manners had voted for the films; Tom Merry and Monty Lowther solemnly voted for the study brew; and Manners had grinned and acquiesced, being in a minority. Hence the visit to the tuckshop, the three parcels, and the cheery expressions on three youthful faces. Naturally, on their way to their study, Tom Merry & Co. stopped at the door of Study No. 6 in the Fourth. On many an occasion, in hard times, they had found hospitality in Study No. 6; and now that Study No. 10 was a land flowing with milk and honey, they were ready to be hospitable in their turn. But as they looked into Study No. 6, in the Fourth Form passage, they met with the surprise of their lives.

Blake & Co. were at home. Tom knew that they were at home; but he did not know how he

would find them occupied. They might have been boxing, or they might have been reading, or doing lines, or they might have been doing crosswords, or they might have been having tea early, or they might have been talking football, or even ragging.

But they were doing none of these things.

They were seated round the study table, which was fairly stacked with books, all of a scholastic nature. They had thoughtful, studious expressions on their faces; and deep silence reigned. They did not even look up as the door opened and the three Shell fellows appeared there. It was close on tea-time, and the sight of the parcels might have been expected to evoke enthusiasm in any junior study. But it evoked no enthusiasm in Study No. 6. Blake & Co. must have known that the visitors were there. But they heeded them not.

Tom Merry stared at the four occupants of Study No. 6. He was not merely surprised, he was amazed.

Study No. 6 had never been celebrated for "swotting." All the fellows there kept their end up in class pretty well; but they thought much more of beating the New House at football than of winning any sort of scholastic distinctions. Once or twice one or another of them had gone in for a prize, and had swotted for a season. But such occasions were rare; and certainly the whole study had never been known to swot in concert before. Yet that, obviously, was what they were doing now. Blake, Herries, Digby, and D'Arcy were swotting Latin, and were so deeply engrossed in that remarkable and unusual task that they seemed perfectly indifferent to everything else in the wide world.

"Well, my hat!" said Tom Merry at last, breaking the silence.

Blake looked up at that. He waved a pen towards the doorway.

"Go away!"

"What?"

"Go away quietly."

"Yaas, wathah!" said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "Pway close the door gently aftah you, deah boys. You're intewwuptin' us."

"What's the name of this game?" inquired Monty Lowther.

"Hush!"

"Did you say 'hush'?" ejaculated Tom Merry.

"Yes. Bunk!"

"But what—"

"Good-bye!"

"It's tea-time—"

"Never mind tea," said Dig. "Just bunk!"

"But we were going—"

"You are going, you mean," said Herries.

"And, for goodness' sake, go!"

"We were going to ask you—"

"Good-bye!" said the four Fourth Formers together.

And Blake & Co. devoted their deep attention to Latin again, while the Terrible Three looked at one another in amazement.

"I suppose it's a rag of some sort?" said Tom Merry in wonder.

No answer came from Study No. 6; only a murmur from Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "Nocturnus, nocturna, nocturnum." Gussy was looking out words in the Latin dic.

"Pulling our leg. I suppose," said Manners, mystified.

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Monty Lowther winked at his chums and laid down in the passage the parcel he carried.

This sudden outbreak of swotting in Study No. 6 was, apparently, some sort of a weird jest. At all events, the Shell fellows could think of no other explanation. One good turn deserved another, and Monty Lowther was ready with a jest in his turn.

Tom and Manners understood, and laid down their parcels also. They entered the study together, and a swift stride brought them to the table. Before Blake & Co. knew what was happening the Shell fellows had grasped the end of the table and upended it.

Crash! Clatter! Smash! Bump!

Books and papers and inkpots and pens went to the floor of Study No. 6 in wild confusion.

Blake & Co. leapt to their feet.

"Bai Jove—"

"You silly asses!" roared Herries.

"You potty chumps!"

"You frightful wuffians!" roared Arthur Augustus. "You have wuined our work—our feahfully hard work!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The havoc was complete. Tom Merry, Manners, and Lowther backed to the door, chortling, as Blake & Co. turned on them furiously.

"Now tell us what the giddy jest is," said Tom Merry cheerily.

"You uttah ass—"

"Come along and tell us in our study," said Manners. "We've got a spread—"

"Here, keep off!" roared Tom, as the Fourth Formers made a rush.

"Kick them out!" yelled Blake.

"Yaas, wathah!"

"You potty chumps, out you go!"

"Hands off! My hat! I—I—" gasped the captain of the Shell. "Oh crumbs! Back up, you fellows!"

Study No. 6 were evidently wildly excited. For whatever mysterious reason they had been swotting, they were plainly enraged by the sudden interruption of the swot and the havoc wrought among their Latin papers. They rushed at the Terrible Three to hurl them forth.

There was a wild and whirling scene in Study No. 6 for a few minutes.

But four to three carried the day.

Manners went out first in a heap; and Tom Merry followed him; and then Monty Lowther flew out and sprawled across his two chums.

"Ow, ow!"

"Wow!"

"Ooooooooop!"

Slam!

The door of Study No. 6 closed on the sprawling Shell fellows, and the key turned in the lock. Blake & Co. were not risking reprisals. Tom Merry staggered to his feet.

"You cheeky Fourth Form fags!" he roared. "Come out, and we'll mop the passage up with you!"

"Weally, Tom Mewwy—"

"Shut up, Gussy!" came Blake's voice. "Don't waste time chatting with those Shellfish. Pile in!"

"Weally, Blake—"

"Don't wag your chin, old man—just work!"

Bang!

Lowther was on his feet, kicking at the door. Manners jumped up and added a smite with his knuckles.



Before the chums of Study No. 6 knew what was happening, Tom Merry & Co. grasped the table and upended it. Crash! Clatter! Bump! Books, papers, inkpots and pens went to the floor in wild confusion. "You silly asses!" roared Herries. "You potty chumps!" yelled Blake.

"Go away!" roared Blake.
 "Open this door, and we'll mop you up!" shouted Lowther.

"Pway run away and be quiet!"
 Bang! Thump!

The Terrible Three had called in at Study No. 6 with the most benevolent and hospitable intentions. Now they seemed to be thirsting for the blood of that celebrated study.

But a locked door was not to be argued with. The chums of the Shell had to give it up, after breathing a series of blood-curdling threats through the keyhole.

"Come on!" said Tom Merry, picking up his parcel. "We'll mop them up later. Let's ask somebody else to tea. I suppose they've all gone mad all of a sudden. Come on!"

And the Terrible Three, a little dusty and breathless, and greatly astonished and wrathful, went on down the passage to Study No. 5, with the intention of asking Reilly, Kerruish, Hammond, and Julian to the spread in the Shell, Study No. 6 having been drawn blank, as it were.

They arrived at Study No. 5, and Tom Merry tapped, and opened the door:

"You fellows—" he began.

Then he stopped in sheer amazement. Reilly, Kerruish, Hammond, and Julian were seated round the study table, their books before them, thoughtful expressions on their faces—swotting! As it had been in Study No. 6, so it was in Study No. 5—as if swotting was spreading through the Fourth Form like an outbreak of influenza.

CHAPTER 3. The Swots!

"DON'T come in!"
 Kerruish of the Fourth spoke politely, but firmly.

"Sure, and shut the door after you!" said Reilly.

"Are we dreaming this?" asked Tom Merry blankly.

"Sure, and we've got no time to talk!" said Reilly.

"Look here, what does it all mean?" demanded Tom Merry. "We found Study No. 6 at this and upended their table. Now we find you fellows swotting. Has all the Fourth gone potty?"

Hammond chuckled.

"We came to ask you fellows to tea," added Tom.

"Thanks no end; but we're not stopping for tea," said Kerruish. "A snack will see us through."

"But what does it all mean?" exclaimed Manners.

"Listen, and I will tell you," said Kerruish. "The ignorance of the Fourth is appalling."

"Eh?"

"I had never noticed it before, but the Head says so," explained Kerruish. "Special exam in Latin for all the Fourth next Saturday. Fellows who don't bag enough marks to see them clear will bag marks of a different kind—from the Head's birch. If we don't go for Virgil, the

Head will go for us. We're choosing the lesser of two evils. The Fourth have had the fright of their lives. I believe even Trimble's working."

"Great Scott!"

"The Head came in to-day," explained Julian. "He put us through our paces, and wasn't pleased. There's to be a special Latin paper on Saturday. See?"

"And floggings handed out to the fellows who don't turn in a good paper," said Reilly. "So we're swotting at it. You fellows run away and play."

Tom Merry & Co grinned.

They understood now the sudden and inexplicable outbreak of swotting in the Fourth Form passage. A special Latin exam, with a flogging promised to every fellow who failed to pass muster, was enough to make the slackest fellow in the Fourth realise that it was time to pull up his socks, so to speak, and grind a little. No doubt, with that dreadful prospect in view, even Baggy Trimble was working. Evidently the Fourth had made up their minds to lose no time.

"You'll find swotting going on in every study in the Fourth, I think," said Julian. "For the present we're a Form of swots. Farewell!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Tom Merry & Co left Study No. 5, grinning.

The Head's visitation, and the alarming prospect before them, had made the Fourth take thought, and swotting was the order of the day. But the Shell fellows doubted very much whether it would last for long. But, curious to see how the rest of the Form were taking it, the Terrible Three looked into some of the other studies. In all of them they found studious youths poring over books, or yawning dolorously over them.

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Quite interested to see whether Baggy Trimble, the fattest and slackest and laziest fellow at St. Jim's, was working, they looked into Study No. 9 in the Fourth. Lumley-Lumley, Levison, Mellish, and Trimble sat round the study table, with their books before them. Lumley-Lumley was working quietly, Mellish and Levison with vicious looks on their faces, and Baggy Trimble was taking a little rest. He was speaking as the Shell fellows came into Study No. 9.

"What about tea?"

"Nothing about tea, I guess," said Lumley-Lumley. "I'm going to put in another solid hour, and then have a snack."

"It's all your fault, Trimble!" said Mellish savagely. "It was your rotten con that made the Beak so waxy."

"I guess your con was pretty rotten, too," remarked Lumley. "There's a pair of you."

"Oh rats!" snarled Mellish.

"It's you two for the licking, if you don't pull up your socks," grinned Lumley. "Especially Trimble!"

"Well, I'm swotting, ain't I?" groaned Baggy. "I've been at it hard. I'm hungry now."

"Go it harder," said Lumley. "You haven't a minute to lose before Saturday. Not a second. The 'infants of the queen' won't go down in the exam, you know."

"The which?" inquired Monty Lowther, from the doorway.

Lumley glanced round, with a smile.

"Don't interrupt the work," he said.

"They've told us that in every study in the Fourth," said Tom Merry, laughing. "Never saw such a hard-working Form. Mr. Lathom ought to be pleased if he could see you now."

"I guess he ought to be—if it lasts. Trimble got the Head's rag out. He translated 'infandum regina' as 'the infants of the queen'—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the Terrible Three.

"Look here, you know—" growled Baggy Trimble.

"I guess we're all in the soup," said Lumley. "You chaps run away and play while industrious fellows are working."

"You haven't time to come to tea in our study?" grinned the captain of the Shell.

"No. Thanks all the same!"

Baggy Trimble jumped up.

"Thanks, old fellow, I'll come!" he said.

"Eh?"

"I'm ready," said Trimble.

"Nobody asked you, sir, she said!" sang Monty Lowther.

"Oh, take him along and feed him!" said Lumley. "A chap can't work with Trimble in the study grousing about grub."

"All right. Come on, Trimble!"

And Baggy Trimble—trying to forget the dismal prospect before him if he did not turn in a good Latin paper on Saturday—accompanied the Terrible Three to Study No. 10 in the Shell. There the three parcels were unpacked, and a handsome spread brought a cheery grin to the fat face of Baggy.

CHAPTER 4.

Tom Merry Does Not Play Up!

BAGGY TRIMBLE leaned back in his chair and smiled serenely.

It had been a first-class spread—more than enough even for Baggy Trimble. Baggy, who had been in the lowest spirits since the Head's visit to

the Form-room that morning, smiled again. Life once more seemed to be worth living.

"Jolly good, you fellows!" said Trimble.

The spread was over, but Trimble showed no hurry to depart. Tom Merry, Manners, and Lowther politely waited for him to clear. As a matter of absolute fact, they did not enjoy the company of Trimble of the Fourth—nobody did, excepting Baggy himself. Having fed him and tolerated his society during the feed, the chums of the Shell considered that they had done more than any reasonable fellow could have expected of them, and now they only desired to see the last of the fat junior.

But Trimble sat himself comfortably, obviously with no intention of taking his departure yet awhile.

"I've been thinking, you fellows," he said.

"You have?" inquired Manners, in surprise.

"Yes. About that exam, you know," said Trimble. "I want you to help me a bit, Tom Merry. As junior captain of the House, you know, it's up to you to hand out help and advice and all that."

"My hat! I'm not taking on the job of a Latin tutor, though," said Tom Merry. "Better ask your Form-master to give you a little extra toot, if you feel that you need it."

"I don't mean that. You see, I'm rather in a scrape," said Trimble. "I generally put in enough work to keep old Lathom quiet. That's all that can be expected of a chap. Of course, there's always danger of getting landed, but a fellow has to take some risks. Now I've got landed through the Head butting in. My own opinion is that the Head would do much better to stick to the Sixth; but, of course, I can't tell him that."

"No; I think I shouldn't," agreed Tom.

"All the fellows have had a scare, and they're taking up swotting all of a sudden, as if they loved it," said Trimble. "Of course, it won't last. I started on the same tack, and I find that I've got an awful lot of leeway to make up. It means grinding every blessed minute all through the week, if I'm not to stick at the bottom of the list on Saturday and bag a flogging. That's not good enough."

"You could do with a little more knowledge," suggested Lowther. "What you know at present would go into a thimble, and still leave room enough for a finger."

Trimble did not heed that remark. The pursuit of knowledge never had appealed to Baggy.

"I've been thinking," he repeated. "I've got rather more brains than most of the chaps in my Form, you know. They think that the only way to scrape through on Saturday is to grind at Latin, and turn in a good paper. But there's more ways of killing a cat than choking it with cream, you know. I've thought of something better. And that's where I want your help, Tommy. After all, we're pals, aren't we?"

"Are we?" ejaculated Tom, in astonishment.

"My idea is this," pursued Trimble. "All the Fourth have got to turn up for the special exam on Saturday. Not a fellow seems to have thought of working a dodge for cutting the exam. That's my idea."

Tom Merry stared at the fat Fourth Former.

"Cut it out, Fatty!" he said. "The Head means business. You'll have to turn up with the rest, of course."

"Not if I get up a really good dodge," urged Trimble. "That's where you can help me, as junior captain. I've got to keep away from the

exam somehow. You see, it's not a regular exam—only a special Head's exam for reporting progress. Any fellow who was ill, for instance, would miss it and get clear."

"But you're not ill."

"That's a last resource, of course," said Trimble. "Being ill means going into sanny. I don't like sanny. The exam's fixed for Saturday afternoon. Two hours taken out of a half-holiday, you know. Rather thick—what? Now, suppose you had a big football fixture on Saturday?"

"We haven't," said Tom.

"You're playing Greyfriars next week."

"Next week," assented Tom.

"Well, you could write to Greyfriars and beg them to alter the date, and make it this Saturday instead. You could do that for a very special reason."

"I suppose I could," said Tom; "but I'm blessed if I see how that would help you in an exam, if I did it!"

"If!" murmured Lowther, regarding the fat junior with great interest.

Baggy's fat intellect worked in mysterious ways,



"Don't bother with him, Snodgrass—we're only after butterflies."

Half-a-crown has been awarded to M. Koster, 21, Nairne Grove, Sunray Avenue, Herne Hill, London, S.E. 24.

its wonders to perform, and evidently some stunning idea was evolving in his podgy brain.

"Well, then," continued Baggy, "take it that you've got the Greyfriars fixture for this Saturday. That puts you in a hole, with a lot of your men kept away by a special exam. Half the junior eleven are in the Fourth, you know. Well, that can't be helped. You'd have to play without Blake or D'Arcy or Figgins or Fatty Wynn. But if you made a particular request for one special fellow to be let off, because you couldn't really play without him, I'm sure the Head would listen to reason. He's very particular about never interfering with the games fixtures if he can help it, you know."

"I know," assented Tom. "The exam has been fixed for this Saturday because there's no school fixture on that date. The Head knows that."

"But the date can be altered to suit, as I've explained," said Trimble. "And you can put me down to play."

"You!" yelled Tom Merry.

"That's it."

"You! But you can't play football!" ejaculated the captain of the Shell, staring blankly at Baggy.

"Well, I play a fairly good game," said Baggy. "That will be all right. Besides, the Head knows about our fixtures; but he doesn't know about every fellow's football form, of course. If you

explained to him that the Greyfriars match had to be played this Saturday, and that you simply dared not face them without me in the team, I know jolly well the Head would let me off the exam."

"My only hat!"

"See the idea?" asked Trimble complacently. "Of course, the Head wouldn't let a lot of fellows off. You'd have to play without Blake and Figgins and Wynn and D'Arcy and Kerr and Redfern, but you'd have me."

"You!" spluttered Tom Merry.

"The Head would let off one chap—that stands to reason. You could pitch it to him very strong about what a splendid footballer I am—a budding International, and all that. Pile it on thick, you know. That would see me clear."

The Terrible Three gazed at Trimble.

Evidently that fat and fatuous youth was greatly taken with the idea, and seemed to see no reason why Tom Merry should not play up. Missing the Latin exam was an important point to Trimble—in fact, it was, from his point of view, the only thing that mattered. All other considerations were insignificant in comparison.

"So I'm to go to the Head and pitch him a string of lies," said Tom Merry, in a gasping voice. "Then I'm to play Greyfriars with some of my best men left out, and a fat dud in their place, and bag a licking at football. And I'm to do all that to save you from the trouble of putting in a little work!"

"Well, as a pal, you know——"

"I can see myself doing it!" gasped Tom.

"You agree?" asked Trimble.

"Oh, my hat! Not quite!"

"I don't think you ought to be selfish," said Trimble, blinking at him. "I'm in a scrape, and a football match doesn't matter much, does it? I mean, not in comparison with something really important."

"Such as helping a fat slacker to dodge work," chuckled Lowther.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Tom Merry rose to his feet, and opened the study door. It really was hardly worth while to be angry with a fatuous ass like Baggy Trimble; but Tom had had enough of that fascinating youth.

"Good-bye, Trimble!" he said.

"But I haven't finished yet——"

"You have," said Tom. "Travel!"

"Look here, you know——"

Tom Merry took hold of the back of Trimble's chair. Baggy Trimble was deposited on the carpet with a bump.

"Ow!" roared the fat Fourth Former.

"Line up, you fellows, and all kick together!" said Tom Merry. "When I say three, let him have it!"

"What-ho!"

"I—I say——" gasped Trimble.

"One!" counted Tom.

"I—I—I say, look here——"

"Two!"

Baggy Trimble did not wait for "three." He squirmed to the doorway, and bolted out of the study like a fat rabbit. Tom Merry chuckled, and banged the study door after him.

Baggy drifted disconsolately back to Study No. 9. Evidently, that great idea was not going to work; for reasons inexplicable to Baggy. Tom Merry did not intend to rescue him from the scrape into which his laziness had landed

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him, at the trifling cost of telling a bushel of untruths, and throwing away a football match. Baggy Trimble rolled dismally back to his study, and sat down glumly to Latin again. Work was the only way out of the scrape—unless he could think of some more practicable dodge.

But after a little more work, Baggy's thoughts wandered from Latin. If work—steady and unremitting swotting—was the only way to escape a flogging, Baggy was booked for the flogging. Indeed, of the two, it seemed almost preferable to Baggy.

And instead of swotting, as the other fellows in the Fourth were doing, Baggy gave up his attention to the consideration of ways and means for dodging the special exam. That was the only way—at least, it was the only way that appealed to Trimble. So while the rest of the Fourth swotted Latin, Baggy's fat intellect worked at full pressure in quite another direction.

CHAPTER 5.

Baggy the Footballer!

TOM MERRY arrived on Little Side the following afternoon with a football under his arm, and a smile on his face.

He had wondered how many of the Fourth would turn up for games practice that afternoon.

As it was not a compulsory day, any fellow who wanted to cut the practice was at liberty to cut it. But all the footballing fellows were certain to turn up as a rule. The Greyfriars match came along the following week and fellows who were to play in that match wanted to keep themselves up to the mark; and fellows who wanted to get a chance of wedging into the eleven were still more likely to show up in games practice, and endeavour to impress the junior captain with their quality. So, in normal conditions, Little Side should have been crowded when Tom Merry arrived there with juniors of both Houses.

But the outbreak of "swotting" was evidently still gripping the Fourth. Tom had wondered how many of that Form would turn up, and a glance showed him that five or six made the total. The rest, apparently, were putting in the half-holiday at deep study.

Of all the Fourth, only Blake, Herries, and D'Arcy represented the School House, and Figgins and Kerr the New House at this especial games practice.

Whereat Tom Merry smiled.

There was a swarm of the Shell present, and the few members of the Fourth were almost lost among them.

"Fatty Wynn not coming down?" asked Tom, with a nod to Figgins and Kerr.

Figgins shook his head.

"No; he will be all right to keep goal next week, you know—he's always in great form. If he could spout Latin as well as he keeps goal, he would be all right on Saturday, too."

"You feel all right for Saturday?" grinned Tom.

"Me! Not exactly," said Figgins. "But I'm chancing it rather than cutting games practice. Kerr's all right, anyhow, and he's tutoring Fatty and me in the study at odd times. Blessed if I know why the Head dropped on the Fourth instead of the Shell yesterday. I dare say the ignorance of the Shell is appalling, too, if they're taken by surprise."

"Our turn will come," said Tom, laughing. "So you're chancing it, too, Blake?"

Jack Blake nodded.

"I think I shall pull through on Saturday," he said. "I had a deep dig into the rubbish yesterday, blow it! Anyhow, I'm not swotting on a half-holiday."

"Hear, hear!" said Herries.

"Wathah not," said Arthur Augustus.

"Hallo! Here comes another!" exclaimed Monty Lowther.

"Bai Jove! Twimble!"

"Trimble—in footer rig!" exclaimed Blake. "It isn't compulsory to-day. What does Trimble want here?"

"Goodness knows!" said Tom Merry.

The juniors stared at the fat Baggy in surprise. Never, in the memory of the oldest inhabitant, had Baggy Trimble been seen at games practice, excepting on days when it was compulsory—and not always then, for Baggy was full of wonderful dodges and excuses on such occasions. And now—when there was no compulsion to come, and there was a powerful reason for staying away—here was Trimble, in football garb, looking as if he were on the point of bursting through his shorts and jersey, as usual, when he was garbed for Soccer. Evidently Baggy Trimble meant to join in the games practice. Why, was a deep mystery to every fellow on the ground.

"Well, here we are, Tom Merry!" puffed Baggy, as he came up. "Not late, I hope. Fine day for footer—what?"

"What do you want here, Baggy?" asked Tom Merry, quite puzzled.

"Eh? Games practice," said Baggy.

"But it's not a compulsory day."

"I know that."

"Then what do you mean?" demanded Tom.

"I mean what I say. I'm here for games practice, and I'm jolly well not going to stand out, either, I can tell you!" said Baggy defiantly.

"I'm awfully keen on football—"

"Since when?" yelled Manners.

"Since the Head told us—I-I mean—I-I've always been keen on footer!" stammered Trimble. "I've been kept out of games by jealousy, and all that. If you want a good man for the Greyfriars match next week, I'm willing to play. You'll see what I can do to-day, if you give me a chance."

Tom Merry laughed.

"If you're really keen, Trimble, I'm glad to hear it," he said. "But have you forgotten about getting ready for Saturday?"

"Eh? That's what I'm doing."

"What?" exclaimed Tom. "The Head isn't going to examine you in Soccer on Saturday, is he?"

"I—I mean—"

"Well, what do you mean?" demanded Tom, eyeing the fat junior in growing surprise.

"I—I mean—you see—I mean to say—" Trimble seemed rather confused. "I mean, a game of footer will pull me up, you know, and— and buck me up for— for study. Healthy mind in a healthy body, and all that, you know—see? Anyhow, I'm here for footer, and you can put that in your pipe and smoke it!"

"Right-ho! It will do you good, anyway," said Tom good-humouredly.

And when the juniors picked up sides, Baggy Trimble took his place in the ranks, evidently meaning business.

(Continued on next page.)

LAUGH THESE OFF!



—with Monty Lowther.

Hallo, Everybody!

"Our Films Are the Latest," advertises Wayland's smallest cinema. So late that last week they didn't arrive!

Story: "What do you do?" asked the actor of an acquaintance. "Oh, I'm a free-thinker," came the reply. "No, that is your belief. For instance, I am a comedian." "No, that is your belief!"

Digby has bought a lot of flower catalogues. He had better be careful he is not led up the garden!

Gore tells me that on a holiday tour he was struck by the low beams in some old country houses. The inmates, of course, have learned to duck.

Story: Smith was always late to work, and the foreman was fed up with him. "Do you know what time we start work here, Smith?" he demanded. "No," replied Smith. "You've always started when I come!"

"Golf Caddy Walks Twenty-Five Miles Daily." Carrying things too far.

Reilly asks if rowing is good for you. Our-fully good!

"Ski-er touches 200 m.p.h.," runs a headline. Ski-whizz!

They say postal orders are going to be made up into books. Pratt, who is hard up just now, hopes they will start a lending library.

Story: A shop in Wayland had a chalked notice: "Fresh Fish Sold Here." Kerr spoke to the shopkeeper. "You don't sell fish that aren't fresh, do you?" "Of course not." "Then you can wipe out the word 'Fresh.' You're not selling them anywhere else?" "Of course not." "Then wipe out 'Here.' That leaves us 'Fish Sold.' You're not giving them away?" "Of course not." "Then wipe out 'Sold.' That leaves us with 'Fish.' Well, there's no need to advertise that!" said Kerr, sniffing.

Useful hint: To stop dry rot, turn off the wireless set.

Story: "Do you take copies of your MSS?" a friend asked the author. "Quite unnecessary," replied the author. "I always get the originals back!"

Believe it or not: "This oak tree is said to be six hundred years old," said the Head to a friend, an antique dealer, as they stood in the quad. "H'm!" grunted the friend. "Probably a fake!"

Oak-ey doak, chaps!

Baggy's football was about on a par with his Latin and his other attainments.

His idea of the game was to make blind rushes and kick. And he never seemed to care whom he rushed over, or where his kicks landed. Seldom, if ever, did they land on the ball; but as every bullet has its billet, so Baggy's wild kicks generally found something to land on—a knee, an ankle, or something of the sort.

For which reason Trimble sometimes found himself "laid out" at games practice, on the infrequent occasions when he showed up there. Fellows did not seem to like Baggy barging into them, and kicking them on any spot that happened to be available.

In a pick-up game Baggy would spend a lot of time on his back, gazing at the heavens, and struggling to get his second wind. Unless a prefect or a master was in charge of the practice, he would crawl off at the earliest possible moment.

Now, as usual, he put in a good deal of sprawling and gasping; but for once he showed no disposition to crawl off. For once—if for once only—the fat slacker of the Fourth was determined to shine as a footballer, for some mysterious reason known only to himself.

And so it came about that Baggy charged recklessly, head down like a bull, into a struggling press of players, and disappeared among innumerable legs and feet, yelling

Three or four fellows stumbled over Baggy, and as they landed on him, they did not take any trouble to land lightly.

"Ow! Wow! Gerroff! Help!"

"Kick that fat idiot off the field!" roared Kangaroo of the Shell indignantly. "He's jolly well lamed me!"

"Bai Jove! He has quite ewushed my nose with his sillay elbow, you know," said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, in tones of anguish.

"Ow! Wow! Yow! Ow!" came faintly from underneath three or four sprawling forms—that seemed in no hurry to leave off sprawling over Trimble.

But they cleared at last, and the fat and gasping Baggy was revealed. He lay and groaned deeply.

"You barging idiot!" said Blake, perhaps by way of expressing sympathy.

Groan!

"Shut up that row, for goodness' sake," said Kangaroo.

Groan!

"Come on!" called out Tom Merry.

The game went on; but Baggy Trimble did not move. Heedless of the other fellows, he lay where he was, groaning.

"Help!" Baggy called out feebly.

"Shut up!" roared Figgins.

"Help! I'm hurt!"

"Crawl off, then, you fat funk!"

"Ow! I can't move! My leg's broken, I think," said Baggy faintly.

"Rats!"

"Bai Jove, the fat duffah may be damaged, you know," said Arthur Augustus; and he ran up to Trimble.

Baggy gave a deep groan.

"Are you hurt?" asked Gussy.

"Ow! Yes! Fearfully!"

"Where, deah boy?"

"My leg's broken!" groaned Trimble.

"Wats!"

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"I—I can't get up! Some of you fellows will have to carry me back to the House," said Trimble feebly.

The juniors gathered round Trimble. Tom Merry and Manners took him by the arms to help him up.

"Ow! Careful!" gasped Baggy. "My leg's broken!"

"You fat idiot!" roared Tom. "Your silly leg's all right!"

"I—I mean my—my back—"

"What?"

"Dislocated spine, I think—"

"You fooling ass!"

"I—I mean—" Baggy gasped. "I—I mean I'm suffering infernally—I mean internally! That's it—internal injuries." Baggy seemed quite pleased at having got it right at last. "Frightful internal injury—that's what it is. I can't walk. Help me!"

The juniors stared at Baggy. Only too well they knew Baggy and his disregard for the straight and narrow path of veracity. When it came to prevarication, Trimble could have given George Washington or Ananias fifty in a hundred, and won easily.

Had it been a compulsory practice that afternoon, the fellows would have known what to think. Trimble's injury they would have taken for granted to be simply an excuse for getting off the field early. But as Baggy was there on this occasion of his own free will, and at liberty to depart whenever he chose, they were driven to believe that he really was damaged.

"Well, if you're hurt, I'm sorry," said Tom. "You should really learn not to play footer like a bull in a china shop, Trimble. Here, lean on me, and I'll help you away."

Baggy leaned on the captain of the Shell—his whole weight. Tom Merry was a stalwart fellow; but Baggy Trimble's weight was no joke. He staggered.

"Bear a hand, somebody!" he said.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Arthur Augustus took Trimble's other arm. Throwing as much weight as he could upon his two kind conductors, Trimble staggered off the field; and the pick-up went on, while Tom and Gussy marched him off towards the School House.

Baggy let out an anguished groan at almost every step, doubtless due to his severe internal injuries.

Tom Merry and D'Arcy were perspiring by the time they got him to the House. They piloted him in; and would have relinquished him there, but Baggy held on to their arms.

"Take me to the Housemaster," he said feebly.

"What on earth do you want to see Railton for?"

"He will have to send for a doctor."

"Oh, my hat!" said Tom.

"Bai Jove! If Trimble weally is injahed, you know, pewwaws a doctah had bettah see him," said Arthur Augustus, with a puzzled look at the fat junior.

"Look here, Trimble," said Tom Merry quietly. "I don't know what your game is; but you're generally gammoning, and this looks to me like gammon. If it is, you'd better think twice before you try to stuff Mr. Railton."

Groan!

"You're not really hurt," said Tom. "It's only being a funk and a fat foolzer, you know, that makes you make such a song about a bump or two."

Groan!

"Bai Jove, what a feahful wow!" said Arthur Augustus.

"Take me to Railton," said Trimble faintly. "I—I think I'm dying."

"Fathead!"

"Look here, you know——"

"Well, if you are, you're jolly well not going to die on my hands," said Tom Merry heartlessly. "I'll land you on Railton with pleasure."

And the two juniors helped the tottering Baggy, groaning at every step, to the Housemaster's study.

CHAPTER 6.

A Sudden Recovery!

DR. SHORT stroked his chubby chin and stared at Trimble of the Fourth over his gold-rimmed pince-nez. Trimble, lying on his bed in the Fourth Form dormitory, blinked at him, moaning faintly. Mr. Railton, standing at the foot of the bed, glanced alternately at the fat junior and the little, plump medical gentleman, and seemed worried.

Trimble, if he was "gammoning," was playing his part well. The Housemaster really had had no choice but to send for the doctor. A fat slacker

like Trimble, always out of condition, might quite possibly have received a real injury; and in such a matter the Housemaster could scarcely leave anything to chance.

As Trimble averred, with many groans and moans, that he was feeling an intense pain internally, the result of his misadventure on the football ground, Mr. Railton naturally decided that the medical man had better see to it.

So Baggy had been helped upstairs, laid on his bed, and left to roost there, while the school doctor was telephoned for.

Tom Merry and D'Arcy returned to the football ground, rather concerned about Trimble. Spoofer as they knew him to be, they hardly supposed him to have the nerve to attempt to spoof the Housemaster and the school doctor; neither did they see any reason why he should do so. So they felt quite sorry for Baggy as they left him groaning, and went back to Little Side.

Baggy, perhaps, too lazy to groan when there was no one to hear, ceased his sounds of woe when he was left alone. But at the hint of footsteps in the corridor outside, he recommenced, and was groaning dismally when Mr. Railton brought the medical man in. And during his examination by Dr. Short, he groaned and moaned as if for a wager.



"Well, if you're hurt, I'm sorry," said Tom. "Lean on me and I'll help you away." Baggy Trimble leaned on the captain of the Shell—his whole weight. Tom staggered. "Bear a hand, somebody!" he exclaimed.

Now the medical man was contemplating him with very keen eyes over his pince-nez. His face was very grave.

Dr. Short, as a school doctor, had a long experience of the younger generation, and knew all sorts and conditions of boys. He was not, therefore, at a loss to estimate Baggy correctly. His belief was that there was nothing at all the matter with the fat junior. He had come across cases of malingering before.

Still, such a thing as an internal injury was not easy to trace and diagnose. The medical man did not wish to condemn Baggy out of hand as a malingerer, with the possibility that afterwards it might prove that he really had some hidden damage in some remote recess of his fat person. Being a medical man, Dr. Short was, of course, aware of how little medical men really knew of the mysterious workings of the human organisation.

It would never do for a man in his official position as doctor to a big school to make a mistake—apart from the interests of the patient. So the medical man was thinking rather hard as he scanned Baggy's fat face, and listened to his painful moaning.

He drew Mr. Railton aside at last, and they conversed in low tones out of Trimble's hearing. Baggy strained his fat ears to listen; but only a low murmur of voices reached him.

"Is the matter serious?" asked Mr. Railton.

"I think not," said Dr. Short. "I think, as a matter of fact, that there is nothing wrong with the boy at all. Probably he eats too much pastry; but I can find no trace of such an injury as he complains of. But one cannot be too sure in such matters."

"Quite so. But—"

"If the boy is malingering, he has some reason. Is he, by any chance, under sentence of a flogging?"

"Nothing of the kind, doctor."

"That would account for it," said Dr. Short. "A flogging, of course, could not be administered if the boy is ill, or supposed to be ill. You know of no other reason why he might be pretending to be injured?"

Mr. Railton considered for a moment. Then he started.

"There is a special examination for all the boys in Trimble's Form, this week," he said.

"Aha!" said the medical gentleman. "Is it an examination that Master Trimble can face with confidence?"

"Far from that. He is the least fitted of all his Form to face the examination, and he is far too lazy to prepare for it if he can possibly avoid doing so."

Dr. Short smiled.

"I think we have put our finger on the key to the mystery, Mr. Railton," he said. "I will speak to my patient again. I only wished to discover whether he had a motive for malingering."

Dr. Short returned to the bedside. Baggy Trimble gave a low moan of intense suffering by way of greeting.

"You feel no better?" asked the doctor.

"Worse!" groaned Trimble.

"You still feel that you cannot rise without assistance?"

"I—I can hardly breathe!" groaned Trimble.

"I—I couldn't get up, sir, if the house was on fire."

"Then you will have to be removed on a stretcher to the sanatorium," said Dr. Short.

A glimmer came into Baggy's round eyes. The sanatorium was not a place he yearned to visit. But anything was better than the Latin exam on Saturday. It was a case of any port in a storm.

That sudden glimmer in Baggy's eyes did not escape the medical gentleman. But his face remained very grave.

"You will be placed in the sanatorium on a special diet, and under special care," he said. "Do you feel, in your present state, as if you can eat?"

"Oh, yes, sir!" said Baggy at once.

"You do not feel that your appetite is affected in any way?"

"Not at all."

"You feel you could digest an ample breakfast in the morning—say, eggs and bacon, with kidneys and tomatoes?"

"Easily, sir."

"Some slight refreshment during the morning—say, a cake and fruit?" suggested the doctor.

"Oh, yes!"

"For dinner, a chicken, with several vegetables, followed by a substantial pudding?"

"Fine!" gasped Trimble.

"Poached eggs, with ham and tea and cake?"

"Yes," said Trimble. "I—I think so, sir."

He forgot to groan in the contemplation of that happy prospect.

"For supper, perhaps a cold meat-pie and a pudding?"

Trimble's eyes danced.

Sanny, on those lines, was likely to be a very pleasant abiding-place. Dr. Short, evidently, was a medical man in a thousand.

"Very well," said the doctor cheerfully. "Of course, such a diet would be quite impossible in the case of an internal injury."

"Eh?"

"I will now draw up a special diet for you, Master Trimble, which the nurse will be instructed to adhere to strictly."

Dr. Short took out his pocket-book and a pencil. Trimble watched him very anxiously.

"Breakfast," murmured the doctor aloud, as he scribbled. "One glass of lukewarm water and a small piece of dried toast."

Trimble gazed at him in horror.

"Nothing but a glass of lukewarm water between meals—very important. For dinner, a small quantity of vegetables—no meat, or puddings, or pies, in any circumstances whatever."

Trimble groaned.

It was not his internal injury that caused him to groan. It was the prospect of that appalling diet.

"For tea, a glass of lukewarm water and a dry biscuit—not a sweet biscuit. No supper!"

Groan!

"This diet will be strictly adhered to," said Dr. Short, "and I trust, Master Trimble, that I shall find you better on my next visit."

Trimble's jaw dropped.

"Mr. Railton, you will see that the nurse carries out my instructions to the very letter?"

"Undoubtedly!" said Mr. Railton, with a stern glance at Trimble. He was at no loss to understand the changes in the fat junior's face.

"I have every reason to believe," continued the doctor blandly, "that Master Trimble's recovery will be rapid."

Dr. Short left the dormitory with Mr. Railton.



Wings over Ostend on this Belgian air mail stamp of 1930.

CASH ON DELIVERY!

The old C.O.D. postage system gave a certain old lady the chance to "COD" the postal authorities.



A U.S.A. "Special Delivery" stamp of 1902. They "hustled" by cycle in those far-off days!

IN one of our earliest articles you'll no doubt recall that we mentioned that, for simplicity's sake, it's advisable to collect only adhesive postage stamps. There wasn't space then to enlarge on this, but it is time we went into this question of adhesives more fully, for there are many classes, some of them quite puzzling.

First of all, however, let's take a peep at the beginnings of our present-day stamps. Prior to 1840 it was the normal practice for the receiver, not the sender, of a letter to pay the postage on it. The postman would call at your door and demand payment for it in much the same way as his present-day counterpart demands payment if someone has under-stamped a letter to you.

TRICKING THE POST OFFICE.

The cash-on-delivery system was open to many abuses. Postal rates, in the first place, were often so extortionately high and variable that people frequently refused to accept delivery of their mails.

In this connection there is the famous story of the old lady who arranged with her son before he went away to send her blank sheets of paper at regular intervals just to show that he was well. When the postman called on her she would promptly refuse to pay the postage and hand back the letter offered her—knowing all was well with her absent son!

Apart from all this irregularity and inconvenience to the public, the Post Office was sadly out of pocket, and in 1840, thanks to the enterprise of Rowland Hill, the old, bad system was completely reversed. You had to prepay the postage on any letter you sent, and the Post Office, then as now, gave you a gummed label, or postage stamp, as a token of receipt of your money. This receipt you stuck on your letter.

As can be imagined the great bulk of postage stamps available to us have been intended to

Trimble sat up on the bed—able to move now that he was alone—and gazed blankly after them.

"The—the—the awful beast!" gasped Baggy.

Latin exams—Head's floggings—what were they compared with a week on such a diet as that prescribed by Dr. Short? Trifles light as air.

Baggy had succeeded—a little too well. Dr. Short had said that the fat junior's recovery would be rapid.

It was very rapid indeed.

When Mr. Railton came back to the dormitory, five minutes later, Baggy Trimble was no longer extended on the bed. He was on his feet, and ready to go. So far from being the helpless victim of injuries, internal or external, Baggy was only too anxious to convince the Housemaster that he was not injured at all.

prepay postage on ordinary mails. In all English-speaking countries such stamps are distinguished by the words "Postage" or "Posts" on them.

Often, as in the case of our own stamps, the word "Revenue" is coupled with "Postage"—to save the cost of separate stamps—to signify that a stamp is valid not only for postal service, but for use on bills and other legal documents. This use, incidentally, is known to collectors as fiscal.

Most of the other countries use their own lingual versions of postage on their "straight" postage stamps, the Spanish "Correos" and the Portuguese "Correio" being probably the least decipherable to the uninitiated.

AIR MAIL STAMPS.

In conservative Britain we don't boast special stamps to frank our air mails. A large number of countries do, however, and these specialities are distinguishable—apart, of course, from their design—by the inclusion of such words as "Flugpost" or "Luftpost" (in German-speaking spheres), "Luchtpost" (Dutch), or "Correo Aereo" (Spanish) in their inscriptions.

A very useful arrangement for ensuring the earliest possible delivery of a letter is to express it. Many countries issue special stamps for this branch of their postal service. The Spaniards of the Old and New World distinguish their stamps of this class by the words "Urgente," "Entrega Inmediata," or "Entrega Especial," the Italians choose "Espresso," and the French "Expres."

Somewhat similar in its function to the express-letter service is that of the "Late Fee," or "Too Late," as our Australian cousins in Victoria called it. Suitably stamped correspondence placed in the Late Fee box is assured of catching a mail connection which it would otherwise miss. Certain American States, such as Panama, favour these stamps, marking them "Retardo" (Late) or just simply "R."

Mr. Railton looked at him grimly.

"So you are able to rise now, Trimble?"

"Yes, sir!" gasped Baggy. "I—I—I feel much better, sir. I—I—I seemed to feel a—a—a sudden recovery, sir."

"In the case of serious internal pains, such as you described, Trimble, a sudden recovery is impossible."

"I—I—I really feel better, sir," stammered Trimble, quite dismayed at the idea of being transferred to the sanatorium, on the diet prescribed by Dr. Short, by an over-anxious Housemaster.

Mr. Railton's brow grew grimmer and grimmer.

"You feel no more pain, Trimble?"

"No, sir!"

"You are quite sure?"

"None at all, sir."

"You are able to walk to the sanatorium?"

"I—I don't think—I don't feel ill enough to go into sanny, sir!" gasped the dismayed Baggy.

"I—I don't think—I don't feel ill enough to feel much better, sir—quite well, in fact."

"I have no doubt of it, Trimble," said Mr. Railton. "You will not be sent into the sanatorium, Trimble."

"T-t-thank you, sir."

"You will follow me to my study, Trimble."

"Wha-a-at for, sir?"

"To be severely caned, Trimble, for attempting to deceive me, and for giving Dr. Short an unnecessary journey to the school," said the Housemaster grimly. "I shall endeavour to impress upon your obtuse mind, Trimble, that such deceptions must not be attempted."

"Oh lor!"

"Follow me!" snapped Mr. Railton.

He strode from the dormitory, and Baggy Trimble limped after him, in the lowest of spirits. Baggy dragged his faltering steps into the Housemaster's study, and watched Mr. Railton select his stoutest cane, with a dismal eye.

What followed was painful—and though Baggy's internal injuries were fictitious, there was no doubt that he suffered external injuries—rather severely.

But whatever might be the extent of his injuries, internal or external, there was obviously nothing the matter with his lungs. His voice could be heard far beyond the Housemaster's study, and it resembled the roar of the celebrated Bull of Bashan, of olden time.

"Now, Trimble—" said Mr. Railton, as he laid down the cane, breathing rather hard after his exertions.

"Wow-wow-wow!"

"Let this be a warning to you, Trimble!"

"Wow-wow-wow!"

"You may go!"

And Trimble went.

When he crawled into Study No. 9 in the Fourth, he found Lumley-Lumley, Mellish, and Levison swotting there, getting ready for the Head's exam.

Trimble wondered dismally whether he would not have done more wisely to follow their example. Certainly his own methods of preparing for the special exam had been a ghastly failure so far.

CHAPTER 7.

Trying it on the Dog!

"Gussy!"

"Wats!"

"Dear old chap!"

"Pway wun away, Twimble!" said Arthur Augustus severely. "I wegard you with uttah contempt!"

It was the following day, and classes had been over some time when Baggy Trimble rolled along to Study No. 6 in the Fourth.

Blake & Co. were getting tea in that celebrated study.

It was only two more days now to the Head's special exam. And as the dreaded date drew near, it might have been expected that swotting would intensify in the St. Jim's Fourth.

But it didn't.

Quite the reverse, in fact. There was a

slackening down all through the Form. Undoubtedly, the Fourth Form had had the wind up after the Head's visit to their Form-room. The whole Form had taken to swotting like ducks to water. But it was too fast to last.

By Thursday, many of the fellows felt that they had done enough to see them through. And many of them had come to the conclusion that it was better to risk a Head's flogging than to spend the leisure hours of a whole week mugging up the classics.

Some of the Fourth were still swotting away; but if Tom Merry had walked along the passage that day, looking for fellows to ask to tea, he would have found plenty available. Hardly a study would have turned him empty away, so to speak.

So Study No. 6 were not busy with swotting when Trimble rolled along. They were busy getting tea. But they were not pleased to see Trimble, all the same. Nobody ever was pleased to see Trimble, if it came to that.

Arthur Augustus, whom Baggy addressed in affectionate tones, was shocked at him. The story of Dr. Short and Trimble's rapid recovery from his football injuries was known to all the House now, and all the House had chortled over it. The fellows knew now why Trimble had turned up for games practice on a day when it was not compulsory, and why he had barged recklessly into the thickest of the fray. It was a dodge for getting clear of the Head's exam—merely that and nothing more.

All the fellows chuckled over it, only Arthur Augustus taking it seriously and feeling shocked at Baggy's duplicity.

Monty Lowther had remarked that if a fellow had to be shocked at all Trimble's misdeeds, a fellow would spend his whole time in a series of shocks, as if he were sitting on an electric battery.

Nevertheless, the swell of the Fourth was shocked at Trimble. And now that the fat and fatuous Baggy inserted his podgy features into the doorway of Study No. 6, Gussy told him so.

Contempt, according to the Eastern proverb, will pierce the shell of the tortoise. Perhaps Baggy was better protected than a tortoise. At all events, Gussy's lofty contempt had no effect upon him. Baggy could stand a lot of contempt without turning a hair.

"It's rather important, you fellows," said Trimble, blinking into the study. "I want you to lend me—"

"A boot?" asked Blake, looking round.

"No, I want—"

"Well, a boot is all that this study has to lend," said Blake. "You kick him, Herries—you've got the biggest feet!"

"Pleased!" said Herries.

"I want you to lend me a black-edged envelope," bawled Trimble, just in time.

Herries, in sheer surprise, dropped his foot.

"A—a—a what?" he babbled.

"Bai Jove!"

Baggy Trimble drew his sleeve across his eyes. Study No. 6 became serious at once. If Baggy had had bad news from home they were prepared to sympathise. A request for a black-edged envelope hinted at very bad news indeed.

"Bai Jove!" The expression of lofty scorn left Arthur Augustus' noble features, which softened into sympathy at once. "Do you weally mean a black-edged envelope, Twimble?"

"Yes," said Baggy, wiping his eyes with his sleeve.

"Have you had bad news?" asked Dig.

"My—my father—"

"Poor old chap!" said D'Arcy.

"I say, I'm sorry!" said Blake. "It's rather sudden, isn't it, Trimble? Didn't you know he was ill, old chap?"

"He was run-down, you know, when I was home last Christmas," said Baggy tearfully. "And then the rush of things, you know, may have worn him out a lot. We have crowds of people at Trimble Hall in the hols, you know!"

"Oh!"

"But, of course, I never expected it would come to this. It—it—it's awful, you know!" said Trimble.

"Yaas, wathah, poor old chap!"

"When did it happen?" asked Herries.

"Yesterday," moaned Trimble. "I've only just got the—the awful news! Knocked over by a motor-car, you know."

"Eh?"

"Frightful motoring fatality—fearfully sudden!" said Trimble.

Blake stared at him.

"But you said he was run-down last Christmas," he said. "That hadn't anything to do with a motoring accident yesterday, I suppose?"

"I—I—I meant, he was run down by a car!"

"What?"

"Run down by a grey car," said Trimble, adding details, which, no doubt, seemed to him to carry conviction.

"Last Christmas?" exclaimed Dig.

"No; yesterday."

"But you said last Christmas."

"D-d-did I? I—I mean, I—I'm so knocked over, I hardly know what I'm saying!" mumbled Trimble. "You see, I've only just got his letter by this afternoon's post, telling me about it."

"His letter?" said Blake dazedly. "Your father's letter?"

"Yes. Boo-hoo!"

"You've got a letter from your father, telling you that he has been killed in a motoring accident?" stuttered Blake.

"Yes. I—I mean—"

"Well, what do you mean?" roared Blake. "What sort of silly spoof are you handing out now?"

"Weally, Blake—"

"Fathead!" said Blake. "It's spoof! Blessed if I know why he's spinning such a yarn. But it's only a yarn."

"Twimble, deah boy, pway pull yourself together!" said Arthur Augustus gently. "Of course, you did not get a lettah fwom your fathah?"

"I—I mean, no. He telephoned."

"Telephoned? Your father did?"

"N-no. M-my uncle!" gasped Trimble. "You see, my uncle was called in at once. My Uncle George. He broke the terrible news by telephone!"

"Poor old chap!"

"I've got to write back, of course!" said Trimble. "That's why I want a black-edged envelope. If you can lend me one—"

"I'm afraid we haven't any in the study, deah boy!" said Arthur Augustus gently. "I am vewy sorry!"

Blake eyed the fat junior suspiciously. Perhaps Blake was not quite so sympathetic as Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. Certainly, he was not so unsuspecting.

"And why do you want to write in answer

to a telephone call?" he said. "Couldn't you answer your uncle on the phone?"

"You—you see, my Uncle Thomas is rather deaf."

"Your Uncle Thomas!" gasped Blake.

"Yes."

"Your Uncle Thomas is deaf?"

"Yes, awfully."

"And what would it matter if your Uncle Thomas was deaf, when it was your Uncle George who telephoned?"

Trimble started.

Trimble no doubt knew that a certain class of persons should have good memories. Trimble belonged to that class of persons, undoubtedly, but he had a bad memory. It was a handicap.

"I—I—I mean—"

"Go it!" said Blake sarcastically. "Tell us what you mean, by all means!"

"I—I mean, it was my Uncle George Thomas who telephoned!" stammered Trimble. "That's what I mean! I—I'm so cut up, I—I hardly know what I—I'm saying, you know. When I think of—of my poor father, struggling for life in the waves—"

"What waves?" shrieked Blake.

"The raging waves—"

"When he was run down by a motor-car?"



"What's this cork I've just pulled out of the bottom of the boat, dad?"

Half-a-crown has been awarded to A. Craddock, 17, Stormont Road, Clapham, London, S.W.11.

"Oh—I—I mean—"

Trimble fairly stuttered.

Even Arthur Augustus was looking suspicious now. Blake and Herries and Dig were more than suspicious—they were certain.

"So this is the latest, is it?" snorted Blake.

"Malingering was no good, so you've thought of a death in the family. Funeral on Saturday—what?"

"Yes, exactly!"

"I thought so. You burbling idiot! And what are you going to say, if you get leave for your father's funeral on Saturday, next time the Head gets a letter from your father?"

"Oh!" gasped Trimble.

Obviously, the fatuous Baggy had not thought of that. Really, it was an obvious consideration. But Baggy's fat intellect had its own ways of working. Certainly Trimble would be given a day's leave from the school, if he stated that his father's funeral was to take place on Saturday. There was no doubt about that.

But the next time the Head heard from Mr. Trimble, it was certain that trouble would transpire. When he received a letter or a visit from Mr. Trimble, the Head was not likely to believe that that gentleman was dead and buried. It would really be putting the headmaster's credulity to too severe a strain.

Baggy stood gasping, like a fish out of water. He realised what a narrow escape he had had, and he was glad that he had tested his new story on Study No. 6 before letting Dr. Holmes hear it. He had been, as it were, trying it on the dog, and he had reason to be thankful that he had been so cautious.

"Well," grinned Blake, "my advice to you, Trimble, is to chuck it! Even lying requires a little brains, and you haven't any brains at all, you know!"

"Bai Jove! If you are weally spoofin', you fat boundah—"

"I—I—I— The fact is—"

"Let's hear the fact!" chuckled Blake. "A fact from Trimble will be something new!"

"It—it was—was really my—my uncle—"

"What was your uncle?"

"Who was—was drowned."

"Drowned by a motoring accident?"

"I—I mean, knocked over by a motor-car!" gasped Trimble. "My uncle—my Uncle Montague—"

"Not George or Thomas?"

"Nunno! My Uncle Montague! He was out in his boat, you know, when it suddenly sprang a leak, and—and—I—I mean, he was walking along a country road when a motor-car suddenly ran into him from behind, and—before help could reach him he had sunk—I mean, he—he—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Blake.

Evidently, Trimble had been undecided, in the first place, between a boating accident and a motoring accident. In his confusion, he was getting the two stories mixed; and really, they were like oil and water, and did not mix well.

"Bai Jove! You fwightful fibbah!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus. "You are goin' to spin this idiotic yarn to get off the exam on Saturday! I weward you with feahful contempt, Twimble!"

"If you're going to spring that story on the Head, old fat man, spring one at a time!" chuckled Blake. "Don't tell the Head that your pater sank out of his depth in the raging waves on a country road, or that a motor-car ran him down at sea!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It isn't a laughing matter!" hooted Trimble.

"It won't be for you, when you've told the Head that yarn!" grinned Blake. "Put some exercise-books in your bags before you begin!"

"I—I think this is simply heartless when my poor old pater—I mean, my Uncle Thomas—that is, my Uncle Montague—is lying—"

"If your uncle's anything like his nephew, he's lying!" agreed Blake. "I've no doubt of that part!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Bai Jove! I wefuse to listen to your feahful fibbin', Twimble!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus indignantly. "I am goin' to kick you!"

Baggy Trimble backed hastily out of the study. He turned to flee along the passage, and the indignant Gussy reached him as he turned. An elegant boot shot out—and elegant as it was, it seemed rather weighty to Trimble, and there was plenty of force behind it.

"Yaroooh!"

Trimble went along the passage like a stone from a catapult.

"Come back and have anothah, you wascal!" roared Arthur Augustus.

Trimble vanished. Evidently the Ananias of St. Jim's considered that one was enough.

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CHAPTER 8.

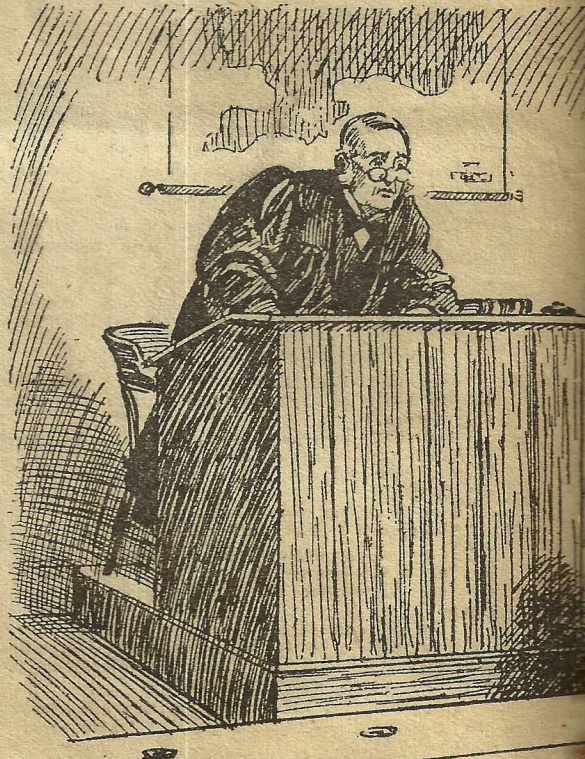
Alas! My Poor Brother!

"TOM, old fellow!" Tom Merry was about to say "Scat!" when he suddenly stopped. Tom did not like "Tom, old fellow!" from Baggy Trimble. He would have mentioned that fact to Trimble in the plainest of plain English; but, as he looked at the fat junior, he beheld, to his amazement, tears in Baggy's eyes.

So Tom Merry, instead of saying "Scat!" and following it up with other remarks, just stared at Trimble.

He did not look specially sympathetic. Trimble was "blubbing," and blubbing was shocking bad form. Even fags in the Third Form were expected not to blub. A fellow who had "six" from a prefect might yell and howl and groan if he liked, but public opinion in the Lower School required him not to blub.

Trimble, indeed, was prepared to blub, or to do anything else, if it served his turn. If Baggy was blubbing over a caning, Tom Merry had no sympathy to waste on him. Rather he would have felt disposed to give him something extra to blub for. But it was unusual for even Trimble to blub, so Tom wondered whether anything of a serious nature had happened, and patiently gave Baggy a hearing.



"Boo-hoo! Hoo!" sobbed Baggy Trimble, stopping before Form-master looked up with a start. "What does this mean?"

"My p-poor brother—Boo-hoo!"

Baggy wiped his eyes with the back of his hand. "Tom, old chap, I—I know it's rotten to blab, but—but my poor brother, you know—"

"What about your brother?"

"My poor, poor brother!" said Trimble. "You haven't a brother, have you, Tom Merry?"

"No," said Tom.

"Then you don't know what a fellow feels like when his brother's run over by a traction-engine."

Tom Merry started.

"My dear chap, I'm awfully sorry to hear it!" he exclaimed. "I say, that's awfully rotten!"

Tom was quite sympathetic now. If a fellow's brother had been run over by a traction-engine, it was up to the fellow to feel pretty bad about it, and tears were quite excusable—indeed, expected of a fellow of proper feeling.

"He—he was such a jolly good chap, you know!" mumbled Trimble.

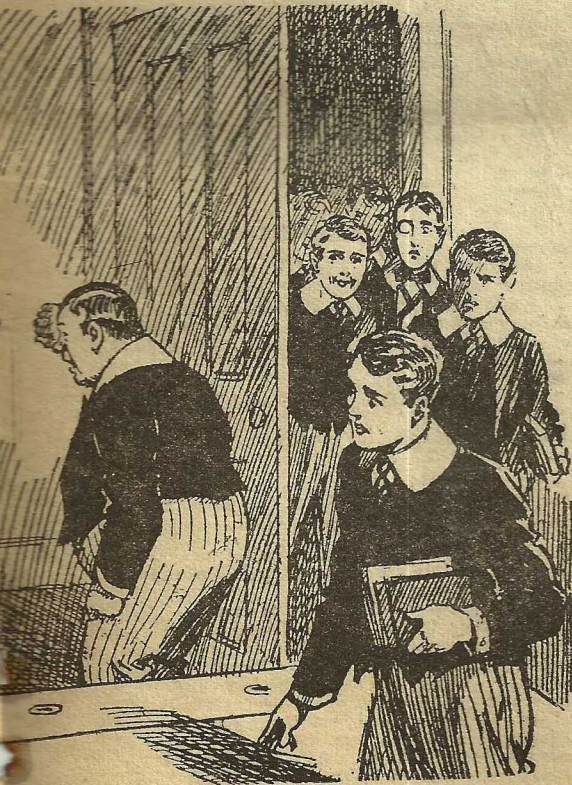
"Was?" repeated Tom. "Was it a fatal accident, then?"

"Instantaneous!" groaned Trimble.

"Hard lines, old fellow!" said Tom.

It was the first time Tom had ever called Baggy "old fellow," but he really meant it. Tom's tender heart was easily moved by a tale of distress, and certainly this was a very distressful tale indeed.

Baggy took out a grubby handkerchief and dabbed his eyes.



Mr. Lathom's desk as the Fourth came in to lessons. The man? he asked. "I—I can't help it, sir," wailed Baggy. "He was run over by a motor-car!"

Trimble had caught Tom Merry in the Shell passage when he was coming away from Study No. 10 after prep. There were two or three other Shell fellows in the passage, and two or three lounging in their doorways. And all eyes were turned upon the pathetic figure of Baggy Trimble.

Some fellows, bereaved as Baggy stated that he was bereaved, would have preferred to yield to their grief in private. Baggy, evidently, was prepared to let all the world see how grieved he was. Reticence had never been one of Baggy's weaknesses.

He rubbed his eyes with the grubby handkerchief, and sobbed a little. Manners and Lowther, following Tom from Study No. 10, stopped to stare at him.

"Hallo! What's this game?" asked Lowther. "If you're blubbing over a licking, Trimble, can't you blub in your own passage?"

"Boo-hoo!"

"Cheese it, old chap!" said Tom hastily. "Trimble's had bad news from home."

"Oh!" said Monty. "Sorry!"

"What's the trouble, then?" asked Manners.

"My poor brother!" sobbed Trimble.

"His brother's been run over," said Tom.

"Never knew he had another brother," said Manners, eyeing Trimble.

"Well, it seems that he has," said Tom. "It's rotten news for a fellow to get all of a sudden. I'm really sorry, Trimble!"

"Thank you, old chap!" said Trimble faintly. "It—it's awful, you know! But it's something to get a little sympathy in one's terrible grief."

"Hem!"

"It—it's heartbreaking, you know!" said Trimble tearfully, blinking at the Shell fellows with reddened eyes. "My brother Herbert was such a splendid fellow! And now— Boo-hoo!"

"Anything I can do?" asked Tom uncomfortably.

He was really sorry for Trimble, but demonstrative grief made him feel uncomfortable. In his own case he would have chosen to indulge his sorrow behind doors.

"Yes, old fellow," said Baggy. "You—you see, the—the funeral's on Saturday. Boo-hoo!"

"On Saturday?" asked Lowther, with a quick look at Trimble. "When did it happen?"

"Yesterday!" sobbed Baggy. "It was frightfully sudden. Arthur was walking along a lane, you know, when the bull—"

"The—the what?"

"The bull suddenly rushed through a hedge, and—and— I—mean," broke off Trimble, as he noted Tom's astonished face—"I mean, he had just turned a corner when the traction-engine ran right over him!"

Tom stared at Trimble blankly.

"He gave just one cry, and then it was all over!" said Trimble. "Poor—poor old Arthur!"

"Arthur?" said Tom dazedly. "But you said it was your brother Herbert!"

"D-d-did I?" stammered Trimble.

Again it was borne in upon Baggy's fat mind that liars should have good memories.

"You jolly well did!" exclaimed Tom, his sympathy diminishing very considerably now.

"I—I meant—I meant Arthur!" stuttered Trimble. "Not Herbert. I meant my other brother, Arthur—see?"

"Oh!" said Tom.

"I—I want you to advise me, Tom, old man,"

said Trimble. "I shall have to get leave from school to go home to the funeral."

"You're going to the funeral?"

"I—I feel that I must, you know," said Trimble. "I was very fond of poor old Herbert—I mean, Arthur. Of course, he would miss me if I didn't come—"

"Miss you?" gasped Tom.

"I—I—I mean, of course, he wouldn't miss me, in—in the circumstances; but he would expect it if—if he could expect anything, you know," stammered Baggy. "I must go! I must, really! Do you think the Head will give me leave?"

"Of course," said Tom.

"You really think so?" asked Baggy.

"I'm sure of it," answered Tom Merry. "Of course he will give you leave to go to your brother's funeral if your people want you. You've only got to ask."

"Good!"

Baggy made that remark quite brightly; and then, remembering that he was deep in grief, he sobbed and wiped his eyes again with the grubby handkerchief.

"It's a fearful blow to me, you know," he said. "We were brought up together and—loved one another, you know. We played together side by side in—in childhood's happy days, you know."

"Oh!" said Tom.

"Last hols we were together all the time," said Baggy, "and I little thought when I came back to school that I should never see poor old Albert again! Boo-hoo!"

"Albert?" yelled Tom Merry.

Trimble jumped.

"I mean, Herbert—that is, Arthur. I—I'm a little confused, you know, in this—in this fearful grief."

"So you've got a brother Albert, too?" said Monty Lowther, eyeing the fat junior very suspiciously. "That's four in all, isn't it?"

"We're a rather large family, you know," said Trimble. "It was poor Herbert—I mean, Arthur—who was gored to death by the traction-engine—I mean, the bull—that is, I mean to say, who was run over by the traction-engine."

Undoubtedly Trimble was a little confused, whether with grief or not.

Tom Merry eyed him.

It was borne in upon him that Trimble was spoofing once more. His tale really did not hang together very well. But there were actual tears in Trimble's eyes—there was no doubt about that. It seemed impossible for a fellow to pump up real tears in support of a yarn.

Manners sniffed.

It was an emphatic sniff.

"You're going to tell the Head about this tragedy?" asked Manners. "You're going to ask leave on Saturday for the funeral? Good! A few tears will go down on such an occasion—but don't let the Head scent the onion!"

"Wha-a-at?"

Trimble jammed his grubby handkerchief hastily into his pocket. Tom Merry gave a jump. Now that Manners mentioned it, he noticed a decided smell of onions.

"Why, you fat villain!" exclaimed Tom. "You've been rubbing your eyes with a slice of onion!"

"I—I—I——" gasped Trimble.

"That's where the giddy tears come from!" chuckled Lowther. "It's not grief for Herbert-Arthur-Albert, who was gored by a traction-engine or run over by a bull. It's onions."

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"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look here, you know——" gasped Trimble.

"You spoofing rotter!" exclaimed Tom, in disgust. "Then it's all a swindle—a yarn to get off on Saturday? And you're pulling my leg just to see how the yarn will go down?"

Trimble grinned for a moment.

Evidently he was pursuing his system of "trying it on the dog." It was quite a good system really. The tip he had received from Blake had been very useful, and he had decided to make the unhappy victim of the accident a brother instead of his father. Now he had received another tip—to be extremely careful about the onion when he prepared to shed tears in the Head's presence.

"Bai Jove!" Arthur Augustus D'Arcy came sauntering along the passage, and he turned his eyeglass on Trimble in surprise. "What's the mattah, deah boys? What's that fat boundah blubbun' about?"

"His brother Herbert-Arthur-Albert has been gored by a traction-engine," said Monty Lowther sadly.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Or else run over by a bull. Trimble doesn't seem to have made up his mind which," said Monty.

"Bai Jove! So it's his bwothah now, is it?" exclaimed Arthur Augustus. "It was his patah when he spwung the yarn on us in Studay No. 6."

"What?" exclaimed the Terrible Three together.

"Bai Jove! I weally think there is no limit to Twimble's wotten twickewy! I have kicked him once, and I weally considah that I had bettah kick him again. Turn wound, Twimble!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I—I say——" gasped Trimble.

"Bump him!" said Manners.

"Here, leggo!" roared Trimble, as the juniors grasped him. "Leggo! Chuck it! I—I say—— Yaroooooh!"

Bump!

"Whoooooop!"

"Give him anothah!" gasped Arthur Augustus.

Bump!

"Yow-ow-ow! You awful rotters, when I'm suffering from frightful grief!" gasped Trimble. "I've told you my pater—I mean, my brother—has been run over by a bull—I mean, a motor-car—and drowned—I mean, smashed—and—— Yoooooop!"

Bump!

"Now kick him all together!" said Tom Merry.

"Yaas, wathah!"

Baggy Trimble fled for his life.

CHAPTER 9.

To Be or Not To Be!

BAGGY TRIMBLE was the object of a rather unusual interest in the Fourth Form Room the following morning.

It was Friday, eve of the special exam.

Every other fellow in the Fourth Form had been making special preparation for that special exam. Certainly the outbreak of "swotting" had not lasted—it had been too fast to last. But every fellow had put in extra work—even slackers like Mellish and Levison had bucked up and felt equal to facing the ordeal. It had been a very industrious week in the St. Jim's Fourth. With the solitary exception of Baggy Trimble, the Fourth Form felt fairly safe from the Head's wrath.

But Baggy had chosen his own methods—his own very peculiar methods—of getting ready for that

exam. Swotting did not appeal to him—nothing in the nature of work ever appealed to Baggy. Why work if trickery would serve a fellow's turn? That was how the estimable Baggy looked at it.

But undoubtedly, so far as the other fellows could see, swotting was a surer method than trickery. Had Baggy put in as much time and trouble at Latin as in evolving schemes for dodging the exam he might have faced Saturday with equanimity. Instead of which, he was hopelessly unprepared for the examination, and his trickery, so far, had resulted in precisely nil.

It was too late now to think of swotting—if Baggy had been disposed to think of it.

In a single day he could not possibly have mugged up enough to see him through.

And so—willy-nilly—Baggy Trimble had to depend on his powers of trickery, for what they were worth. The general opinion in the Fourth was that they were worth nothing. But they were all the hapless Baggy had left.

Baggy's fat brow was lined with thought in the Form-room that morning. He had a problem to solve, and it was not an easy one.

Blake & Co. regarded him with amusement. They wondered whether Baggy was going to rise in the Form-room and tell Mr. Lathom of his terrible news from home. No doubt, by that time, Baggy had his story in a rather more coherent shape. He had had time to select his materials, as it were, and decide between a boating accident, a motoring accident, and a mad bull, and to settle definitely whether the victim was his pater or his brother, and whether his brother's name was Herbert or Arthur or Albert.

But the story, at the very best, was a risky business, and certainly few fellows in the Form would have had the nerve to "spring" it on the Form-master. And Trimble was not a nery fellow—he was the reverse; he was, in fact, a good deal of a funk. But the proverb says that fools will rush in where angels fear to tread; and there was no doubt that Baggy was a fool! On that point there was no doubt, no possible, probable shadow of doubt.

And Trimble had left himself no other resource. By allowing the week to glide by in idleness he had, in effect, burned his boats behind him. If trickery could not save him, nothing could save him. If he was booked for the special exam, utterly unprepared for it as he was, he was indubitably booked also for a Head's flogging.

So Baggy really had little to lose by exercising his powers of deception. Failure could not leave him much worse off than he was. True, there was a moral aspect to the matter. But Trimble was not the fellow to worry about that.

When, in second lesson, Trimble rose to his feet to speak to Mr. Lathom, Blake closed one eye at his comrades.

"He's going it!" he murmured.

"Bai Jove!"

All eyes turned on Trimble. All the fellows had heard of his latest dodge and chuckled over it, and all wondered if Mr. Lathom was to hear it now.

The Form-master glanced at Baggy.

"If you please, sir——"

"You may sit down, Trimble."

"But, sir——" gasped Baggy.

"Well, well, what is it?" asked Mr. Lathom impatiently.

"I—I—I——"

"What?"

"My—my—my——" stammered Trimble.

"Now it's coming!" whispered Levison.

"What do you mean, Trimble?" exclaimed Mr. Lathom, blinking at Baggy over his glasses in astonishment.

"My—my——" stammered Trimble.

"Your what?"

"My father, sir—I mean, my brother——"

Baggy stuck tight there. It simply would not come out. He had tried it on Study No. 6, and he had tried it on Tom Merry & Co. But trying it on the Form-master was a more difficult task, and the fat Baggy's nerve fairly failed him.

He stood blinking at Mr. Lathom, gasping but speechless.

The Form-master stared at him.

"I fail to understand you, Trimble!" he snapped. "You are wasting time. No doubt it is your object to waste time."

"I—I—I——" burred Trimble.

"Sit down!"

Baggy plumped into his seat.

"You will take a hundred lines, Trimble."

"Oh dear!"

"If you speak again I shall cane you!"

Baggy Trimble did not speak again. He sat overwhelmed with dismay. The whole Form were grinning, and Mr. Lathom looked at them very severely. Baggy sat in dismal silence till the end of the lesson, when he rolled out of the Form-room with the Fourth.

"N.G., what?" chuckled Blake in the corridor.

Trimble blinked at him dismally.

"I am vevy glad that you did not tell Mr. Lathom a stwing of feahful whoppahs, Twimble," said Arthur Augustus. "I twust that you will think bettah of it."

"You silly owl!" grunted Baggy.

"Weally, Twimble——"

"I've got to get off to-morrow somehow," groaned Baggy. "It means a Head's flogging for me if I sit in the exam."

"Vevy likely, deah boy; but you should weflect that you deserve it, you know."

"Eh?"

"That wreflection should console you, Twimble," said Arthur Augustus.

"You—you silly idiot!" gasped Trimble.

And he rolled away, evidently deriving no consolation whatever from the source suggested by Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

Baggy rolled out dismally into the quadrangle, feeling very much down on his luck. He was looking very worried when Tom Merry and Manners and Lowther came on him. The Terrible Three smiled.

"Feeling down?" inquired Monty Lowther. "More horrid fatalities in the family?"

Grunt!

"Pater rua over by a mad bull, or uncle drowned in a motoring accident?" asked Monty sympathetically.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Yah!" snorted Baggy, and he rolled out disdainfully, leaving the chuns of the Shell chuckling.

His fat face was dolorous when he came in to dinner—in contrast to the faces round him, which were mostly grinning. Trimble was getting quite desperate; but his desperate plight evoked no sympathy whatever in the Fourth.

The other fellows did not see why Trimble couldn't have swotted Latin in readiness for the exam, the same as they had done. If a fellow chose to slack, a fellow naturally had to take the consequences. It was all very true; but it was of

no use to Trimble. He didn't want to take the consequences.

At dinner, Trimble suddenly gave a deep groan. The fellows looked round, and Mr. Lathom, at the head of the Fourth Form table, quite jumped.

"What—what is that? Did you make that ridiculous noise, Trimble?"

"I—I—" gasped Trimble. "You see, sir, I—I—" Trimble had made up his mind to the plunge at last.

But he had no chance to take the plunge. Mr. Lathom interrupted him severely.

"Have you no manners, Trimble?"

"If you please, sir, I—I—"

"If you cannot behave yourself at table, Trimble, you must leave the table!" exclaimed the Form-master. "Go at once!"

"I—I—" stuttered the hapless Baggy.

"Leave the table immediately!"

"Oh dear! I haven't finished my dinner, sir!" gasped Baggy.

"You should have thought of that earlier, Trimble. You must not play foolish tricks at the dinner-table. I command you to leave the table at once! Not a word! Go!"

Trimble did not utter a word. His feelings were too deep for words as he rose from his chair and limped away. His tale was still untold, and his dinner was unfinished—a still more serious matter.

Mr. Lathom's frowning glance followed him as far as the door. Every other face at the table wore a cheery smile. The misadventures of Baggy seemed to provide quite a welcome entertainment to the rest of the Fourth.

CHAPTER 10.

Getting Away With It!

SATURDAY morning dawned upon St. Jim's. Baggy Trimble turned out at the clang of the rising-bell that morning, with a dismal expression on his face.

Most of the Fourth were in a serious mood. The special exam was to take place that afternoon. Nobody knew what was to be on the paper yet, but all felt certain that the Head would not make it an easy paper. Even fellows who were fairly confident of passing muster took the matter seriously. Those who were not so confident took it more seriously. But no fellow took it quite so seriously as Baggy Trimble.

Baggy was fairly up against it now. Whether the other fellows scraped through the ordeal or not really did not matter—to Baggy. What was absolutely certain was that Baggy never would scrape through if he sat in the exam at all. All through the week he had slacked, as usual—indeed, he had slacked rather more than usual, as he had been giving so much time and attention to his deep dodges for eluding the special exam.

After the exam at least one flogging was quite certain to be handed out, and the happy recipient thereof would be Baggy Trimble. Baggy realised that he had left himself no retreat. He had to elude the exam—he had to escape that awful Latin paper, which he knew would tie him in a knot. And, if he were going to take the plunge, he had to take it now. He had left himself very little time.

When the Fourth went into their Form-room that morning Baggy took his courage in both hands, as it were. It was neck or nothing now, and Baggy was resolved to go it.

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Mr. Lathom was at his desk, looking over some papers, as the juniors filed to their places. Mr. Lathom looked up, with a surprised start, at a sound very uncommon in the Fourth Form Room.

"Boo-hoo!"

"Bless my soul!" ejaculated Mr. Lathom.

"Boo-hoo! Hoo!"

"Trimble!"

"Oh dear! Boo-hoo!"

Baggy Trimble had stopped before the Form-master's desk, and he was rubbing his eyes with his sleeve, looking the picture of woe. It was not really difficult for Baggy to look woeful. The thought of the approaching exam, only a few hours distant now, made him feel exceedingly full of woe.

"Trimble, what does this mean?" exclaimed Mr. Lathom. "Is it possible that you, a Fourth Form boy, are crying? I am surprised at you, Trimble."

"I—I k-k-k-k-can't help it, sir," sobbed Baggy.

"Nonsense!"

"My—my—my—"

"Cease this absurd exhibition at once, Trimble!" said Mr. Lathom sternly. "Go to your place!"

"Boo-hoo!" roared Baggy. He had made up his fat mind, and he was fairly going it now.

"Trimble!" thundered Mr. Lathom.

"I—I can't help it, sir!" sobbed Baggy. "My poor brother, sir—"

"What?"

"My poor brother Herbert, sir!" moaned Baggy. "It—it's awful, sir! I'm sorry, sir, but I can't help it! I—I want to go to the funeral, sir!"

"Bless my soul!" said Mr. Lathom.

He gazed at the fat junior, his face changing very much in expression. All the Fourth gazed at Baggy, too. It was out now. Baggy had taken the plunge, and the Fourth waited in breathless expectation to see what would come of it.

"Trimble," said Mr. Lathom, quite gently, "calm yourself, my boy!"

"Boo-hoo!"

"You mentioned a funeral," said Mr. Lathom. "Am I to understand that you have lost a relation, Trimble?"

"My brother Herbert, sir!" said Baggy. "It's awful, sir! I—I was so fond of him, sir. Run over by a—a moter-car, sir! It was instantaneous, sir! Boo-hoo!"

"I am sorry—deeply sorry, Trimble!" said Mr. Lathom. "I feel the deepest sympathy for you, my poor boy!"

"Thank you, sir!" murmured Baggy. "It's a fearful blow, sir! I—I feel it very deeply, sir! My—my people want me to go to the funeral, sir. I—I suppose I can have leave?"

"Most decidedly," said Mr. Lathom at once. "When does the ceremony take place, Trimble?"

"This afternoon, sir."

"At what time, Trimble?"

"Three o'clock, sir," said Trimble.

The Fourth Formers looked at one another. Three o'clock was the time fixed for the Form to enter the examination-room. Baggy was making quite sure of missing the exam.

"Very well, Trimble," said Mr. Lathom kindly; "you may leave the school after dinner to-day. That will give you ample time to reach Lexham in time for the ceremony."

"Thank you, sir!" mumbled Baggy.

He wiped his eyes and went to his place. He sat down, and took out his handkerchief and gave his eyes another rub to make them as red as

possible. Then, under cover of the handkerchief, he winked at Blake, who was staring blankly at him. Very fortunately for Baggy, Mr. Lathom did not see the wink.

"Well, my only hat!" murmured Blake.

"Bai Jove! It's weally too thick!"

"He's got away with it!" said Digby, in wonder. "That fat idiot—that blithering dummy—that frabjous, footling fathead—he's got away with it. My hat!"

There was no doubt on that point. Baggy had "got away with it," as Digby expressed it.

Not a single suspicion had crossed Mr. Lathom's kind mind.

Certainly no fellow in the Form had ever

lessons. So Trimble simply sat out classes that morning and enjoyed a rest.

After class Baggy Trimble rolled out into the quad, with a sad and sorrowful face so long as it was possible that Mr. Lathom's eye might fall upon him. After that he grinned, and gave a fat chuckle in sheer exuberance of spirits.

"Enjoying life—what?"

Baggy spun round hastily at the sound of Tom Merry's voice. He hurriedly composed his fat face into seriousness.

"Eh—no! I'm frightfully upset!" he said.

"More family losses?" said Monty Lowther.

"My poor brother Herbert!" said Baggy sadly.

"Brother Herbert still defunct?" inquired



"My—my brother has recovered, sir," stammered the wretched Baggy. "So—so there won't be any funeral this afternoon, after all." "Trimble!" thundered Mr. Railton. "You dare to tell me such a palpable falsehood! Confess the truth at once, you young rascal!"

thought of spinning such a yarn to his Form-master before. No fellow, if he had thought of it, would have had the nerve; the punishment, in case of discovery, would have been a little too severe. But Baggy had rushed in where the rest of the Form would have feared to tread. He had spur his yarn, and he had got away with it.

Baggy—alone in the Fourth—had leave from school that afternoon; Baggy, of all the Form, would not attend the Head's special exam. No wonder he grinned behind the handkerchief which Mr. Lathom supposed was hiding his grief!

Morning lessons went on, but Baggy did not share in them. Mr. Lathom very kindly left the fat Baggy to himself; a fellow in such a state of grief was in no state for giving attention to

Manners sympathetically. "What about brother Arthur and brother Albert? I suppose they've come to life again?"

"You can joke about it," said Baggy, "but it's very unfeeling when a chap's going to a funeral."

The Terrible Three regarded him with interest. They did not know yet what had happened in the Fourth Form Room that morning. They were not aware that Baggy had got away with it.

"Whose funeral?" asked Tom Merry.

"Herbert's."

"You don't mean to say that you've got leave?" exclaimed the captain of the Shell, in astonishment.

Trimble sniffed.

"Of course I have! Think my Form-master would refuse leave to a fellow to attend the funeral of a relation—a near relation? I'm catching the train for Lexham after dinner. That will be in time for the—the funeral; it's only a run of twenty miles."

"My only hat!" said Manners. "You've really brought it off?"

"You've got a prize-packet of a Form-master, Trimble!" said Monty Lowther regretfully. "I don't think Mr. Linton would swallow these things. You fellows think it would be any use trying an uncle's funeral on him next time the circus comes to Abbotsford?"

"No fear!" said Manners. "Linton's too downy."

"I—I say, I—I'm suffering an awful lot, you know," said Baggy. "Deep grief, and all that, you know. And I'm in a little difficulty, too—the railway fare to Lexham, you know. If you fellows could lend me half-a-quad—to go to my brother's funeral, you know—"

Baggy looked hopeful.

"My dear man, I'd lend you a whole quid to go to your own funeral," said Monty; "but that's the best I can offer!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You fat boulder!" said Tom Merry. "You're not going to Lexham at all this afternoon; there's no funeral, and you've nothing to go home for! You're going to mooch about out of gates till the Head's exam is over!"

Trimble grinned involuntarily for a second, but his fat face became serious again at once. He felt that it was judicious, in the circumstances, to look as serious as he could.

"Bai Jove! Here you are, you fat wottah!" Arthur Augustus D'Arcy came up, and his eyeglass gleamed scorn at Trimble. "Twimble, I wegard you as an unspeakable, spoofin' wottah—weally, the outside edge! If it were not sneakin', I would tell Mr. Lathom how you are pullin' his leg!"

"He's really got away with it?" asked Lowther.

"Yaas, wathah; and I wegard it as uttably shockin', you know! I twust your conscience will punish you for this deception, Twimble!"

"Yah!" said Trimble.

"Baggy's conscience can stand a lot!" grinned Lowther. "It's had a lot to stand, and got a bit tough. I think. But I'm blessed if I ever thought that that fat foolzer would pull it off! Didn't it strike Mr. Lathom as rather a coincidence that Trimble's family choose examination days for their funerals?"

"Appawrently not," said Arthur Augustus. "Of course. Mr. Lathom will have to mention it to Mr. Wailton and the Head, and pewwaps they may smell a wat."

"Oh, rot!" exclaimed Trimble, in alarm. "What rot! The Head might have doubted my word—he's rather suspicious; but when Mr. Lathom mentions it to him, he will think that my people have written—stands to reason he will. He will be satisfied if Lathom is—and I know Lathom is. It's all serene. As for Railton, he's got nothing to do with it! Blow Railton! I'm jolly well going to have a good time this afternoon!"

"At a funeral?" asked Monty.

"Oh! I—I—I mean—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Weally, Twimble—"

"Oh, rats!" said Trimble; and he rolled away with his fat little nose in the air.

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He had been successful; he had got away with it. The other fellows would not give him away; he had no sneaking to fear, and that was all he cared about. As for what they thought of him and his proceedings, Baggy cared nothing. Perhaps he considered that they could not think much worse of him than they did already.

And at dinner that day Baggy found it quite difficult to keep a cheery grin off his fat countenance, and to look as serious as a fellow might be expected to look who was going to the funeral of the late-lamented—and non-existent—Herbert.

CHAPTER 11.

The Way of the Transgressor!

"CONGRATULATIONS!" said Levison heartily.

Baggy Trimble blinked at him rather suspiciously.

Most of the Fourth Form fellows—School House and New House—took no trouble to conceal their contempt for Baggy and his wonderful wheeze. Even Mellish, who was not a particular fellow, thought it was rather "thick." Nobody could really admire such a device, and the more serious fellows were shocked at Trimble; D'Arcy was very shocked indeed, and shook his noble head very solemnly over the affair. Only Levison regarded the matter as amusing, and he offered Baggy his congratulations as the juniors came out after dinner.

"Congratulations!" repeated Levison. "Every other fellow in the Fourth swotting Latin this afternoon, under the marble eye of the Head, and you rambling around, with your hands in your pockets, doing nothing but laughing in your sleeve!"

"Look here, you know—" mumbled Baggy, with an uneasy glance round. He was very proud of his success, but he did not want to boast of it in the hearing of masters or prefects. "Don't yell, you know!"

Levison chuckled.

"I won't give you away," he said. "I wonder if it's too late for my grandfather to have a sudden serious illness?" went on Levison meditatively.

Baggy looked alarmed.

"Here, you chuck it!" he exclaimed. "It would look jolly suspicious! Lathom might think— Look here, you know, it's my idea—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed Levison. "All serene, old fat bean! I won't poach!"

And he walked away with Mellish.

Baggy Trimble grunted, and consulted his watch. There was a train at two o'clock from Rylcombe to Lexham, and Baggy was leaving in time for that train. Not that he had any intention of catching the train and expending his cash on a railway fare for nothing. But it was necessary to keep up appearances.

He was going to walk down to Rylcombe in time for the train—on account of appearances. Then he was going to walk farther on to Wayland, and spend a comfortable afternoon at the cinema there—while the rest of the Fourth worried through the special exam.

It was a happy prospect.

Only the recollection that he was supposed to be going to a funeral that afternoon kept Baggy from grinning with glee.

"Twimble!"

Arthur Augustus came up to him, with a severe expression on his aristocratic countenance.

"Hallo!" said Trimble coolly.
 "I twust, Twimble, that you will wepent of your wascality before it is too late," said Arthur Augustus severely.

"Oh, can it!" said Trimble.

"I weally considah—"

"Rats!" said Baggy cheerfully.

"I think, Twimble—"

"You'd better think about Latin grammar, if you can think at all," jeered Trimble. "You're for it this afternoon, you know."

Arthur Augustus breathed hard and deep.

"I will not waste any words on you, you uttah wottah!" he said. "I wegard you as a wank outsidah, Twimble. Howevah, I have a message for you fworm Mr. Lathom. You are to go to his studay."

"Right-ho!" said Baggy.

And he rolled away towards Mr. Lathom's study, Arthur Augustus shaking his head very seriously after him.

Baggy tapped cheerily at Mr. Lathom's door.

His Form-master had been so kind and sympathetic, that Baggy was wondering whether he could venture to "touch" Mr. Lathom for the railway fare to Lexham. What, after all, was the use of kindness and sympathy, if it couldn't be turned to practical account? A little extra cash would come in very useful for refreshments after the pictures at Wayland.

"Come in!"

Baggy's fat face was composed into a sorrowful expression as he entered Mr. Lathom's study.

The master of the Fourth gave him a kind look.

"Come in, Trimble! I am glad to see, my boy, that you are bearing up under this sudden and terrible blow," said Mr. Lathom.

"I—I'm trying to, sir," said Baggy dolorously. "Of course, sir, I'm awfully cut up. My poor, poor old pater—I—I mean, my—my poor brother Herbert—"

"I have spoken to Mr. Railton on the subject," said Mr. Lathom.

Baggy felt a momentary twinge of uneasiness. The School House master was, he knew, a much keener gentleman than Mr. Lathom. It was possible that the coincidence had struck him—that the Trimble funeral was fixed for precisely the same time as the Head's special exam.

"Mr. Railton is very sorry to hear of the great loss you have suffered, Trimble!"

Baggy breathed again.

"It's very kind of him, sir!" he mumbled.

"Mr. Railton is taking his car out this afternoon," pursued Mr. Lathom. "He is leaving the school almost immediately to drive to Bognor."

"Yes, sir," said Baggy, wondering why Mr. Lathom was giving him this information.

"Mr. Railton will, of course, pass through Lexham on his way to Bognor," said Mr. Lathom.

"Eh?"

"And he will give you a lift in his car, Trimble."

"What?"

Baggy's jaw dropped.

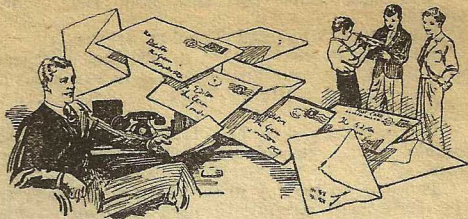
"You will be ready in ten minutes, Trimble," said Mr. Lathom. "Be ready, and bear up, my boy!"

Baggy stared at his Form-master, dumb with horror.

"That is all," added Mr. Lathom.

"But—" gasped Trimble.

(Continued on next page.)



THE EDITOR'S CHAIR.

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

HALLO, chums! It is good to be greeting readers again after my long absence from the old paper. As a matter of fact, the GEM has been so full of grand stories and ripping features that yours truly had to forgo the little corner in the GEM reserved for his chats. But this week, as the "Who's Who at St. Jim's" has ended, there is a little space for me—and here we are!

Although I haven't been in my usual place, I have constantly been in touch with readers through the post. My mailbag has been larger than ever during recent weeks, for I have received hundreds of letters in praise of the new GEM. It pleased me a lot to see the result of my efforts so warmly congratulated by the majority of readers. As J. Bingham, of Stoke, said in his letter: "Such was the excellence of the GEM I didn't think it was possible to improve upon it; but thanks to your good work, Mr. Editor, you have lifted the old paper far above other boys' magazines, and now it is unbeatable, unequalled."

Thank you, Reader Bingham, for your few well-chosen words!

"THE THIEF!"

Another reason why I am glad to have a few words with you this week is because of next Wednesday's St. Jim's story, which is the first of a great series. I have dealt with hundreds of Martin Clifford's yarns, but I must say "The Thief" is the finest one I've ever read. For real human interest, dramatic intensity, and gripping school adventure, the story has not been surpassed in the long history of the GEM.

It deals with the return to the St. Jim's district of Tickey Tapp, the scoundrel who used to run a gambling den on Wayland Moor—until Tom Merry & Co. smashed it up, thereby saving George Gore from trouble. But Gore has not learned his lesson, for he falls into Tickey Tapp's clutches again—the outcome of which is far more serious for the Shell junior than on the previous occasion. I will not tell you any more, but leave Martin Clifford to unfold this powerful yarn next week.

In addition, the next number will contain another ripping Greyfriars story, telling of the trouble Bunter causes when the Famous Four take over their new study in the Remove. Then there are the other grand features—all up to the usual high standard. Don't forget to order your GEM early, chums.

THE NEW "MODERN BOY."

Before I close down, there's another important matter to which I want to draw the attention of readers. Big things have been happening to our companion paper, "MODERN BOY." The size has been increased to twenty-four large pages, measuring 15 ins. by 10½ ins., which means that the paper has been practically doubled. The first issue in its new form is now on sale, and in it you will find a truly amazing programme. There are EIGHT STORIES, including a splendid war-flying story of the future called: "WINGS OVER THE PACIFIC!"; a Biggles story: "BIGGLES ON THE TREASURE TRAIL" by Flying-officer Johns; Captain Justice's greatest adventure: "SIEGE OF STATION A!"; a funny Told-in-the-Tuckshop story: "THE FLYING BIKE!"; "SKYLINE CITY STRAIGHT AHEAD!"

(Continued on page 36.)

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"You had better go and get ready now, Trimble."

"B-b-but—" babbled Trimble helplessly.

"What is it, my boy?" asked Mr. Lathom, blinking at him over his spectacles in surprise.

"I—I—I—" stuttered Trimble.

"Well?"

"I—I couldn't give Mr. Railton all—all that trouble, sir!" gasped Baggy. "I—I'll go by train, sir!"

"There is no trouble in the matter, Trimble, as Mr. Railton is driving through Lexham on his way to Bognor," said Mr. Lathom. "It will save your railway fare also, which is a consideration!"

"Oh, no, sir! Not at all, sir! The—the fact is, I—I'd rather go by train, sir!" gasped the hapless schemer.

Mr. Lathom looked at him rather sharply.

"Nonsense, Trimble!" he said. "Mr. Railton has very kindly offered to give you a lift in his car to Lexham, and he will put you down at your own door."

"But—but I'm not going—I mean, I don't want—the fact is, sir, I—I—I—"

Baggy's voice trailed off.

It was simply impossible to give a reason for refusing Mr. Railton's kind offer. The only reason Baggy could give was that he wasn't really going to Lexham, that there was no funeral at all, and that he dared not let Mr. Railton see his father, who, of course, would have been astounded to learn that the Housemaster had brought Baggy home for a funeral that was non-existent.

Certainly, Mr. Railton would discover the facts of the matter—and Baggy turned quite cold all over at the thought. Baggy stood with his fat knees knocking together, blinking at Mr. Lathom in horror and dismay. He had hoped to be the object of kindness and sympathy. But he was getting altogether too much kindness now.

Mr. Lathom blinked at him, more and more surprised. He could not understand Trimble—though a keener man would have understood him thoroughly.

"What do you mean, Trimble?" he asked sharply.

"I—I—I mean—"

"Well?"

"You—you see, sir, I—I—I—"

"You are not quite yourself, Trimble," said Mr. Lathom kindly. "You are upset, my boy. Say no more; go now and get ready for the journey."

Baggy Trimble staggered from the study.

A wild idea was in his mind of bolting at once out of gates. Somehow, anyway, he had to keep out of Mr. Railton's car; he had to keep the Housemaster from calling at the Trimble home in Lexham. Discovery and disaster loomed ahead of Baggy Trimble.

He rolled away to the door of the School House. And several juniors who looked at him, and noted the horrified dismay in his fat face, wondered whether there was anything after all in his tale of a family loss.

"Trimble!"

"Oh dear!" gasped Trimble.

He had almost run into Mr. Railton.

He stopped, gasping for breath. The Housemaster fixed his eyes on Trimble with a very curious look.

"You have seen Mr. Lathom, Trimble?"

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"Oh! Yes, sir!" mumbled Baggy.

"He has told you that I shall take you with me in the car as far as your home at Lexham," said the Housemaster.

"Ow! I—I mean, yes, sir."

"You will get ready at once, Trimble!"

"Oh dear!"

"Bai Jove!" Trimble heard that involuntary ejaculation from Arthur Augustus D'Arey, and from somewhere he thought he heard the sound of a chuckle. A good many fellows had heard Mr. Railton's words. And Mr. Railton's words, of course, conveyed to all hearers that Baggy's game was up.

"We start in five minutes, Trimble," said Mr. Railton.

"I—I can go by train, sir," mumbled the wretched Baggy.

"You will go by car, Trimble, and you will get ready at once!"

"I—I—I—"

"Well?"

"I don't want to give you a lot of trouble, sir! No—no need to take me as far as my home, sir!" stammered Trimble. "If—if you drop me at Lexham, I—I—I'll walk home, sir. In—in the circumstances, sir, my—my people will—will be rather upset, sir, by—a visitor arriving in a car."

"I hardly think so, Trimble," said Mr. Railton. "Most certainly I shall take you to your father's house, and speak to Mr. Trimble before I leave you there."

"Oh, lor'!"

Baggy almost collapsed.

He realised now that the Housemaster was, indeed, rather more "wide" than Mr. Lathom. The coincidence of the Trimble funeral, on the same day as the Head's exam had in fact occurred to Mr. Railton's mind.

Fellows gathered round the Housemaster and the hapless Baggy in breathless interest. Baggy had nearly, very nearly, got away with it. But—evidently—not quite!

"Have you anything more to say, Trimble?" Mr. Railton's voice and look were grim.

"I—I—I—"

"If you have any confession to make, Trimble—"

"Oh crumbs!"

"If there has indeed been a serious occurrence in your family, Trimble, I have only the deepest sympathy for you," said Mr. Railton. "But if this is another trick to elude the examination this afternoon, Trimble, you had better confess while there is yet time—as I shall certainly ascertain the facts from your father."

"Ow!"

"For the last time, Trimble—"

Baggy gasped.

"The—the fact is, sir—"

"Well?"

"I—I—I was—was mistaken, sir! There was—was a mistake. My—my brother recovered, sir—"

"What?"

"It—it was a—a—a sudden recovery, sir, at—the last moment, sir!" stuttered the wretched Baggy. "So—so—so there won't be any funeral this afternoon, after all, sir."

"Bai Jove!" murmured Arthur Augustus.

"If he thinks Railton will swallow that—" murmured Tom Merry to his chums; and Manners and Lowther chuckled.

Mr. Railton did not look like "swallowing" it. His brow grew thunderous.

"Trimble!" His voice was thunderous, too.

Baggy jumped.

"Ow! Yes, sir!"

"You—you dare to tell me such a palpable falsehood!" thundered the Housemaster. "Confess the truth at once, you young rascal. You have invented this story from beginning to end, to obtain leave from school this afternoon, to escape the examination."

"Ow!"

"Answer me!"

"I—I—I—" babbled Baggy.

"Very well: I will take you to the Head, who will question you," said Mr. Railton.

"Oh dear! I don't want to go to the Head!" wailed Baggy. "I—I—I own up, sir! It—it really was a—a—a joke, sir—"

"Upon my word!"

There was a brief silence. Mr. Railton's eyes looked as if they were boring holes in the hapless schemer of the Fourth.

"Trimble!" he said at last.

"Oh dear!"

"You confess that your whole story was false from beginning to end?"

"Oh crickey! Yes, sir!" groaned Baggy.

"Very well. I shall not punish you now, Trimble, as you are to sit in an examination this afternoon. I shall attend to you after the examination. You may go."

Baggy tottered away.

The best-laid schemes of mice and men gang aft agley, as the poet has told us. Baggy had been very near to success. But he had not, after all, got away with it. And when the Fourth Form went into the examination-room that afternoon, there was one member of the Form who

limped in dismally, looking as if he found life scarcely worth living.

After all his dodges and devices, Baggy was landed in the exam after all, utterly unprepared for it—all his preparations had been for dodging it! He had the dimmest apprehensions of the result of the exam!

Baggy Trimble's apprehensions were well-founded.

All the Fourth scraped through with more or less credit, with the single, solitary exception of Baggy Trimble.

Baggy's paper was absolutely hopeless.

With the rest of the Form, the Head expressed himself more or less content. Only one fellow's paper had been so hopelessly bad that a flogging was to be handed out.

Baggy was the unhappy victim.

He had one consolation, such as it was. As he was booked for a Head's flogging, Mr. Railton said nothing more about punishment for his scheming, doubtless considering that Baggy would get enough from the Head. That was something, as far as it went.

Baggy did indeed get enough from the Head. His own impression was that he got too much—much too much. For a long, long time afterwards. Baggy's groans were deep and dismal; and in all the House there was none to sympathise. The opinion of Tom Merry & Co. was that Baggy had asked for it, and that it was a good thing that he had got it; and doubtless they were right.

(Next Wednesday: "THE THIEF"—first great yarn of a smashing series, featuring George Gore and Reginald Talbot. Don't miss it—order your GEM early.)



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PEN PALS COUPON

19-2-38

THE MAIDEN VOYAGE OF THE REMOVE SAILORS ENDS IN A WRECK!

The Greyfriars Sailors!

By FRANK RICHARDS.

(Author of the grand long yarns of Greyfriars appearing every Saturday in our companion paper, the "Magnet.")

WHAT HAPPENED LAST WEEK.

Harry Wharton & Co. and Billy Bunter visit the fishing village of Pegg, near Greyfriars, for the auction of an old schooner. They are interested in the sale because when the vessel was wrecked on the rocks in Pegg Bay, some weeks before, it was Harry Wharton who had swum out to it and rescued the sole survivor—Captain Stump.

The captain is at the sale, and, learning that Wharton's uncle is wealthy, he urges the junior to buy the schooner, which has been patched up and refloated. The old seaman wants to see the vessel run for pleasure cruises, with himself as skipper.

It is out of the question for Harry even to think of buying the schooner; but he would like to, for he has in mind an idea of starting a sailor corps at Greyfriars. Little does he dream that the schooner is to become his!

At the sale, Bunter, for a joke, throws his voice so that it appears to be Harry Wharton who makes the final bid of one hundred and ten pounds! Faced with finding the money, Harry goes straight away to see his uncle. Meanwhile, the other juniors return to Greyfriars to explain to Mr. Quelch why Wharton has not returned.

(Now read on.)

Awkward!

WHEN the juniors reached Greyfriars from Friardale, Billy Bunter cut off, not intending by any means to join in the visit to Mr. Quelch's study to explain why Harry Wharton had not returned. Bob Cherry, Nugent, and Hurree Singh entered the School House and hesitated.

"We may as well get it over," said Bob Cherry. "It's no good leaving it till calling-over, when Harry will be missed."

"Yes, rather!"

"The ratherfulness is terrific."

"Come on, then!" said Bob Cherry, marching off to Mr. Quelch's door.

He knocked, and the Form-master's deep voice bade him enter. The three juniors went in, and the Remove master looked at them.

"Well?"

The monosyllable was shot out at them like a stone from a catapult, and it made them feel more uncomfortable than ever.

"If you please, sir," said Bob Cherry.

"Exactly!" said Nugent. "If you please——"

"The pleasefulness is terrific!" murmured Hurree Jamsat Ram Singh.

The Remove master frowned.

"If you have anything to say to me say it at once, and leave my study," he said.

"Certainly, sir!" said Bob Cherry. "It's about Wharton——"

"He isn't coming back——"

"He's had to go away on business——"

"Important business——"

"He's coming back by the last train——"

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"So will you please excuse him——"

"As it was very important——"

Mr. Quelch rose to his feet.

"Will you kindly speak one at a time and explain what you are talking about?" he said quietly. "You tell me, Nugent."

"If you please, sir," stammered Nugent, "Harry—I mean, Wharton—has just bought a ship——"

"Nugent!" thundered Mr. Quelch.

"Yes, sir—I—I mean, a schooner——"

"If this is a joke," said the Remove master, "I fail to see where the humour comes in. I give you one minute to make yourself clear, Nugent."

"It was an auction at Pegg, sir," said Nugent, hurrying out the words breathlessly. "There was a—a mistake owing to a silly joke, and the auctioneer knocked down the schooner to Wharton for a hundred and ten pounds."

"Is it possible?"

"Yes, sir, and he's gone to raise the money——"

"Wharton raise hundred and ten pounds! Are you dreaming, Nugent?"

"He—he thought he'd better see his uncle about it, and he's gone to Wharton Lodge," stammered Nugent. "He hopes you'll excuse him——"

Mr. Quelch's brows contracted.

"This is very extraordinary, Nugent."

"The extraordinaryfulness is terrific."

"Wharton had no right to go without permission, and I shall speak to him when he returns. You may go."

"Yes, sir; but——"

"You may go."

"We hope, sir, that——"

"You may go!"

And they went!

Uncle and Nephew!

COLONEL WHARTON was sitting in the library at Wharton Lodge. The night had set in dark and windy, and the trees in the park outside were rustling and groaning. The colonel was alone. He sat in the deep easy-chair, looking into the ruddy glow of the fire and thinking.

He was thinking of his nephew.

The colonel had been a soldier all his life, and he had never married. Yet, like all men of sound and healthy natures, he had a strong affection for children and a delight in the society of young people. And he was thinking, as he sat there, what a difference his nephew made to his life.

He was thinking, too, of the change time had wrought in Harry, his dead brother's son. He remembered how, on his return from India, he had found a proud, high-spirited headstrong boy in the charge of Miss Wharton at the Lodge—a self-willed boy who was determined never to accept the curb.

The colonel had tried his hand with him in vain, and then he had sent him to Greyfriars. That had made all the difference.

THERE'S NOT A DULL MOMENT IN THIS GREAT YARN OF SEA AND SCHOOL ADVENTURE—STARRING HARRY WHARTON & CO.

Knocking about among lads who were not inclined to stand any nonsense had opened Harry's eyes more widely to facts, and he had lost almost all of the passionate, intractable ways which had marred his character when the colonel had first taken him in charge.

At that moment there was a ring at the bell. A minute later and the door of the library opened, and the colonel rose in amazement at the sight of his nephew.

"Harry!"

The colonel looked at him keenly as he shook hands with him. He noted the troubled expression of the boy's face, but he made no remark for the moment. Harry gave his hat and coat to the footman, and the door closed.

The colonel pulled a high-backed chair up to the fire.

"Sit down, my boy! Now, what is the matter? Anything wrong at Greyfriars?"

"Oh, no, uncle!"

"I suppose you have Dr. Locke's permission to pay me a visit, Harry? I need not say that I am glad to see you—in fact, I was just thinking of you—but—"

"I think Dr. Locke will excuse me if you ask him, uncle."

"But—but why are you here, then?"

Wharton coloured a little.

"You told me once to come to you in any time of difficulty, uncle," he said. "I'm in an awkward fix now."

"You have come to the right place," said his uncle quietly. "Yet I can hardly think that you have been doing anything reckless, Harry."

Wharton smiled.

"Oh, no, uncle! It's an awkward business, but it's due to a stupid fellow playing a joke. Only I'm responsible."

"For another's action?"

"Yes, in a way. The young ass—I may as well tell you it was Bunter—has taken up ventriloquism, and he made me appear to give a bid at an auction. The auctioneer believed that I made the bid, and the thing was knocked down to me. The chap was with me, you see, and I felt that I couldn't let an outsider be put to trouble and loss for what a fellow with me did."

The colonel looked grave.

"I suppose you are right, Harry."

"Only, if you don't take the same view, uncle, I don't see what's to be done. It seems rotten that a chap I took with me should cause an auctioneer loss—and it will mean a good deal."

Colonel Wharton nodded.

"But what is the sum?"

"A hundred and ten pounds."

Colonel Wharton almost jumped.

"What?"

The plunge was made, and Harry went through with it now.

"A hundred and ten pounds, uncle."

"What the dickens is the thing you have bought, then?" asked the colonel, in amazement.

"A schooner!"

"A—a what?" gasped the colonel.

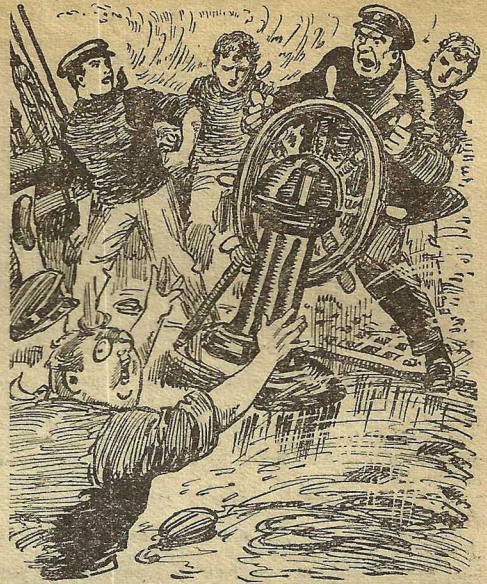
"A vessel, uncle."

"Oh, a schooner!" said Colonel Wharton. "You—you have bought a ship for a hundred and ten pounds?"

"You heard of the wreck in Pegg Bay, sir, last term—"

The colonel's face softened.

"I remember how you risked your life, you



At the same moment as the captain seized the wheel there came a grinding crash. It was the hull of the schooner scraping a sunken rock! "She's aground!" yelled Captain Stump. Crunch! Grind!

young scamp, to fetch a wooden-legged seaman off it."

"Well, that's the schooner. She's floating now, and, though she's awfully rocky, she's worth the money if it can be found."

"It can be found, Harry, if you are bound in honour to find it."

"I feel that I am, uncle. The auctioneer was acting in perfect good faith, and it would come hard upon him to have to make a fresh notification of a new sale and go through all the business over again—to say nothing of making him look ridiculous. I feel that I'm responsible."

"Very good—the money shall be paid."

"Thank you, uncle!" said Harry gratefully. "Of course, I want you to pay for it from—from what I'm to have when I'm twenty-one—"

The colonel smiled.

"We will talk of that another time, Harry. But about this ship—I suppose we'd better let it go for as much as it will fetch and minimise the loss as much as we can."

"If you think that best, uncle, certainly," said Harry Wharton slowly.

His uncle looked at him quickly.

"Had you any other view, Harry?"

"Yes, uncle; if I may tell you—"

"Go ahead!" said the old soldier in his terse way.

Then Harry plunged into the explanation of his new idea—the sailor cadet corps for the Greyfriars juniors.

The colonel listened with kindly attention to the boy's enthusiastic explanation, watching meanwhile the handsome, animated face.

Harry Wharton's eyes glinted. "I shall leave you out, in any case!" he exclaimed. "You can't swim, and you can't play a decent game of any sort, and you can't do your lessons—you can't do anything except gibe at a fellow whose shoes you aren't fit to clean!"

Snoop turned scarlet.

Harry Wharton had a painfully frank way of speaking at times, and snobbishness was a thing he never could stand patiently.

"Well, you've got it, Snoopy—and you've got it in the neck!" chuckled Hazeldene. "Will you put my name down, Wharton? I've learned to swim, you know."

"You can leave me out!" shouted Bulstrode. "And if you want a name for your ship, you can call it the Workhouse or the Casual Ward, or the Factory!"

"Hold your tongue, Bulstrode!"

"I'll hold my tongue when I like!"

"You'd better like now, then, or there'll be trouble! Come on, you chaps, I'm waiting to take your names down! Only swimmers need apply."

"Put down my name!" said Trevor.

Harry gave him a quick nod. Trevor was the son of a rich Lancashire manufacturer, and he had been one of the set to rag Linley when the mill-boy first came to Greyfriars. But he had dropped that now.

Names came in fast enough. But as only good swimmers were wanted, Wharton had to weed them out. The whole number were enrolled as members of the cadet corps, but only a dozen were found suitable for the crew of the schooner.

"Good!" said Harry, closing his book at last. "That's done. Now all you chaps who can't swim will have to take that as first training. It's a bit cold for the river at this time of the year. But there's the swimming bath here at Greyfriars, and instruction to be had there for the asking. Now for another matter. We can't man a ship and sail it in Eton jackets, can we?"

"Blessed if I see why not!" said Trevor.

"Oh, it wouldn't be the thing. Besides, we may get duckings and spoil our clothes. Also, it will look ever so much more businesslike to be in yachting clothes."

"By Jove, rather!"

"I say, you fellows—"

"We're going to have a complete rig-out in navy blue," said Harry. "Caps and all complete. I rather think that's the proper caper."

"I say, you fellows—"

"But that will cost money," said Hazeldene doubtfully.

"Oh, that's all right!" said Wharton cheerfully. "My uncle is going to see to that. He has promised to stand the rig-out for the first crew of the schooner. I told him that we should make it a dozen, and he's going to foot the bill for it."

"My only Aunt Maria!" said Russell. "I wish I had a few uncles like that. Awfully useful to have about the house, I should think." "The usefulness is terrific!"

"So that point's settled," said Harry. "And there's another point. There's that old sailor-man in Pegg with the wooden leg, who calls himself Captain Stump. So long as the schooner belongs to us, my uncle is going to pay him to look after the vessel, and to help us sail it."

"Bravo!"

"So I should think the wheeze will be a

success. I may as well say that I've wired to a London tailor to come down and take the measurements for the yachting suits."

"I say, you fellows—"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Were you talking, Bunter?"

"Yes, Cherry, I was; and you knew it all along," said Bunter, with an indignant blink. "I want to have my name put down for the crew."

"But you can't swim."

"Yes, I can. I can swim like a fish."

"But we shan't want any ballast in the schooner," said Nugent. "You'd be superfluous."

"Oh, really, Nugent! I say, you fellows, you'll want a cook on the ship, you know, and I don't mind doing anything to oblige you chaps."

"Oh, we'll put Bunter down as cook!" said Harry Wharton, laughing.

"Well, I think you ought to, you know, as you really owe it to me that you have the ship at all," said Billy Bunter. "You must admit that you got it through me."

"Well, of all the cheek!" gasped Bob Cherry. "He's taking credit to himself for that now."

"Oh, he can come as cook! The cook, of course, will be expected to provide all the grub—"

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"And any yarn about a disappointment of a postal order won't be accepted."

"Oh, really—"

"The tailor will be down to-morrow," said Wharton. "The meeting will now adjourn for swimming exercise."

Kind Offers!

EXCITEMENT ran high in the Greyfriars Remove. That day and the next the juniors talked of nothing else but the cadet corps and the cruise planned for Saturday afternoon. Even the seniors took an interest in the proceedings, and Carberry of the Sixth was kindness itself.

The Sixth Form bully met Harry Wharton in the Close on Friday, after morning lessons, and assumed an agreeable grin for the occasion.

"Hallo, Wharton!" he said. "Stop a minute, will you?"

Harry stopped. He disliked Carberry very much, but he was always civil. And, besides, the Sixth Former was a prefect.

"I hear you're getting up a cruise on a schooner or something," said Carberry agreeably. "It looks like being a fine day to-morrow, and I rather think it will be jolly out on the bay."

"I hope so, Carberry."

"Some friends of mine think it will be a jolly good idea to take the schooner for a cruise round the bay," said Carberry. "We should want it after dinner until tea-time."

Wharton's face set grimly.

(Continued on next page.)



"Hey, you chaps!"

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"Would you? Is that all?"
 "Yes; and then you kids could have it," said Carberry suspiciously. "Some of you might come. We couldn't be bothered by a parcel of kids, but you and one other could come. You could make yourselves useful."

"Yes; I've no doubt we could make ourselves useful."

"Then it's settled?"

"Not quite," said Harry Wharton coolly. "You see, we want the schooner ourselves on Saturday afternoon."

"But I've told you I want it—I and my friends."

"Then I'm afraid you and your friends will be disappointed. You see, we want it, and, as it's ours, we mean to have it."

Carberry's brow darkened.

"So you mean to refuse, you young cad?"

"I don't mean to give up an afternoon's cruise to lend you the vessel," said Harry quietly. And he walked away, leaving the Sixth Former pale with anger.

"Hallo! You've been ruffling up Carberry!" remarked Blundell of the Fifth, stopping Harry Wharton a dozen paces away. "Anything wrong?"

Harry laughed.

"Oh no! Only a little difference of opinion!"

"Jolly cool, to have a difference of opinion with a prefect," said Bland, who was with Blundell. The two Fifth Formers seemed to be in a particularly amiable mood. As a rule, they were too lordly to talk familiarly with members of the Remove.

"But I say!" said Blundell. "I hear you're sailing that wrecked schooner round the bay to-morrow afternoon, and you've got an old sailor to help you."

"That's so."

"We were thinking—Bland and I—that we'd come and take command," said Blundell. "We're rather nervous of you kids getting into trouble, and we shouldn't mind a little exertion to see you safe through, should we, Bland?"

"Not at all," said Bland.

"What do you say, Wharton?"

"Sorry; only the command is filled," said Wharton politely. "We could take a couple of extra hands as waiters, if you like."

And he walked away, leaving the Fifth Formers glaring.

He had just reached the School House when Temple, Dabney & Co. of the Upper Fourth collared him. They surrounded him with agreeable smiles. By this time Harry knew what was coming, but he grinned politely and waited.

"I hear you're skippering a schooner," remarked Temple. "Jolly pleasant sort of thing in the decent weather we're getting now."

"Oh, rather!" said Dabney.

"We were thinking—" began Fry.

"Let me finish, Fry."

"You never do finish, Temple."

"We were thinking," said Temple, with a frown at his follower, "that we'd help you youngsters out. We'll come down in a party and show you how to handle the vessel."

"Oh, rather!"

"Thanks!" said Wharton. "But we're not asking any help at present."

"Well, not to put too fine a point on it, we'd like to come," said Temple, as if that great condescension from the captain of the Fourth settled it.

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"Sorry, but we've no room."

"Look here, we're coming down to help you out—"

"If you come on board the schooner we shall help you out!" said Wharton. And he went into the School House. Temple & Co. were speechless for a full minute after he had left them.

Wharton hurried to the Common-room. He had received word that the tailor from London was there, and he had come in to see him. He found most of the crew of the schooner assembled, and a little bald man with wisps of hair over his temples.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here you are!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "Here's Mr. Green waiting for you. Mr. Green, this is our respected skipper, Harry Wharton."

Mr. Green nodded his head in welcome.

"Sorry to keep you waiting," said Harry. "Here you are. Fetch in the other fellows, Bob, will you?"

Mr. Green ran his tape over Harry Wharton's sturdy form. When Billy Bunter's turn came, Mr. Green eyed him very dubiously.

"No extra charge for the porpoise," said Bob Cherry. "You can make it up on Skinner. He's as thin as a lath."

"I say, Cherry, I wish you wouldn't insinuate that I'm fat," remonstrated Billy Bunter. "I admit I've got some flesh on my limbs—"

"More flesh than limbs, I rather think," said Bob Cherry. "Still, you can't help being double-width."

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

Mr. Green ran his tape round Bunter's fat form. The measurements were all taken at last, and then came the question of the delivery of the goods.

"Let me see," said Mr. Green, rubbing his chin with the stump of his pencil, "shall I come down to fit you, say, this day next week?"

"Eh?"

"And the clothes can be delivered the following week."

"Which?"

"That won't do," said Harry Wharton. "We want to wear them to-morrow afternoon. We're going for a cruise. If we don't have the things then, they're no good."

"Then will you allow me to make a suggestion?" said the tailor. "We have a ready-made department, and I've no doubt that these sizes can all be found there—with perhaps one exception. A few alterations can be made to-day, and the goods sent off to reach you during the morning. That is the only method by which you can obtain the suits on Saturday."

Wharton looked doubtful.

"I suppose they'll fit?" he said dubiously.

"I can answer for them," said Mr. Green blandly. "Any little further alterations you require can be made later, the goods being returned to us for that purpose."

"Very well, then. We simply must have them to-morrow."

And Mr. Green departed with his order.

The Anchor's Weighed!

THE next day, sure enough, the consignment from the tailor's ready-made department arrived at Greyfriars.

It came during morning lessons, and was carried into the Remove dormitory. The juniors hurried there when work was over and they were free to try on their new attire.

The bundle was unfastened, and the yachting suits spread out to view.

Mr. Green's goods had some qualities. The cloth was good, and the cut, considering the clothes were of the ready-made variety, was rather good.

But the fit!

Mr. Green had blandly promised that the nearest sizes to those he had taken should be sent, and any little alterations should be made afterwards.

It soon became clear that some little alterations would be required.

Harry Wharton was kept talking by the Form-master for some minutes after school was dismissed, Mr. Quelch cautioning him once more to use great care in making that cruise on the bay in such an unlucky craft as the schooner.

Harry arrived in the dormitory a few minutes later than the others, and found most of the crew of the schooner already rigged out in their new garments.

He stared blankly at them.

Skinner, the thin junior, had clothes on that bagged round him like empty sacks. Billy Bunter, with a very red face, was cramming himself into garments that threatened to split with every new effort.

Russell was turning up the trousers, which were six inches too long, and Trevor was trying to button up the jacket that was six inches too narrow.

Bob Cherry and Nugent, being medium sizes, had pretty good fits, except that Bob's long legs stuck out of the ends of his trousers with a liberal display of ankle.

"My hat!" said Harry, staring.

"Faith, and it's suffocated I am!" gasped Micky Desmond, who was crammed into a suit much too tight for him. "I believe the buttons will go ivery minute, begorra!"

"I—I don't think I can get into this!" gasped Billy Bunter.

"Go it, Bunty!" said Bob Cherry encouragingly. "It will make you feel a little like a sardine in a tin, but you'll get used to it."

"The fitfulness is terrific," said the nabob.

Hurree Singh looked very nice, and so did Mark Linley, whose sturdy form was well-fitted by the new garb. Harry Wharton slipped into his own suit, and found that he was a pretty good fit also.

Pop!

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Who's that firing a pistol?"

"Faith, and it isn't a pistol; it's one of my buttons going!" gasped Micky Desmond. "Sure, I'm thinking that the rest will follow!"

Pop, pop, pop!

"You'll have to wear the jacket unfastened!" laughed Harry Wharton. "I say, Bunty, don't burst anything, you know."

"I've got 'em on!" gasped Bunter.

"Harrah!"

"They feel awfully tight, you know. I'm blessed if I know how I shall ever get them off again."

"You needn't think of getting them off yet," said Nugent. "If you have anything to eat this afternoon they'll burst, and you'll get out that way. You'd better be careful what you eat outdoors."

"I say," said Bunter in alarm, "I—I think I'll change back into my other things. I—I feel awfully hungry already."

"Oh, they'll stretch!" said Wharton reassuringly. "Better turn up the trousers; they're too

long as well as too narrow. You'll flop over. Look out!"

The warning came too late.

Billy Bunter moved along, but there was a foot or more of loose cloth flopping over his boots, and he stumbled and went staggering.

He caught Hurree Singh round the neck to save himself, and brought the hapless Nabob of Bhanipur to the floor with a bump.

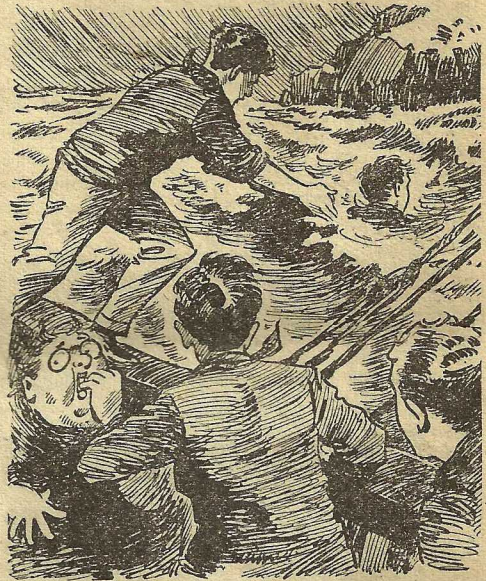
"Oh!" gasped Billy Bunter.

"O-o-o-o!" gurgled the nabob. "The removefulness of this terrific weight would be the savingfulness of my valuable life, my worthy chums."

Nugent rolled the fat junior off, and there was a significant rending sound.

"Ow! They're bursting! I knew they would!"

"It's only the waistcoat," said Nugent comfort-



"We shall go down with her if we don't hurry!" exclaimed Harry Wharton. "Jump for it, you chaps!" And without waiting for the schooner to sink deeper the amateur sailors plunged into the water.

ingly. "This can't be the first waistcoat you've burst. You're all right."

Pop, pop!

Desmond's last buttons went.

"We shall have to make them do," said Wharton, laughing. "We can have them altered next week, in time for next Saturday's cruise. It's time to get down to dinner now."

The dozen juniors caused rather a sensation when they entered the dining-hall in yachting garb.

Wharton had obtained Mr. Quelch's permission, and so nothing was said; but all Greyfriars stared at the amateur sailors.

They did not mind that, however; in fact, they rather enjoyed it. The Remove liked making a sensation.

After dinner the sailors prepared to go down to the beach. All the rest of the cadet corps formed up to march with them, though only the dozen—

or thirteen, including Bunter—were to begin the navigation of the schooner.

They marched forward down the road to the sea, and they burst into a cheer as they rounded the base of the Black Pike and came in sight of the wide blue waters. Their entrance into the quiet little fishing village of Pegg caused a fresh sensation. The fisherfolk stared at them, and the Remove enjoyed being stared at. Captain Stump was waiting on the shore, ready for them.

He saluted Harry Wharton.

"Bust my topsails!" ejaculated Captain Stump. "As fine a crew as I've ever sailed with."

"We're ready to go aboard," said Harry. "You've made a difference with the craft, Stump. Good!"

There was indeed a change in the aspect of the schooner. Jury masts had been rigged, and though they were neither so tall nor so strong as the original masts, they were a very handy makeshift.

Captain Stump, with local assistance, had done the work, and very proud of it he looked.

The juniors were pulled aboard in old Reuben's boat, leaving the cadet corps on the beach waving their hats and cheering.

"Faith, and it's a ripping craft," said Micky Desmond enthusiastically. "Ye'll be making me steersman, Wharton. It's heaps of steering I've done on the loughs in ould Ireland."

"Ay, ay!"

"Ha, ha!"

Wharton looked at Cherry, who had laughed.

"What are you cackling at, Bob? Ay, ay, is the correct expression."

"It strikes you rather comical at first," said Bob, grinning. "But it's all right, my hearty. Heave away!"

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"I see you've had the name painted on the ship," said Hazeldene, looking pleased. It was his sister's name that had been bestowed upon the schooner.

"Yes," said Harry, laughing. "The Marjorie. Now, you chaps, we've got to form up the crew. We won't trouble about separate watches as we shall all be on deck all the time. I appoint Bob Cherry first mate—"

"Ay, ay, captain!" said Bob Cherry, touching his cap.

"And Frank Nugent second mate—"

"Ay, ay, sir!"

"And Billy Bunter cook—steward—purser—cabin-boy—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I accept the post," said Billy Bunter, with dignity. "I'm the only chap here who knows how to cook."

"And you can purse and stew, I suppose?" said Skinner.

"Purse and stew?"

"Yes; I suppose that's what a purser and steward has to do."

"Oh, really, Skinner—"

"Micky Desmond is coxswain and Ogilvy boatswain."

"Faith, and I'll steer ye well. I've steered on the loughs of ould Ireland—"

"But what about a pipe?" said Ogilvy.

"What on earth do you want a pipe for?" You don't smoke; besides, smoking isn't allowed."

"Ass! I mean—"

"No member of the crew is allowed to call the skipper an ass."

"Well, I mean the bo'sun's pipe—the whistle, you know. How am I to pipe all hands on deck if I haven't a pipe?" demanded Ogilvy.

"Oh, I see! Here's a football whistle."

"Good! That will do rippingly."

And Ogilvy forthwith proceeded to blow piercing blasts to get into form ready for his new duties as bo'sun.

"Ow!" roared Bob Cherry, stopping his ears with his fingers. "Shut up! Ring off! You're not refereeing a match, you ass!"

"Shut up, bo'sun!" shouted Harry Wharton. "Now, then, all hands on deck!"

Skinner, the funny man of the Remove, solemnly knelt down and spread his hands on the deck, pretending to misunderstand. Bob Cherry promptly trod on them, and Skinner jumped up with a fiendish yell.

"Now, then, my lads—"

"Ow! He's nearly squashed my hands!"

"Serve you right!" said the skipper severely. "There's a time to be funny. Shut up! Now, my lads, stand by the capstan. The anchor's got to be weighed."

And Skinner, who was rubbing his fingers ruefully, actually forgot to ask how much it was expected to weigh.

Everything Goes Swimmingly!

THE schooner glided out into the bay. There was a strong current setting across the bay towards the towering Shoulder, and as soon as the vessel was released from the anchor, she drifted into it.

The wind was very light, but there was quite enough for the schooner, if the sails were once set.

Captain Stump, who was certainly an experienced sailorman, stumped up and down deck and gave directions.

He treated Harry Wharton with marked respect, never speaking to him without touching his cap, and, whenever he could, giving him information quietly. It was tactful of the old salt and Wharton appreciated it. It would have been easy for the wooden-legged sailorman to act otherwise, especially as the safety of the Marjorie depended upon his guidance. For the bay was full of perils to the unwary, and not one of the Greyfriars juniors could be considered much of a sailor so far.

Micky Desmond probably knew less about sailing than anybody else, though he had cheerfully constituted himself steersman.

He had steered boats on the Irish loughs, but that was a very different matter from steering a ship on the ocean. But fortune favoured him at first, and he had good luck with the wheel.

Under the directions of the wooden-legged salt, the mainsail was shaken out.

The mainsail was almost in tatters at the time of the wreck, but Captain Stump had industriously patched and sewn, till it was something like a sail again. The mainsail was at present the only sail the schooner possessed, but it was quite sufficient for the speed the youthful crew required.

When the canvas was seen to fall out and fill in the wind, there rang a loud cheer from the shore, where the rest of the Remove were watching eagerly.

From the shore, the schooner seemed to glide along very easily, and it looked the easiest thing in the world to sail her.

The same impression was felt by most of the amateur sailors.

The sail had been set successfully, and the schooner was sweeping through the blue waters in the bright sunshine, and the juniors felt extremely pleased with themselves.

"Everything seems to be going on swimmingly," Bob Cherry remarked. "Blessed if I thought it was so jolly easy to sail a ship."

"You want to steer clear of the rocks, sir," said Captain Stump, with a faint grin. "I'll just go below for a turn, and I'll be up in a minute."

And the old sailorman descended the hatchway.

The sea looked calm, and the schooner, except for a slight list, sailed well. It did, indeed, seem an easy thing to be a sailorman.

There was the sound below of something gurgling into a glass, and Bob Cherry grinned.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo, Stumpy's sampling the rum!" he remarked. "I didn't know you had any aboard, skipper."

"And I didn't, either," said Harry Wharton. "Hallo, we're getting near the Shoulder! There's the place where the schooner was wrecked."

"We'll give it a wide berth, then."

"The widefulness of the berth should be terrific."

"I say, you fellows." Bunter put his head up from below. "There's nothing here but a rotten old oil-stove to cook with."

"Sorry," said Bob Cherry. "We'll have the latest thing in electric-cookers fitted up for you next Saturday."

"Oh, really, Cherry! I'm afraid I can't do much cooking with such accommodation. The place isn't very big, either. It's lucky we brought some sandwiches, as I shall be some time with the cooking."

"Yes, so it is; you can serve the sandwiches round."

"I can't."

"Yes, you can—you're steward. You can't shirk your stewing duties like that."

"I don't want to shirk them, but there aren't any sandwiches left."

"Why, we brought enough for everybody."

"Yes, but I had to have a snack, if I'm going to cook."

"My hat! He's scoffed all the sandwiches!"

"I suppose you don't want me to sink down from exhaustion, Bob Cherry?"

"Blessed if I care! I know I wanted some of those sandwiches. Go down and cook something, and cook it quick, or I'll come down and cook you!"

"Yes; but——"

"Down below!" roared Bob Cherry, picking up a belaying-pin.

And Bunter disappeared.

The schooner glided on. The great rock of the Shoulder rose more clearly before the amateur sailors, with the seagulls flying about the summit.

"I say, we shall have to steer clear of that," said Wharton. "Starboard, Micky."

"Faith, and starboard it is!"

Captain Stump put his head up on deck. A strong scent of rum proceeded from him.

"Aho, shipmates! I——"

The wooden-legged sailorman stopped abruptly. The sight of the great Shoulder towering above the vessel seemed to petrify him. He stared at it blankly and gasped. Then he came stumping excitedly on deck.

"Bout ship!" he roared. "Man the lee braces! Bust my topsails, we shall be aground before you can say Jamaica rum!"

"There's plenty of room to turn!"

"Hard-a-port!"

"We're a quarter of a mile off the Shoulder yet!"

"But the sunken rocks!" yelled the sailorman.

"My hat! I——"

"Hard-a-port!"

The sailorman yelled directions and rushed to the wheel, stumping along at a great rate. The boys, feeling that there was danger, tried to carry out his orders. But there was no time. The sailorman seized the spokes from Micky Desmond, and jammed the wheel hard down.

At the same moment came a grinding crash. It was the hull of the schooner scraping a sunken rock.

The sailing of the ship was not, after all, the easy matter the amateur sailors had at first thought.

Captain Stump gave a yell.

"She's aground!"

Crunch!

Grind!

The schooner slid back from the grinding rocks, and there was a very audible sound of water pouring in below.

Some of the juniors changed colour.

Billy Bunter bolted up from below like a rabbit from a burrow.

"The water's coming in!" he roared. "She's sinking! All the grub will be spoiled!"

But the others were thinking about something more important than grub.

Harry Wharton was thankful at that moment for the Head's caution in allowing only swimmers to man the schooner. Owing to that there was no danger to life, for the bay was quite calm, and the shore was no great distance away.

The schooner was sinking. She had struck upon the rock with a great force, and there was a yawning gap in her timbers below.

The tide was full in the bay, and the rocks that had gashed her timbers were completely covered with water.

The schooner slid back farther from the rocks, and the sound of water gushing in below was loud and threatening. There was no chance of stopping that. And there was no boat. The boats belonging to the Marjorie had been swept away and destroyed in the storm at the time of the wreck.

The juniors had not much time to think.

The water was washing over the deck almost before they knew that the schooner was done for, and there was a general rush for the side.

"Keep cool," said Harry Wharton quietly. "We've got to swim for it. But we've swum bigger distances before."

"Yes, rather! We're all right!"

"The all-rightfulness is terrific."

"I—I say, you fellows—"

"Keep close to me, Bunter, and I'll help you. Bob, you give Stump a hand."

"Right-ho!"

"Thank you, young gents! It's my fault—I ought to have stayed on deck."

"Well, you ought, as a matter of fact," said Harry. "But it can't be helped now. The schooner will be uncovered again at low tide, and we'll be able to save her. But we shall go down with her now if we don't hurry! Jump for it, you chaps!"

"Ay, ay, sir!"

THE EDITOR'S CHAIR

(Continued from page 25.)

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And without waiting for the schooner to sink deeper, the amateur sailors plunged into the water.

Thanks to Harry's coolness there was no panic. The juniors swam steadily, Harry giving aid to Billy Bunter, and Bob Cherry to the wooden-legged sailor.

There was a crowd on the beach as the unfortunate voyagers swam in.

The tide was still going in, having not quite reached the full, and that was a fortunate thing for the swimmers.

On the shore were the sailor cadet corps, most of them grinning from ear to ear. Most of the fisherfolk of Pegg, too, seemed to have collected to see the amateur sailors come swimming in.

"Well," grinned Bob Cherry, as he waded ashore, "everything has gone swimmingly, at all events!"

But the juniors were too wet to laugh at the joke.

They waded out of the water and were met with a chorus of polite remarks from the juniors ashore.

They were asked if the water was wet, and if they always sailed vessels straight downwards, and whether they enjoyed a life on the ocean wave, and so on.

With a grinning and chuckling escort they made their way to the Anchor Inn, where a good fire and brisk rub down made them feel more like themselves. They had to stay in a bedroom while their clothes were drying.

"Never mind!" said Bob Cherry, with unshaken optimism. "One swallow doesn't make a summer, and we'll be more careful next time. We can get at the schooner at low tide, and we'll have another try next Saturday."

"Yes, rather," said Harry emphatically. "We're not going to give up a good wheeze because of an accident. Hallo, Bunter, what are you snuffling about?"

"I've got a cold. I'm sneezing like anything."

"Never mind—"

"But I do mind!" howled Bunter. "And all the grub's wasted, too! I'm hungry, and I've got a fearful gold!"

But the rest of the sailors were undaunted, and before they were dry they were looking eagerly forward to the next cruise of the Marjorie.

(Next week: "BILLY BUNTER'S HOUSE-WARMING!" It proves all too warm for the chums of Study No. 1! Read all about it in this grand story of fun and adventure at Greyfriars. It's much too good to miss!)

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