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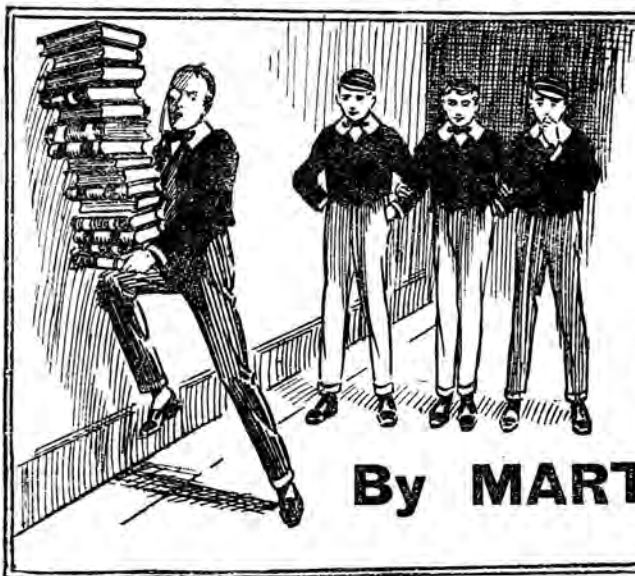
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By MARTIN CLIFFORD.

CHAPTER 1. Ready for Work.

"GREAT Scott!"
"What the dickens—"
"My hat!"

Tom Merry, Manners, and Lowther—the Terrible Three of the Shell—uttered those exclamations all together in tones of the greatest astonishment. They stopped in the passage, and stared.

"Pway don't get in the way, deah boys—"

"But what on earth—"

"What are you up to, Gussy?"

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy of the Fourth Form panted for breath. He was coming along the passage weary and heavy-laden. On each arm he had a pile of huge volumes, and his pockets were bulging out with smaller volumes. No wonder Tom Merry & Co. were astounded. Arthur Augustus was not famous as a reading chap—indeed, he was supposed to devote much more attention to the pattern of his fancy waistcoats than to his lessons, and to think more seriously about the curl in the brim of his silk hat than about preparation or Form-room work, or any trifles of that kind.

And now—

Tom Merry & Co. simply stared. D'Arcy was staggering along under a weight of learning that might have bowed down a famous professor. On his left arm were piled four great volumes, and the Terrible Three read the imposing titles of "Liddell and Scott's Lexicon," "Homeri Ilias," Xenophon's "Anabasis," and the works of Plato. On his right arm he had five big books, and they were found to be Plutarch, Demosthenes, Æschylus, Euripides, and Sophocles. The end of a Greek grammar stuck out of his pocket on the right, and his other pockets were all full.

"Pway don't stop me, deah boys!" said D'Arcy breathlessly. "These books weigh a fearful lot, you know."

"They look a bit heavy," said Tom Merry, in amazement. "Inside and out. What are you going to do with them?"

"I'm takin' them to my study."

"What for? Going to play at barricades?" asked Monty Lowther.

"Weally, Lowthah—"

"Or is it a new kind of gymnastics, carrying weights and things?" asked Manners.

"Weally, Mannahs—"

Arthur Augustus stopped in his career. One of the piles of huge volumes had lurched, and it nearly toppled over. He just saved it, but the jerk made the other pile topple, and he jammed himself against the passage wall just in time to save it.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Weally, deah boys—"

"What on earth are you going to do with those books?" demanded Tom Merry. "Does anybody know you've been clearing out the school library?"

"Yaas, wathah! I have asked Mr. Lathom's permish to bowwow books fwm the libwawy."

"A dozen at a time?"

"I wequire them all."

"You're not going to read them?" yelled Monty Lowther. Arthur Augustus nodded.

"Yaas, wathah!"

"But you don't know any Greek!"

"Quite so. I'm goin' to learn."

The Terrible Three stared at the swell of St. Jim's blankly. That Arthur Augustus D'Arcy should take up Greek of his own accord—Greek not being a compulsory subject at St. Jim's—was sufficiently surprising. But that he should start Greek with such works as the plays of Æschylus and the Iliad of Homer made the chums of the Shell gasp.

"You—you—you're going to learn Greek?" stuttered Tom Merry.

"Yaas, wathah!"

"And you're starting with Æschylus?"

"Yaas. Nothin' like tacklin' the subject thowoughly, you know. But I've got a Gweek gwammah in my pocket, too."

Next Thursday:

"THE SPY OF THE SCHOOL!" AND "THE SCHOOL UNDER CANVAS!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I fail to see anything to laugh at, dear boys," said Arthur Augustus, carefully balancing his burden against the wall, and trying to get it fair and square upon his arms again, to carry into the study. "The fact is, I'm goin' to swot a bit."

"Ha, ha, ha!" shrieked Tom Merry. "You must be going to swot if you're starting with *Æschylus* and *Euripides*."

"But what's the little game?" asked Lowther. "Have you suddenly made the acquaintance of an ancient Greek, and want to talk to him in his own language?"

"You uttah ass—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I'm goin' in for the Gweek Medal," said D'Arcy. "I've thought that it would be a wippin' thing to win that medal, you know. My patah thinks I can't do those things, and I'm just goin' to do it to surpise him."

"My hat! You will surpise him—if you do it!"

"Yaas, wathah!" said D'Arcy, with considerable satisfaction. "I'm goin' to show the patah that I can do those things. You see, it isn't good form for me to go in for the scholarships and exhibitions, because they're intended for poor chaps who can't afford to pay their fees, and it's wathah wotten for a rich chap to walk them off. But the Gweek Medal is an entirely different thing. It's not worth much fetwintically, and it's all honah to win it, without much pweffit. Fellows in the Sixth compete for it, and it would be wippin' to whack the Sixth, wouldn't it?"

"Ha, ha! Yes."

"Anybody can entah, you know. I've entahed."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And as it's only a week to the exam. I shall have to buck up," said D'Arcy.

The Terrible Three shrieked. The idea of Arthur Augustus learning sufficient Greek in a week to beat Sixth-Formers at an examination struck them as funny. Arthur Augustus was not what one would call conceited—that word did not apply to him in the least. But he had great confidence in his own powers. He was something like the young lady in the story who did not know whether she could play the violin or not, as she had never tried.

"Pway don't stand there cacklin' like a set of silly asses!" said D'Arcy. "Lend me a hand with these books if you want somethin' to do."

But the Terrible Three could not—they were in hysterics.

Arthur Augustus sniffed.

He had succeeded in carrying the terrible volumes upstairs, performing really wonderful feats of balancing in doing so. He was on the landing now, and the weight was telling upon him. He had asked permission of Mr. Lathom to borrow books for study from the school library, but probably the Fourth Form-master had not suspected that he was going to make a raid of this kind. Again the piles toppled, and D'Arcy jammed them up against the wall to keep them from rolling over and whizzing to the floor. A Greek grammar dropped out of his pocket, and "Twister's Irregular Verbs" followed with a crash.

"Bai Jove!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Arthur Augustus made one more effort to balance.

But as he drew out from the wall with his carefully-balanced burden, his foot caught upon the Greek grammar on the floor, and he stumbled.

"Ow!"

Right over went the piles of learning. Arthur Augustus was close to the top of the staircase, up which he had brought his burden with so much difficulty. He made a wild grab after the rolling volumes, and the result was that the whole pile went flying. Arthur Augustus sat down violently upon the top step, and the heavy volumes whizzed down the stairs.

There was a yell from below.

"Oh! What—Yah! Oh!"

"My only hat!" gasped Tom Merry. "It's Railton, and he's got it in the neck!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

CHAPTER 2.

Arthur Augustus Means Business.

MR. RAILTON, the Housemaster of the School House, was coming up the stairs, quite unsuspecting of danger. The sudden volley of heavy volumes took him completely by surprise.

Liddell and Scott crashed upon his chest, and he reeled. He caught at the banisters, but as he did so *Æschylus* caught him in the neck, and he let go. *Euripides* and *Plato* smote him forcibly on the waistcoat, and he sat down, with *Plutarch* and *Sophocles* thundering round him.

"Oh!" gasped Mr. Railton. "Ah! Oh, dear! Ah! Oh!"

"Bai Jove!"

"What—what—"

"Sowwy, sir—"

"What—Oh!"

Arthur Augustus staggered to his feet. He groped for his eyeglass, and jammed it into his eye, and regarded the fallen Housemaster with dismay.

Mr. Railton sat on the stairs dazed, with volumes strewn around him, not as thick as leaves in Vallombrosa, but very numerous.

"Dear me!" he gasped. "What ever has happened? D'Arcy! Is that you, D'Arcy?"

"Ya-a-a-s, sir."

Mr. Railton rose to his feet. He held on to the banisters and gasped.

"D'Arcy! How dare you?"

"Weally, sir—"

"You—you—I am astounded!" gasped the Housemaster. "You—you have dared to pelt me with books, D'Arcy!"

"Oh, sir!"

"You—you extraordinary boy! How—"

"It was an accident, sir."

"Accident!" thundered the School Housemaster. "Is it by accident that you have hurled these heavy volumes at me, D'Arcy?"

"I dropped them, sir."

"Dropped them! Do you mean to say that you were carrying them—a dozen volumes?"

"Yaas, sir."

Mr. Railton stared at the swell of the Fourth. He knew that Arthur Augustus was a particularly truthful boy. But he did not understand. He glanced at the volumes lying on the stairs, and frowned. A crowd was gathering in the passage below, attracted by the noise, and the sound of a chuckle was wafted up the stairs.

"These volumes belong to the school library!" exclaimed Mr. Railton, as he recognised the well-known bindings.

"Yaas wathah, sir!"

"Why have you brought them here?"

"To wead, sir."

"What!"

"I'm takin' up Gweek, sir!"

Mr. Railton gasped.

"You—you are taking up Greek!" he stammered. "And you have brought these volumes from the library to begin with?"

"Yaas, sir."

"Are you being deliberately impertinent, D'Arcy?"

"Certainly not, sir!" said D'Arcy indignantly. "I'm goin' in for the Gweek Medal, sir, and I'm goin' to swot at Gweek, sir. I thought I'd better have plenty of books."

There was a shriek of laughter from the passage below.

Mr. Railton stared at the swell of the Fourth, and the frown upon his face melted away. He tried not to smile, but he couldn't help it. He smiled, and the smile widened into a laugh, and then he roared.

"Ha, ha, ha, ha!"

"Weally, sir—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the Housemaster. "My dear boy, you—you are a most extraordinary junior. Ha, ha, ha!"

And Mr. Railton went on his way, still laughing.

Arthur Augustus looked surprised and hurt. He was relieved, however, in one way. Mr. Railton had apparently taken the matter as a joke, and so there was no punishment for having bowled him over on the staircase with those valuable volumes.

The swell of St. Jim's descended the stairs to collect up the scattered heaps of learning. He turned an indignant glance upon the fellows in the passage below, who were yelling.

"Weally, dear boys, you might lend a fellow a hand instead of cacklin' there like silly fatheads!" he exclaimed.

"Oh, Gussy!" roared Blake of the Fourth. "You'll be the death of me yet! Ha, ha, ha!"

"I fail to see any cause for wibald laughtah!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I wegard you as a set of asses! Tom Mewwy, dear

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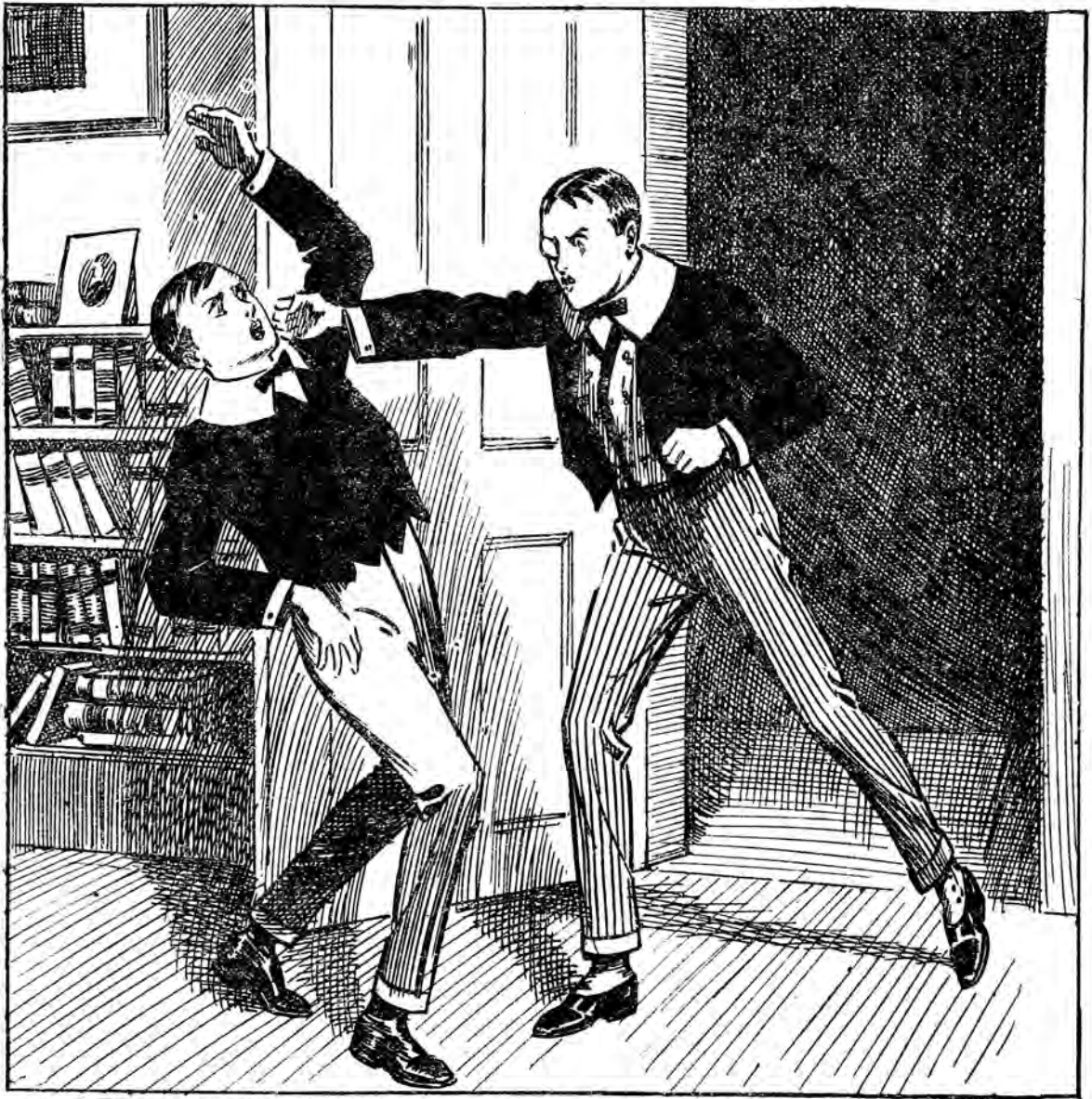
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To be enclosed, with coupon taken from page 2, MAGNET No. 238, with all requests for correspondents. This may only be used by readers in Australia, New Zealand, Africa, Canada, India, or other of our Colonies.

(See column 2, page 27 of this issue.)

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"THE FORM-MASTER'S SECRET!" Is the Title of the New and Exciting Complete School Tale of Harry Wharton & Co. appearing in this week's "MAGNET" Library. Now on Sale. Price One Penny.



D'Arcy's fist crashed full into Levison's face, and the end of the Fourth rolled over on the floor of the study. "And now I'm goin' stwaight to the Head!" cried the swell of St. Jim's excitedly, "to tell him the whole story, and hand back this medal that doesn't belong to me!" (See Chapter 16.)

boy, will you cawwy some of these wotten books into No. 6 for me? They are awf'ly heavy."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, certainly!" said Tom Merry, wiping away his tears. "Let me help! I specially want to see you learn Greek in a week. I remember seeing you learn shorthand in one afternoon. Ha, ha, ha!"

"Pway lend a hand, and don't cackle, deah boy!"

The Terrible Three helped to pick up the volumes. Blake and Herries and Digby—D'Arcy's chums in the Fourth—came up to assist. With a big volume each, they marched after Arthur Augustus into Study No. 6. It was a half-holiday at St. Jim's, and as the weather was splendid, nearly everybody was going to spend it out of doors. But Arthur Augustus had evidently made up his mind to swot.

"Aren't you coming down to the cricket, Gussy?" demanded Blake, as he laid *Æschylus* on the table.

D'Arcy shook his head.

"Too busay, deah boy!"

"You're going to stick in here all the afternoon?" demanded Tom Merry.

"Yaas, wathuh!"

"Swotting?"

"Yaas."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Pway don't cackle. You chaps can cleah out now!" said D'Arcy, sitting down at the study table, and opening the Greek grammar. "I suppose I'd better start with this," he added, rather dubiously.

"No. Start with *Æschylus*!" yelled Monty Lowther.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Upon the whole, I think it would be best to learn the Gweek alphabet first," said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy thoughtfully.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Go hon!"

"I wegard it as wathuh a mistake of the ancient Gweeka to have this wotten alphabet," D'Arcy remarked. "I don't see why they couldn't have the same lettahs that we use. It would make the whole thing much easiah."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Howevah, it's no good wasting time. Alpha, beta, gamma, delta!" started D'Arcy.

"Ha, ha! Go it!"

"Epsilon, zeta, eta, theta—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Iota, kappa, lambda—"

Tom Merry & Co. almost staggered out of the study. But THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 238.

NEXT THURSDAY: "THE SPY OF THE SCHOOL!" A Splendid, New, Long, Complete School Tale of Tom Merry & Co. at St. Jim's. By MARTIN CLIFFORD.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy did not heed their merriment. As they went down the passage, they could still hear the aristocratic tones of the swell of St. Jim's.

"Mu, nu, xi, omicron, pi, rho, sigma!"
And they roared.

CHAPTER 3.

Interrupted Studies.

JACK BLAKE, of the Fourth, came off the cricket field with his bat under his arm, and a very thoughtful expression upon his sunburnt face. The Terrible Three were standing outside the pavilion, talking, not cricket, but football. Cricket was coming to an end now, and the juniors were already looking forward to the great winter game. But football was not in Blake's mind.

"I suppose you chaps have heard?" he said.

"That's according," said Lowther blandly. "We heard the bash just now, when Fatty Wynn knocked your wicket over, if that's what you mean."

Blake grunted.

"Oh, don't be an ass, if you can help it! I mean about Levison."

"Levison?"

"Yes."

"What about him?" asked Tom Merry.

"He's coming back."

"Oh!"

The chums of the Shell looked serious. It was some time now since Levison of the Fourth had gone away from St. Jim's for his health. Levison of the Fourth was a somewhat peculiar fellow, undeniably clever, and able to do many things that better fellows could not do. But he generally turned his cleverness in directions that made him very unpopular. More than once he had been in danger of being expelled from the school, and he had fully deserved it. Indeed, if he had not left on the score of ill-health, it was probable that he would have left by sentence of the Head; and when he went there was no one wished him to return. Even his chum, Melish of the Fourth, was not sorry to see the last of him. The curious duplicity of Levison's nature, which made him deceive, even when it would have been more to his interests to be straightforward, made him the object of distrust and dislike in all the lower Forms.

"Coming back?" said Manners.

Blake nodded.

"Yes. I just had it from Kildare. The Head's allowed him to come back. How are we going to take it?"

"Well, I think it's rotten," said Monty Lowther. "I'm fed up with Levison. The Head's too soft. The young end will be at all his tricks again before he's been back a week."

"Most likely," said Manners.

"It isn't so bad for you chaps," said Blake. "He's coming back to our Form, not to yours. I think it's pretty rotten for the Fourth. I was thinking of having some of the fellows up in the study, and having a jaw about it, so as to decide how to treat him. Dig says he ought to be sent to Coventry."

"Well, he ought," admitted Tom Merry. "But it's a bit rough sending a chap to Coventry when he's just come back after an illness."

"That's what we all think," agreed Blake. "The rotter's always got some rotten advantage over us, in one way or another. But come into the study, and we'll jaw it over."

"Right-ho!"

The news that Levison was returning to St. Jim's excited a great deal of interest among the juniors of the School House, especially the Fourth-Formers.

Levison had made himself so unpopular that nobody wanted to see him again; and there was a good deal of feeling on the subject.

Whether to send him to Coventry or to give him a chance was a question that the leaders of the School House juniors had to decide, the rest of the House being likely to follow their lead.

Quite a little crowd came up to Study No. 6, in the Fourth-Form passage, for the "little jaw" suggested by Jack Blake.

Tom Merry and Manners and Lowther were the first, and Reilly and Lumley-Lumley of the Fourth followed them, and Kangaroo and Dane and Glyn of the Shell. Blake and Herries and Digby came in with their bats under their arms. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy was already there. The swell of St. Jim's was sticking to his purpose. While the other fellows had been enjoying open air and exercise Arthur Augustus had been "swotting" Greek. He looked up from a sheet of impot. paper, covered with wild-looking characters, as the crowd of juniors poured into the study. More fellows were coming along, too—Brooke of the Fourth, and one or two more. Arthur Augustus frowned majestically as he looked at the invasion.

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"THE FORM-MASTER'S SECRET!" is the Title of the New and Exciting Complete School Tale of Harry Wharton & Co. appearing in this week's "MAGNET" Library. Now on Sale. Price One Penny.

"Weally, my deah fellows!" he exclaimed. "I weally don't want to be inhospitable, but I'm wathah busy just now!"

"Oh, that's all right!" said Monty Lowther cheerfully. "If work interfeeres with pleasure, give up work. It's quite simple."

"Weally, Lowthah—"

"It's tea-time!" explained Blake. "We want the table."

D'Arcy shook his head.

"Imposs., deah boy!"

"What?"

"I'm feahfully busay. I'm mastewin' the Gweek alphabet like anythin'. I say, do you know those asses had thirty forms of the definite article? Wotten, isn't it, to a chap who has to learn Gweek in a huwwy?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Never mind if they had three hundred forms of the definite article, old son," said Tom Merry. "We don't lave Greek, thank goodness, though German's bad enough."

"I wogard it as wathah a mistake on the part of the goverahs to intwoduce German instead of Gweek!" said D'Arcy, shaking his head. "It places me in a wathah awkward posish just now, as I'm goin' in for the medal."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Are you going to shift these blessed books and papers?" asked Blake.

"Imposs. I don't want to get them mixed," said D'Arcy, casting an affectionate glance upon the sheets with which the table was covered. Weird-looking Greek letters were scrawled upon them, to say nothing of endless multiplications of the elusive definite article.

"We want tea!" bawled Herries.

"Can't you have tea in Hall this evenin'?"

"What?"

"And I should weally be much obliged if you chaps could do your pwep. to-night in some othah studay, or else in the Form-room."

"Eh?"

"Undah the cires, as it's important for my papels not to be disturbed, I should like to have the studay to myself till aftah the exam.," explained D'Arcy.

Blake and Herries and Digby looked at him speechlessly.

"Faith, and I think that takes the cake!" said Reilly of the Fourth.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Jack Blake took hold of one end of the table, and tilted it up a little towards D'Arcy.

The latter gave a yell of alarm.

"Hold on, Blake!"

"I'm holding on!" grinned Blake. "Are you going to move that rubbish, or shall I shoot the lot off on top of you?"

"It is not wubbish," said the swell of St. Jim's indignantly.

"I'm swotting!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It will be a big honah for this studay if I cawwy off the Gweek Medal," said Arthur Augustus. "You chaps seem to have no espyw de corps."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Moving?" asked Blake.

"Certainly not. I—yawcoo!"

Arthur Augustus had said that he was not moving; but he really had no choice in the matter. Blake tilted up the end of the table, and the formidable array of library volumes and the sheets of scribbled papers, and the inkstand, slid down towards the swell of St. Jim's. Before Arthur Augustus could escape he was overwhelmed.

"Ow!" he roared. "Yawcoo!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Crash—bump—crash!

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LONDON, W.C.

The swell of St. Jim's sat suddenly upon the study carpet, and heavy volumes thudded round him, and written sheets floated through the air all over the study.

The elegant junior sat amidst the wreck of his Greek studies and gasped.

"Ow! You uttah wottah!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Bai Jove! I——"

"Get up!" yelled Blake.

"I refuse to get up! I——"

"You're sitting in the ink!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Bai Jove!"

Arthur Augustus leaped up as if moved by a sudden electric shock. The spilt ink formed a pool on the study carpet, and Arthur Augustus had been sitting in it. Black ink streamed down his elegant trousers as he rose to his feet.

"Bai Jove! Oh, you awful wottah!"

Arthur Augustus twisted round to see the amount of damage done to his elegant bags.

The juniors yelled with laughter.

"You feahful wottahs! You've wuined my twousahs!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Bai Jove! I'll give you a feahful thwaslin'——"

"Better go and change your bags before they're soaked!" gasped Blake. "Ha, ha, ha!"

"The ink will run into your socks," suggested Lowther.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Bai Jove! I——"

Arthur Augustus paused, and, giving Blake a look which ought to have withered him up on the spot, rushed from the study. The juniors roared with laughter.

"Oh, Gussy will be the death of me!" moaned Blake.

"Get the fire lighted. Dig, old man. We want to make some tea. There's plenty of Greek exercises here to light it with."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

And Digby soon had the fire going. The guests in Study No. 6 all lent a hand in getting tea. Blake was in funds, and he had brought in a bag from the tuckshop which looked very tempting to the juniors, hungry after an afternoon in the open air. The big Greek volumes were stacked in a corner of the study, and the exercises that were not required for lighting the fire were piled upon them. The table having been cleared in so simple and efficacious a manner, the cloth was laid, and tea was prepared. There were a dozen fellows in the study, which was rather a crowd, but they were accustomed to crowding in the junior studies at St. Jim's.

Tea in Blake's study was soon going strong, and as soon as the duties of hospitality were under way, Blake broached the subject of the meeting.

"Gentlemen——"

"Hear, hear!" said Kangaroo. "Pass the marmalade!"

"I've called you together to——"

"Feed!" said Monty Lowther.

"To discuss a most important——"

"Spread!" said Lowther. "We're discussing it."

"If that ass is going to be funny there will be trouble in this study!" said Blake wrathfully. "I call on Tom Merry and Manners to muzzle Lowther if he's going to begin as a funny man on an occasion like this."

"Hear, hear!"

"Order!" exclaimed Tom Merry. "Keep that for the comic column in the 'Weekly,' Monty, old man, and pass the jam. Go ahead, Blake, my infant!"

"Oh, rats!" said Lowther.

"Most important subject!" resumed Blake. "Levison's coming back, and we've got to decide how we're going to treat him!"

"I'm not going to treat him at all!" said Monty Lowther.

"He never treats me!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Blake rose in wrath.

"Chuck that ass out!" he exclaimed.

"Hear, hear!"

"Order!"

"If Lowther interrupts again——"

"Go on, Blake," said Kangaroo. "If Lowther's funny any more, I'll dab the jam down the back of his neck. Buzz ahead!"

And Blake, with a wrathful glare at the humorist of the Shell, sat down.

CHAPTER 4.

Arthur Augustus Regards it as a Duty.

LEVISON is coming back to St. Jim's—this afternoon," said Blake. "He may be back any minute. The question is, what's going to be done when he comes?"

Monty Lowther was upon the point of remarking that whoever had anything to do with Levison would be done; but he caught Blake's eye, and refrained.

"It's an open secret," went on Blake, "that the rotter would have been expelled, if he hadn't fallen ill. I dare say the Head thinks that his illness will have had a good effect on him—shown him the error of his ways, you know, and so on. You know the Head is a bit soft in some things; he hasn't got our experience."

"Hear, hear!"

"We can't prevent the chap coming back; but we can make him jolly well sorry he's come," went on Blake. "Only it seems a bit rough to jump on a chap when he's down."

"Yes, rather!"

"Levison is down on his luck, and he'll come sneaking back, and making out that he's turning over a new leaf," went on Blake. "He's had us that way before. Of course, nobody would think of taking his word."

"No fear!"

"It's for us to decide whether he's to be given a chance or not," said Blake. "The rest of the House will follow our lead."

"Hear, hear!"

"Pass the jam!"

"If they don't, sure we'll punch their heads, the spalpeens," said Reilly. "Sure I think we might give the rotter a chance!"

"Better rag him and make him bunk again," growled Herries. "I know jolly well that there isn't any good in him!"

"Good in everybody, more or less," said Tom Merry charitably; "though I admit that Levison is a rather hard case."

"Not in Levison!" said Herries. "I know that."

"How do you know?"

"Towser doesn't like him."

"Eh?"

"My bulldog, Towser," said Herries. "You remember how he took a dislike to Levison the first day he came to St. Jim's. He's never got over it."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I don't see anything to cackle at. Dogs always take to decent fellows; and I've never known Towser to be wrong."

"Better give Towser the casting vote," said Monty Lowther.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You might do worse," said Herries. "Towser's got a lot more sense than some Shell chaps who set up as funny men."

"Look here——"

"Order! Order!"

"We're not getting on," said Blake.

"I'm getting on all right," said Kangaroo, looking up from his third rasher.

"I mean about Levison——"

"Oh! Go ahead, then!"

"We'll put it to the vote," said Blake, "whether we jump on him at once, and keep him in his place, or whether we're civil to him and give him a chance."

"Weally, deah boys——"

Arthur Augustus entered the study. He had changed his lower garments, and seemingly his good humour had been restored by finding himself in spotless garb again. But he had a severe expression upon his aristocratic brow.

"I am surprised at you, deah boys!" he said.

"What's the matter now? We've left you something to eat," said Bernard Glyn.

"I am not alludin' to that, Glyn. I am surprised at the suggestion that we should be down on a chap who's been away ill!" said Arthur Augustus indignantly. "Whethah he is goin' to be decent when he comes back, or not, I vegard it as our duty to give him a chance."

"Rot!" said Herries.

"Weally, Hewwies——"

"Put it to the vote!" said Tom Merry.

"Hear, hear!"

"I have a suggestion to make, deah boys."

"Life's too short!" said Manners. "Put it to the vote."

"Pway don't be an ass, Mannahs. I have a weally good suggestion to make. I have thought the mattah ovah. Suppose we make up our minds to give Levison evwy possible chance to act decently. We can make it a point to forget the past, and nevah wag him about what he's done, and assume that he's goin' to be decent, and speak to him civilly, and ask him into the studay to tea, and all that. That's the best way of bwingin' out the good in a chap, if he's got any good in him."

"Levison hasn't!" said Herries.

"Oh, wats!"

"By Jove!" said Tom Merry, looking round. "Gussy's

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suggestion is a jolly good one, and very like Gussy, too. I second it!"

"And I third it," said Blake. "Let's give the rotter a chance!"

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Hands up for taking Levison under our wing, and giving him a chance to show whether he's going to be decent or not," said Blake.

Hands went up on all sides.

"Good! Now hands up against it!"

Only one hand went up this time; it belonged to Herries. The faith of Herries in the judgment and sagacity of his famous bulldog was unshaken.

"Weally, Hewwies, old man—" said Arthur Augustus, in a tone of remonstrance.

"Oh, rats!" said Herries crossly. "I'm against it!"

"Well, the majority are in favour of giving Levison a chance," said Tom Merry.

"Hear, hear!"

"And I weally considah that it will turn out all wight," said Arthur Augustus. "Levison is a weally clevah chap, if he used his clevahness in a wight way. He knows Latin bettah than any fellow in the Fourth, exceptin' Bwooke, and he knows Gweek, and can entah for the medal if he likes. It's a gweat pity that such a clevah chap should be such a wotten cad, and I weally twust he is goin' to turn ovah a new leaf. Anyway, if we give him a good chance, it won't be our fault if he doesn't."

"Bosh!" said Herries.

"Look here, Hewwies—"

"I'm against it. I don't trust Levison—"

A tap at the door was heard while Herries was speaking, and it opened. Levison of the Fourth, the junior of whom Herries was speaking in a somewhat loud voice, walked into the study.

"Bai Jove!" said D'Arcy.

CHAPTER 5.

Levison Makes His Peace.

LEVISON looked over the crowd of juniors, and nodded. There was silence in Study No. 6.

The fact that they had all been discussing Levison, made the juniors feel a little awkward at his sudden entrance. Herries turned red.

"Hallo!" said Levison cheerfully.

"Hallo!" said Tom Merry.

"Here we are again!" said Levison. "I thought I'd look in and see you chaps. I knew you'd all be glad to see me—especially Herries."

Some of the juniors grinned; and Herries glared. The burly Fourth-Former was not in the least inclined to retreat from the position he had taken up.

"I'm not glad to see you," he said deliberately; "and I'm not going to pretend I am. You won't get any soft sawder out of me."

"I don't expect it," said Levison, with a grin. "You always hit out straight from the shoulder, Herries, and I know what to expect. But I don't bear you any malice. I heard that all you fellows were in here, and I came to see you on purpose, because I've got something to say to you. I know you used to dislike me when I was here before, but I think you might give me a hearing."

"Yaas, wathah!"

"As a matter of fact, we've just been jawing you over," said Blake.

"Thanks!"

"We wanted to decide how to treat you," Blake explained. "I can't say we're overjoyed at your coming back, but if you don't begin any of your rotten tricks again, we're willing to give you a fair show."

"Hear, hear!"

"That's what I want to speak about," said Levison. "I've been away some time, and I've been ill. My pater has been frightfully ratty with me, and I haven't had the best of times at home. I'm sent back to St. Jim's to see if I can do better; and as a precaution against my getting into mischief, the pater has cut off all my pocket-money."

"Bai Jove! That's wathah wuff!"

Levison shrugged his shoulders.

"I can stand that," he said. "But I don't want everybody to be down on me as soon as I get back. Give me a chance, and don't jump on a fellow when he's down. That's all I ask."

"Quite right, too," said Tom Merry. "It's only fair."

"Hear, hear!"

"Yaas, wathah!"

Blake made room for Levison at the table.

"Sit down and feed," he said. "You're quite welcome. The past is all over, and you're going to have a fresh start."

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"Good!" said Tom Merry.

Herries frowned. He was as far from agreeing with the others as ever, but he felt that it was incumbent upon him to hold his peace.

Levison was hungry after his journey, and he "wired into" the good things in Study No. 6 with hearty goodwill.

The juniors were hospitality itself. Only Herries quietly left the study, from a natural repugnance to eating in company with a fellow he disliked and distrusted.

Levison looked just the same as of old.

His recent illness seemed to have left no traces; and indeed a suspicious fellow might have surmised that he had exaggerated it at the time, in order to play upon the sympathy of the Head and avoid the sentence of expulsion from the school.

He chatted cheerfully enough over the tea-table.

Levison could be a very entertaining fellow when he liked, and but for the inevitable distrust his crooked ways inspired, he would have been a very agreeable companion.

He made himself pleasant enough now. Tom Merry & Co. were determined not to find fault, and so the time passed agreeably enough.

The guests in Study No. 6 departed one by one or in twos as the "spread" was finished, Levison remaining till the last.

He had caught sight of the Greek volumes and the exercises piled in the corner of the study, and he asked what they meant.

Arthur Augustus explained.

Blake and Digby chuckled. Levison stared at the swell of St. Jim's blankly.

"You've entered the exam. for the Greek Medal?" he exclaimed.

Arthur Augustus nodded cheerfully.

"Yaas, wathah!"

"But you haven't studied Greek?"

"Not yet."

"My hat!"

"You could have entered, if you'd been here, deah boy," D'Arcy remarked. "But it is past the date for puttin' down the names."

Levison yawned.

"What's the good of the competition?" he asked. "There isn't any prize of any sort, or a scholarship."

"There's the medal."

"I heard one of the masters say that the medal only cost two pounds," said Levison. "It wouldn't be worth that to sell."

Arthur Augustus sniffed. Levison's remark was so like the old Levison that it was difficult to believe that there was anything of the change in him that the juniors had hoped to see.

"There's the honah of winnin'!" said D'Arcy coldly.

"My hat! Fancy going into a slogging examination for the glory of capturing a giddy medal, not worth a pound at a pawnbroker's!" said Levison. "I should want something a bit more solid than that."

"What did you learn Gweek for, then?" demanded D'Arcy.

Levison shrugged his shoulders.

"Partly because my pater ordered it, and partly for use," he said. "There are lots of things open to a chap who knows Greek. Besides, it isn't any trouble to me. But I wouldn't go into an exam, if I could help it, unless there was a money prize. No fear!"

"There's the glowy—"

"Oh, blow the glory!" said Levison. "Pass the jam!"

Arthur Augustus passed the jam in silence.

Blake and Digby strolled out of the study. They had had enough of Levison's society for the present. He was beginning to show all his old ways and his old manner of thinking again before he had been at St. Jim's an hour.

"But I'll tell you what," said Levison, helping himself to jam; "I can be of use to you, if you like, D'Arcy, if you're really taking up Greek."

"How do you mean, deah boy?"

"I can read that rot backwards!" said Levison, with a nod towards Homer and Plato in the corner. "I'll help you construe, if you like."

"Bai Jove!"

"If you're really taking it up, I'll be your coach," said Levison. "I know Greek better than any other junior in the school, excepting Kerr, of the New House, and perhaps Brooke, of ours. I'll help you with pleasure, and we'll have an hour together every evening, if you like."

"That's aw'f'ly good of you, deah boy!" said D'Arcy gratefully. "I was thinkin' of askin' Bwooke for some help; but, as he's a day-boy, it would be wathah difficult for him to stay and help me aftah lessons, and he has work to do at home, too. But if you could lend me a hand at first, it would be wippin'!"

"I'll be glad," said Levison. "It will keep me out of mischief, too. I don't want to have too much to do with Mellish and Crooke now I'm back. Lumley-Lumley chuckled them when he turned over a new leaf, and I'm thinking of doing the same."

"Quite wight, deah boy!"

"We'll begin this evening," said Levison. "Suppose you come along to my study at seven, and we'll stick at it till eight."

"Thanks, awfly! What books shall I bring?"

Levison looked at the formidable pile in the corner of the study, and grinned.

"I should recommend getting that lot back to the library before they get damaged," he said. "Bring your Greek grammar, and some impot. paper, and we'll begin at the beginning. My dear chap, you can't tackle Homer at first—there's parts in Homer that give the Head himself a twisting. Let's start with the alphabet."

"Vewy well, deah boy!"

"See you at seven, then," said Levison, as he strolled out of the study.

Arthur Augustus jammed his eyeglass into his eye, when Blake and Digby and Herries came in a little later, and gave them a triumphant look.

"I was wight, deah boys!" he exclaimed.

"Well, you're white now!" said Blake, pretending to misunderstand. "Who said you were black?"

"Pway don't be an ass, Blake! I was quite wight—Levison is turnin' out a vewy decent chap!"

"Rats!" growled Herries.

"Weally, Hewwies—"

"He's taken you in, you mean!" said Herries.

"Nothin' of the sort! He's all wight!"

"What has he done?" asked Blake, with a grin.

"He's goin' to coach me in Gweek."

"My hat!"

"Pulling your leg, I suppose?" said the unconvinced Herries.

"I wufuse to entahtain such a suspish. For a moment, Hewwies! Besides, we're beginnin' this evenin', and I suppose a chap wouldn't gwind at Gweek for an hour for the sake of pullin' anybody's leg."

"I know I wouldn't!" grinned Blake. "If Levison does that, I think we shall have to allow that he's a bit more obliging than he used to be."

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Has he borrowed any money off you?" asked Herries.

"Certainly not!"

"Well, he says his pater has cut off his pocket-money, as a punishment for being a rotten cad and nearly getting expelled—"

"He didn't put it like that," grinned Digby.

"That's how it is, though. If he's got no pocket-money, it's not surprising that he's vewy obliging to a chap who's rolling in tin!" grunted Herries.

"I am surprised at you, Hewwies!" said Arthur Augustus, with a great deal of dignity. "I am weally disgusted with you!"

"Rats!"

"Levison has not asked me to lend him any money, nor hinted at anythin' of the sort. You are unjust!"

"Bosh!"

"I weward you as a suspicious beast, deah boy!"

"Br-r-r-r-r-r!"

Arthur Augustus rose.

"I'm goin' to see him now," he said. "I back him up, all along the line! I weward him as a decent chap! Nevah mind what he has been; chaps weform, you know!"

"Not chaps like Levison!"

"Wats!"

And Arthur Augustus quitted the study.

CHAPTER 6.

The Swots.

MELLISH and Lumley-Lumley, of the Fourth, were in their study in the Fourth Form passage, which they had shared with Levison while he was at St. Jim's. Lumley-Lumley, at least, had found it more comfortable while Levison was away. Mellish, too, although he had been Levison's chum, seemed to have borne the loss of his society with great equanimity.

The junior studies at St. Jim's, especially in the School House—which was the older building of the two Houses—were not large. There was, as Jerrold Lumley-Lumley remarked, more room for two than three. And as Lumley-Lumley had been on bad terms with Levison, his return did not awaken any enthusiasm in Lumley-Lumley's breast.

Levison entered the study after leaving No. 6, and found Lumley-Lumley and Percy Mellish there, and they looked at him rather grimly.

Levison nodded to them with perfect nonchalance, as if

he had parted with both of them on the best of terms only the day before.

"Room for one more?" he asked blandly.

"We're going to make room, I guess!" said Lumley-Lumley. "I guess I shall do my prep. in another study, as I used to before you left!"

Levison nodded.

"You always were a nice obliging fellow, Lumley-Lumley!" he said. "I shall miss your company a fearful lot—I don't think!"

Lumley-Lumley grunted, and moved towards the door.

"Oh, don't go!" said Levison.

"You make me sick!" said Lumley-Lumley politely.

"Well, shut the door after you, then!" said Levison, in the same bland tone.

Lumley-Lumley banged the door, with a bang that sounded all the way along the Fourth Form passage. Levison sank into the armchair Lumley-Lumley had vacated, and grinned at Mellish, who was laughing.

"You're glad to see me back again, of course?" said Levison.

"Oh, of course!" said Mellish.

"You owed me some tin when I left St. Jim's."

"Did I?" said Mellish.

"You know you did!"

"Well, if that's what you've come back for, you might as well have stopped at home," said Mellish sourly. "You never expected me to pay you; you never needed the money. And I haven't got it."

"Circumstances alter cases," said Levison. "I'm stony now."

"I should have thought that you'd have brought some good tips back, after being at home a long time—and ill, too," said Mellish, in surprise.

"You don't know my people. My pater's frightfully ratty with me, and he's cut off all my allowance of pocket-money for this term."

"Phew!"

"I've come back with exactly half-a-crown in my pocket, and I'm not going to have any allowance the whole term," said Levison. "That's what comes of a chap's father playing the giddy Roman parent—Brutus the Second, you know."

"It's rough," said Mellish. "But it's no good reviving old loans of last term. I couldn't settle then, and I can't settle now."

"I shall look to you for a bob or two until I make a raise," said Levison coolly. "I've got to raise the wind somehow, though. If there was any money prize attached to that rotten exam. next week for the Greek Medal, I'd have a go at that. But it's only the glory, and any ass who likes that can rope it in."

"D'Arcy of the Fourth has entered for it," said Mellish, with a grin.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"He's learning Greek on purpose," grinned Mellish.

"I know; I'm going to coach him," said Levison.

Mellish stared.

"You're going to coach D'Arcy?" he exclaimed. "I thought you were on pretty bad terms with all that gang in No. 6."

"So I was. But D'Arcy will be a useful friend to me," explained Levison. "I don't mind letting you into it. I've got to raise money from somewhere, and D'Arcy's governor is very liberal to him in tips."

Mellish grinned.

"I see," he said.

"The giddy ass is going to learn Greek in a week," said Levison. "Just about as sensible as his idea of carrying off the medal—useless rubbish, in my opinion. When he comes in you can get out, and leave us for an hour. I'm going to coach him here."

Mellish yawned.

"I'll jolly well get out; rather!" he said. "I don't want any blessed Greek. So you're going to be thick with those rotters in No. 6?"

"Yes—till I see how things go, at any rate."

"When that silly ass comes—"

Tap!

"Hush! He's there!"

"Come in!" called out Mellish.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy entered the study. Levison looked at him anxiously for a moment, fearing that perhaps Mellish's voice might have penetrated through the door. But the face of the swell of St. Jim's was quite unsuspecting.

"Here I am, deah boy," he said. "Are you weady?"

"Quite."

"I twust we shall not be incommodin' you in any way, Mellish," said Arthur Augustus politely, as he laid his Greek grammar and lexicon and an imposing pile of impot. papers on the table.

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"Not at all," yawned Mellish. "I'm goin' out."

And he went.

Levison pulled out a chair for the swell of St. Jim's.

"Now to work," he said cheerily.

"This is weally awfully good of you, Levison," said Arthur Augustus gratefully, as he sat down and opened his grammar.

"Not a bit," said Levison. "I only hope I shall be able to help you rope in the Greek prize. Besides, I've got to make up to you for playing rather a mean trick on you once. You remember the time I made up as you—"

"That's all wight, deah boy," said D'Arcy. "The past is all ovah, and forgotten. Besides, that wasn't much. Kerr of the New House made up as me once, and he did it ever so much bettah than you did. Where shall we begin?"

"Beginning," suggested Levison; "that's a good place. Suppose you take the definite article for a start—the thirty different forms of the word 'the.' Take the singular number first, nominative case."

"Yaas."

"Now masculine, feminine, neuter, lo, hee, to," said Levison.

"Yaas."

"Write it down."

"In English letters?" asked D'Arcy hopelessly.

"You can't; you'll have to put it in Greek."

"But I don't know the Gweek lettahs."

"That's all right. Copy them from the grammar as you need them."

"Yaas; that's a good ideah."

And Arthur Augustus followed Levison's directions.

For a whole hour they worked together, and certainly Levison worked his new pupil hard. He kept him to the definite article; but as there were two dozen and a half forms of that dreadful word, D'Arcy had enough to do. And the discovery that in Greek there was a dual number, as well as a singular and a plural, filled the swell of St. Jim's with dismay. But he struggled on bravely, though by the time the instruction was finished the word "the," in every shape and form, was buzzing in his brain and dazzling his eyes.

He looked very thoughtful when he returned to Study No. 6, where he found Blake and Herries and Digby at their preparation. The chums of the Fourth looked up with a chuckle as he came in.

"How's the Greek going on?" asked Blake.

"Vewy stwong, thank you," said D'Arcy.

"Levison borrowed any money yet?" asked Herries.

"I wefuse to ansawah a question that I wegard as insultin' to a fiend of mine, Hewwies."

"I suppose you're in the running for the medal now?" asked Digby.

"I twust so, deah boy."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the juniors together.

"Wats! Gweek is a little hardah than I imagined at first, but I'm goin' to stick to it," said Arthur Augustus.

"It is quite imposse, for a D'Arcy to admit himself beaten."

"Even when he is beaten?" grinned Blake.

"Imposse, deah boy; the D'Arcys are nevah beaten! You will wemembah that at the Battle of Hastings my ancestors gave your ancestors a feahful thwashin'—"

"There wasn't an Undesirable Aliens Act in those days, old man, or your ancestors would have found themselves in Queer Street."

"Weally, Blake—"

"Ring off, old son, and do your prep," said Blake, "and don't interrupt. I suppose you're going to stand a big feed when you win that medal?"

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Good! It will be something for us to fall back upon in our old age if we get hard up," Blake remarked.

"You uttah ass—"

And the juniors chuckled, and went on with their prep.

CHAPTER 7.

Not Backed Up.

THE examination for the Greek Medal was an annual affair at St. Jim's, and the fellow who won it—the medallist of that year—was a fellow of great account among the swotting section of the school. There were other fellows, certainly, who said they'd rather have their cap for the footer eleven, or in the eight, than win medals enough to start a shop with. Certainly the number of Grecians at St. Jim's was not large.

St. Jim's had followed the modern movement long before of substituting living languages for dead ones. Latin still held full sway; but German had been substituted for Greek, as a part of the regular curriculum. There was no doubt that German was the more useful of the two. As Monty Lowther remarked, the fellows were likely to meet more

modern Germans than ancient Greeks. But the Head, though he had fully concurred in the change—which had been brought about in his own time—had not lost a lingering fondness for the old way of things, and some of the governors fully agreed with him. Therefore, although Greek was no longer compulsory at St. Jim's, it was optional, and its study found every encouragement.

The Sixth Form produced a Greek play every year, and were popularly supposed to know what it meant. The Greek Medal, however, was the chief object of the ambition of the Grecians. The medallist was a great man for the time, and fags would look at him with deep awe, impressed with the marvellous weight of his learning.

To borrow the words of the poet:

"And still they gazed, and still the wonder grew,
That one small head could carry all he knew!"

So, in spite of disrespectful remarks about "swots" and "cads," the Grecians were very keen about the medal, which had been instituted to encourage keeping up the old classical study; though some of the more worldly-minded fellows suspected that a handsome money prize would have had a still better effect.

As no one could win the medal twice, several of the best Grecians at St. Jim's were debarred from entering on this occasion, and so the result of the exam. was very much in doubt. There were not many entrants; the total number was five. And last of these, but not least, was Arthur Augustus D'Arcy of the Fourth.

Any fellow was allowed to enter, irrespective of his position in the school. The exam. was open to the Fourth as much as to the Sixth.

But it was not usual for juniors to enter. On this occasion Langton of the Sixth was one competitor. North of the Sixth was another. Lefevre and Campbell of the Fifth were in it. D'Arcy of the Fourth had then sent in his name, and it had been duly entered.

There were other and better Grecians at St. Jim's than any of them. But Kildare and Darrel of the Sixth, and Kerr of the Fourth, had all won the medal in previous years. Brooke of the Fourth was strongly tempted to enter; but Brooke was a day-boy, and he had work to do outside St. Jim's, and he could not find the time for working up for a very difficult exam. So, much against his will, he had to let it pass. But the honour of the Lower Forms was upheld—more or less—by Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

D'Arcy's name had been put down on the list, as all names were that were sent in. But the candidature of the elegant junior was treated with a hilarity which caused him great indignation.

The fact that he was not a Greek student did not seem to D'Arcy any reason why he should stand out. Like the gentleman in the story, who said he didn't want many piano lessons, because he only wanted to learn how to teach that instrument, Arthur Augustus reasoned that he only wanted to know Greek to pass an exam.

And he frowned very loftily at the yells of laughter with which his pretensions were greeted.

"It's all wot!" he said to Blake, the day after Levison's return to St. Jim's. "Of course, I wouldn't entah if I had to compete with Kildare or old Kerr. But I think I've got a jolly good chance now!"

"Hear, hear!" said Blake. "Have you learned the alphabet yet?"

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Let's hear it!"

"Well, I've forgotten it again," confessed D'Arcy. "But I learned it all wight last night."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I'm expectin' a lettah swom my patah about it," said D'Arcy. "The fellows all seem to take it as a joke. I weally don't know why. But my patah is certain to be impressed. I shouldn't wondah if he send me a fivah just to encouravoge me. You know, he says I can't do things, and my majah—Conway—says the same. I jolly well pwoved that I could be useful the othah day, when I went ovah to Bwooke's house, and helped him with his work. I'm goin' to pwove it to my govahnah by cawwyin' off the Gweek Medal."

"You'll impress him, if you do it," said Blake solemnly.

"Yaas; that's what I mean to do, deah boy."

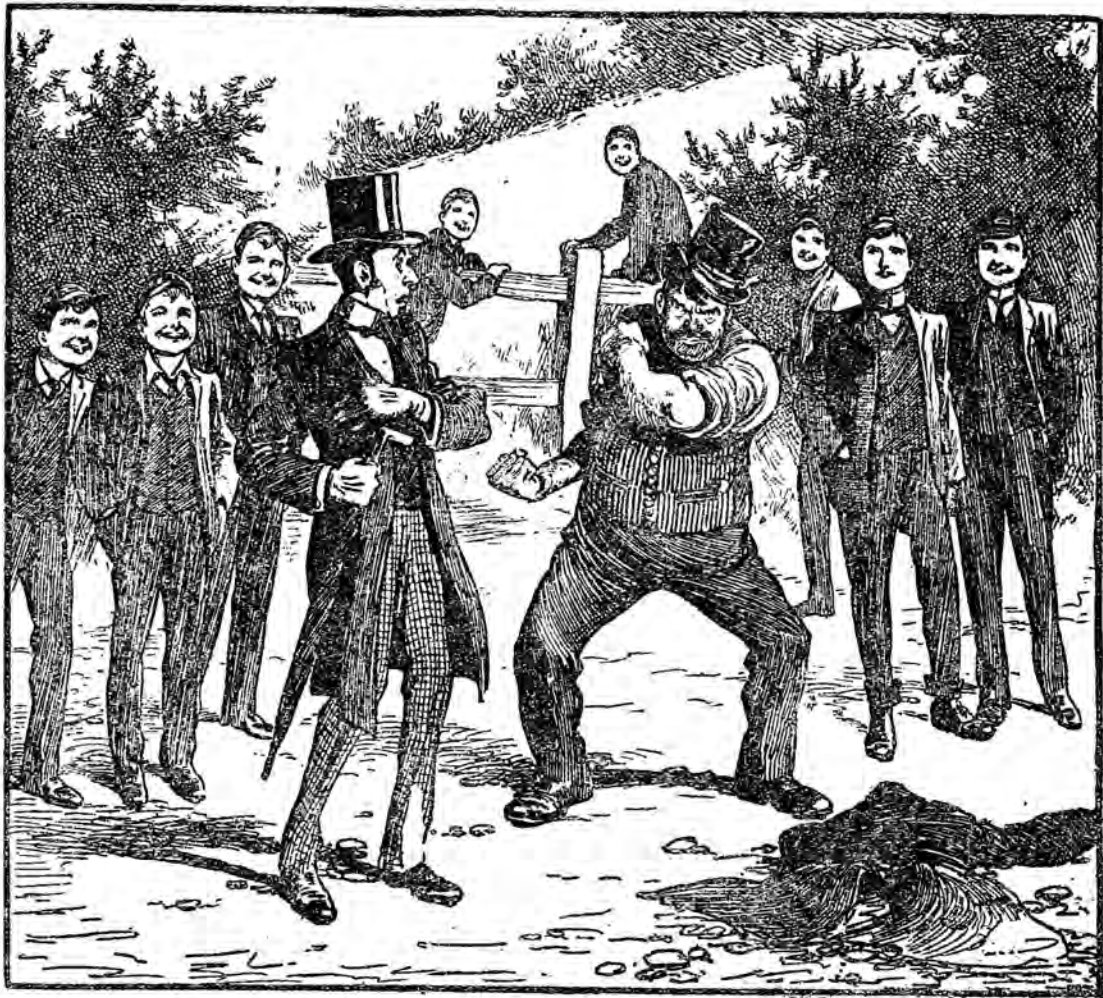
"Letter for you, Gussy," said Monty Lowther, looking into the common-room.

"Thanks, deah boy! It's swom my patah, I expect. I shouldn't wondah if there's a fivah in it. My patah is bound to be pleased at my takin' up the exam. for the Gweek Medal. It will show him that I can work instead of play."

"Fiver in the letter?" exclaimed Tom Merry. "Come on, you chaps! Let's go and help Gussy open his letter."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Arthur Augustus went into the hall, and took his letter.



Mr. Punter tore off his coat and threw it in the road. Then he doubled up his fists and pranced up to Mr. Quelch. "Go away!" shrieked the Remove Form-master, gripping his umbrella. "Certain'y not," replied Mr. Punter. "I am surprised at you Henery! I'm surprised at sich conduct from my brother!"

(For the above incident see the grand long complete school tale of Harry Wharton & Co., entitled "THE FORM-MASTER'S SECRET!" by Frank Richards, which is contained in this week's splendid issue of our popular companion paper "THE MAGNET" Library. Now on Sale. Price One Penny.)

It certainly was in the handwriting of Lord Eastwood, who had the honour of being the pater of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy of the Fourth.

"If there's a fiver in it," said Monty Lowther cheerfully, "I beg to remark that it's a warm day, and Mrs. Taggles's ginger-pop is first-class."

"Hear, hear!"

"Open it, Gussy!" said Blake. "You're keeping us on tenterhooks."

"Weally, Blake——"

"Tear it open!"

"Imposs, deah boy! I could not possibly open a lettah in that slovenly way. Can any of you fellows lend me a penknife?"

Reilly of the Fourth lent a penknife, and Arthur Augustus slit the envelope. Then he drew out the letter and opened it. There was no fiver.

"Bai Jove!" he remarked. "That's wathah wotten! I suppose the patah can't spare so much since that giddy Insurance Bill. Lots of his cash will have to go in stickin' stamps on people now instead of comin' to me in tips. I wegard it as wathah hard."

"Hard cheese!" said Blake sympathetically. "But perhaps he's sent you an apology for the omission. An apology settles everything, you know, from one gentleman to another. Quite as good as a banknote, excepting that you can't change it at the tuck-shop."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Arthur Augustus glanced at his letter, and uttered an exclamation.

"Bai Jove!"

"No apology?" asked Tom Morry.

"I wegard this as wotten!"

"Pater kicking over the traces again?" asked Monty Lowther. "This is what comes of your carelessness in bringing him up, Gussy. If you'd attended to him with greater care during the days of his early youth——"

"Pway don't be an ass, Lowthah! Listen to this!"

And D'Arcy read out the letter in great indignation.

"Dear Arthur,—I am very much surprised to hear that you have entered for the Greek Medal. As you are not taking Greek as a study, I fail to see how you can even enter the examination, saying nothing of passing it. Pray do not be absurd.—Your affectionate Father."

Arthur Augustus stared at the letter, and then looked round at the grinning juniors.

"Fancy a chap's own patah failin' to back him up in this way!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus. "I am vewy much surprised at the patah. I shall w'ite him a wathah stiff lettah for this!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Or wathah, on second thoughts, I won't w'ite to him. I'll leave him to be ewushed by heavin' that I've won the Gweck Medal!" said Arthur Augustus. "That will be the best w'eply to this lettah!"

And the juniors agreed that it would.

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NEXT THURSDAY: "THE SPY OF THE SCHOOL!" A Splendid, New, Long, Complete School Tale of Tom Merry & Co. at St. Jim's. By MARTIN CLIFFORD.

CHAPTER 8.

Levison Shows His Hand.

DURING the two or three following days, Levison was looked at askance by most of the School House Juniors. Many of the fellows who had determined to have nothing to say to him on his return were surprised to find that he had been taken up by Study No. 6, and were influenced by that circumstance. Study No. 6 led the opinion of the Fourth Form, so far as the School House was concerned. And if Blake & Co. considered that Levison was good enough to speak to, there was no reason why the other fellows should not follow his example. The Terrible Three of the Shell, too, were quite civil to Levison, if not exactly chummy. Herries remarked that Levison was deep enough for anything, and that it was simply some more of his usual cunning. But almost everybody else was disposed to give the cad of the Fourth a chance. And certainly Levison was very circumspect in his behaviour just now.

The fact that D'Arcy had taken him up told very much in his favour. Arthur Augustus was, as he sometimes remarked, very select, not to say swagger, in his acquaintances. But he was certainly getting quite chummy with Levison, and Levison was coaching him in Greek every evening. A fellow much less keen and acute than Levison could have played upon the simple nature of the swell of St. Jim's, and Levison found it quite easy.

If Levison was not in earnest it was a puzzle to know why he should take so much trouble. He had not borrowed any money of D'Arcy, much to the surprise of Herries, and certainly he worked hard with him over the Greek. D'Arcy was not an apt pupil. The spirit was willing, but the flesh was weak, and he yawned portentously over the thirty forms of the definite article, and dozed upon the dual number. But Levison did not slack. He worked hard himself, and made D'Arcy work hard. And although D'Arcy was pretty certain not to be able to speak or write the tongue of Sophocles in a week, he was certainly breaking up the ground, and that was something.

Indeed, Levison's coaching opened Arthur Augustus's eyes to the magnitude of the task he had undertaken, and he began to be a little doubtful whether he would carry off the medal in the exam.

Kerr, of the New House, had an old exam. paper, which he lent D'Arcy to look at, so that he could have some idea of the difficulty of the exam. The present year's examination, of course, would be different. But on the same scale of difficulty, so D'Arcy was able to form some idea of the task before him. He simply gasped as he looked at the exam. paper, most of which he could not even read.

He brought it into Levison's study with him on Saturday evening, when he came in for his usual hour.

"Look at that, deah boy!" he said, laying the paper on the table.

Levison looked at it. Mellish quitted the study, as he always did when Arthur Augustus came in with his Greek grammar and lexicon.

"What's that?" asked Levison.

"Last year's exam. papah, deah boy. I got it from Kerr. He won the exam. last year, you know," said D'Arcy. "He's a giddy medallist. Now, I've got a lot more bwaans than Kerr, so I ought to be able to win quite easily. But

"You started studying rather late in the day," Levison remarked, with a grin.

"Yaas, that's it. Kerr suggests that I should work out this papah, and if I make a good thing of it, it will show me what chance I've got for the pwesent exam."

"That's a good idea."

"But I can't even wead it, deah boy!"

Levison chuckled.

"It would give me a twist," he said, looking over the paper. "I should have to mug up a lot if I were going in for this."

"Bai Jove! Don't you think I've got a chance?"

"Well, old man, you do expect a lot, don't you?" said Levison.

Arthur Augustus nodded thoughtfully.

"Pewwaps I do," he said. "But a D'Arcy ought to be able to do things, you know. And I simply must win the exam. now."

"You want the medal so badly?"

"It's not only that. But I've told the chaps I'm goin' to have it, you know—for the honah of the Fourth. And then

there's the patah. He doesn't think I've got a ghostly. I'm jollay well goin' to pprove that I can do it."

"Good egg!" said Levison heartily. "Well, I'll do my best to help you."

"Thank you, deah boy. I'm sure it's vewy good of you," said Arthur Augustus, gratefully. "You are a wippin' chap, Levison."

"Not at all," said Levison. "You've been very good to me."

"Look here, old chap!" said D'Arcy, awkwardly, and colouring a little. "One good turn deserves another, you know. Your patah has cut off your allowance."

"Yes."

"I've got lots of tin!"

"I know you have," said Levison.

"Well, if—if you should be stonay at any time, you've only got to say. I should be delighted to help you tide it ovah till your govahnah comes wound."

Levison shook his head.

"You're very good," he said, "but I couldn't accept even a loan from you. You see, if I let you lend me money, the fellows would say that I was chumming up with you now for the sake of what I could get."

"They wouldn't know."

"Oh, secrets are never kept; besides, I shouldn't care to borrow money of you in secret. I've had enough keeping secrets in my time, and it's done me harm. Everything I do in future is going to be open and above-board."

"Bai Jove, Levison, I wish Hewwies could heah you speak like that!" said Arthur Augustus, in great admiration.

Levison laughed.

"Herries doesn't trust me," he said. "But I don't bear him any malice—he's got reason. I don't deny that I used to—well—that I didn't always play the game. And I admit that I'm pretty hard up now, D'Arcy; but nothing would induce me to accept a loan from you. If you mention it again I shall be offended."

"I won't mention it again, deah boy," said D'Arcy; "and I must say that I weward you as a wippin' chap. I knew all along that you were perfectly disintewested, of course, and I think even Hewwies would be convinced now."

"I daresay I shall convince him in time," said Levison. "Now, about your chance for the exam. I've been thinking it over. You are set on getting the medal?"

"Yaas, wathah!"

"If you withdrew from the exam.——"

"Bai Jove! I couldn't! I should be laughed to death, you know!"

"If you fail——"

"Well, I don't want to fail. But I shall have to go in, in any case. But I'm going to make feahful efforts to pass."

"The exam's on Wednesday afternoon," Levison remarked, thoughtfully. "Lathom's the master in charge."

"Yaas."

"And he's short-sighted."

D'Arcy stared at Levison.

"Yaas," he said, "I know he is. What on earth has that got to do with it? He will have his glasses on to wead the papahs; and the Head goes over them, too."

"Yes, I know. But——" Levison paused.

"What are you thinking of, Levison, deah boy?"

"I'm thinking of ways and means to make you pass," said Levison. "I'm simply going to make you do it; I've made up my mind about that."

"Thank you vewy much, my deah fellow!"

"If you follow my lead, and do exactly as I tell you, it's bound to work out all right," said Levison. "Now to work!"

D'Arcy brightened up.

"You feel sure about it?" he asked.

"Yes, if you follow my lead."

"I'll do that, wathah!"

"Good! Now wire in—Anabasis—Darius kai Parysatis gignontai paides duo——"

And the two juniors set to work, and followed the immortal Ten Thousand upon that historic journey which covered so many parasangs.

Arthur Augustus was considerably fatigued when the coaching was over, but he thanked Levison warmly, and retired from the study feeling elated. Levison's assurance that he would pass the exam. bucked him up very much.

He met Blake and Herries downstairs, as he went for a saunter in the quadrangle to air himself after his "swotting."

"It's all wight, deah boys," he announced.

"Construing *Æschylus* yet?" grinned Blake.

"Not yet, deah boy. But I'm getting on wippingly, and Levison says I've got a weally first-class chance for the medal."

ANSWERS

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Herries snorted. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy turned his eyeglass upon his demonstrative chum.

"What's the matter with you, Herries?" he demanded. "Levison's lying to you," said Herries bluntly. "Everybody in the school knows that you haven't a ghost of a chance. You'd know it yourself if you weren't such an ass!"

"Weally, Herries——"

"Well, Herries is quite right," said Blake. "You couldn't possibly have a chance. What you don't know about Greek would just fill a lexicon."

"Exactly!" said Herries.

"Weally, Blake——"

"Levison must be pulling your leg, you know."

"Wats!"

"Has he borrowed any money yet?" asked Herries—his usual question.

"You are a suspicious beast, Hewwies, old man. I offered to lend Levison some money to-day, as I know he's hard-up, and he wufused, and told me not to mention the subject again, or he would be offended."

Herries grunted.

"What game has he got on, then?" he demanded.

"He hasn't any game on."

"Oh, rats!"

"Weally, Hewwies——"

"He's taking you in somehow, I know that," said Herries.

"He's not taking all this trouble for nothing. Towser can't stand him."

"Oh, blow Towsah!"

And Arthur Augustus walked out into the quadrangle with his nose very high in the air.

CHAPTER 9.

Levison is Mysterious.

MELLISH, of the Fourth, came up to his study to do his preparation, and found the door locked. He knocked on it in surprise.

"Who's there?" called out Levison from within.

"I am. Open the door. What have you got it locked for?"

"Mellish there?"

"Yes, fathead!"

"Nobody else?"

"No!"

"All serene!"

The door was opened, and Mellish went in, in a state of great astonishment. The door was closed again immediately, and Mellish looked round at Levison.

He stared at him blankly.

"Why—what—what——"

A strange alteration had taken place in Levison's appearance.

On the table lay a bag, opened, containing the articles Levison used for make-up when he was acting in the Junior Dramatic Society.

And the cad of the Fourth had evidently been making up.

Instead of his usual somewhat slovenly attire, he was dressed with exquisite neatness, in well-cut clothes that were easily recognisable as belonging to Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. He was just D'Arcy's size, though not quite so slim, and the clothes fitted him very well. The fancy waistcoat, gleaming with colours, was one of D'Arcy's latest acquisitions. But it was not only in the clothes, and the extra height of the collar, that Levison resembled the swell of the Fourth.

He had been making up his face too, and his short, dark hair was completely concealed under a wig adjusted with wonderful exactitude, and exactly resembling the fair hair of the swell of St. Jim's.

Only Levison's somewhat swarthy face remained to give him away, and he was making that up when Levison came in.

That he was making himself up to resemble D'Arcy was evident to Mellish, but why he should do it was a mystery.

Mellish could only stare at him in wonder.

"What's the little game?" he demanded, at last.

Levison grinned. He was working at his face before a glass, and his complexion was becoming fairer under his skillful hand.

"Can't you see?"

"Blessed if I can!"

"When I'm finished, whom would you take me for?"

"D'Arcy, I suppose. You made up as D'Arcy once before, I remember. But what are you doing it for now?"

"Practice!"

"But what's the idea?"

"Never mind that," said Levison. "I just want to see if I can do it, that's all—enough to pass myself off as D'Arcy, say, before Lathom."

"I shouldn't wonder," said Mellish. "Lathom's as blind as a bat. Look here, I can see that you've got something on!"

"Yes, D'Arcy's clothes!"

"What are you going to do?"

"Put this to the test. When I'm finished, I want you to bring a fellow into the study, and call me D'Arcy, and see whether the chap bowls me out. That will be a good test."

"Yes, but——"

"And don't ask too many questions, my son," said Levison.

"It may be better for you not to know anything about it."

"Oh, I don't want to get mixed up in it, if it's one of your old games," said Mellish hastily. "You've got me into trouble often enough."

Levison grinned, and went on with his work. Levison was very clever, and in the art of imitation he had few equals. He could imitate another fellow's voice, and he had often used that gift to play ill-natured tricks. He could imitate another fellow's handwriting with perfect facility; and that dangerous gift had been the cause once of his being very nearly expelled from St. Jim's. And as an amateur actor he had no equal at St. Jim's, excepting Kerr of the New House. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy was so extremely distinctive, both in person and in attire, that he really lent himself to the impersonator. Mellish watched Levison's progress with wonder and admiration.

"It's ripping!" he said, at last.

Levison jammed a monocle into his eye.

Mellish gasped.

"My hat! You might be his twin!"

"Get somebody in to see me, and we'll soon know."

Levison put away his make-up box, and seated himself in the armchair, with his face turned away from the light. Mellish quitted the study, and a few minutes later came back with Reilly of the Fourth.

"Hallo, D'Arcy!" he exclaimed.

The disguised junior turned his head.

"I'm waitin' heah for Levison," he said.

"Where is he?"

"I weally don't know, deah boy."

"Faith, and how are ye gettin' on wid yer Greek, Gussy, darling?" asked Reilly, who evidently had no suspicion.

"Wippin', Weilly, deah boy!"

"Going to pass the exam?" grinned the Irish junior.

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Faith, and I hope ye will!" said Reilly. "Where are those chestnuts, Mellish?"

"Levison's got them," said Mellish. "He's not here."

Reilly sniffed, and left the study. Mellish closed the door after him.

Levison allowed the eyeglass to fall from his eye, and chuckled.

"How's that?" he asked.

"First chop. Reilly had no idea that you weren't D'Arcy."

"Not the slightest," agreed Levison. "I think it will work."

"What will work?"

"The wheeze."

"But what is the wheeze?"

"A secret!" said Levison coolly.

And he locked the door and divested himself of his disguise. Meanwhile, Reilly had gone downstairs, and as he reached the lower passage, he gave a sudden jump. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy was just coming in from the quadrangle.

Reilly stopped dead, staring at him as if he were a ghost.

Two minutes ago he had left D'Arcy, as he believed, in the study of the Fourth-Form passage, and now here was D'Arcy walking in calmly from the dusky quad.

"Phwat!" gasped Reilly.

D'Arcy looked at him in surprise.

"Did you address me, Weilly, deah boy?" he asked.

"How did you get out?"

"What?"

"Did ye shin down from the window?"

"Eh?"

"Sure, and what are ye playin' tricks for?" demanded the amazed Reilly.

"I fail to undahstand you, Weilly," said Arthur Augustus.

"If you will kindly explain what you are divvin' at——"

"Sure I've just left you in Levison's study, and now here ye are!" said Reilly.

"My deah chap, you're dweamin'! I left Levison's study more than half an hour ago!"

"But I saw you there!"

"Wats!"

"I tell ye——"

"You're dweamin', deah boy! I've been in the quad, walkin' wound and talkin' to Figgins for a long time."

"Howly smoke!" gasped Reilly, wondering whether he was, indeed, dreaming.

Arthur Augustus walked on, leaving Reilly in a state of the

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greatest astonishment. The Irish junior turned to the staircase again, and dashed up to the Fourth-Form passage. He tore at the door of Mellish's study. It was locked.

"Open this blessed dure!" shouted Reilly.

"What's the trouble?"

It was Levison's voice.

"Is D'Arcy there?"

Levison chuckled.

"No!"

"Open the dure!"

"Rats!"

And Reilly retired baffled, and still in a state of the greatest amazement.

CHAPTER 10.

Tom Merry Wants to Know!

TOM MERRY came along to Study No. 6 on Tuesday evening, and found the chums of the Fourth at tea. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy had a book on the tea-table beside him—he was seldom without a book in his hand in these days—and, of course, it was in Greek. There was no doubt that the swell of St. Jim's was taking his studies in Greek with the greatest seriousness. Tom Merry grinned as he looked at the book.

"I want to see you fellows about the House match," he remarked. "I suppose you're all playing to-morrow afternoon?"

Blake nodded.

"Yes, rather!" he said. "We've got to beat Figgins & Co. It would hardly do to leave Study No. 6 out."

"We're all playing," said Digby.

"Imposs!" said D'Arcy.

"You don't want to be left out, do you?" said Blake. "You can't desert the team in the last House match of the season, Gussy. Think of the honour of the House."

"Think of us struggling against the New House bowlers without you to help us keep our wickets up!" said Tom Merry solemnly.

"Don't leave us in the lurch, Gussy!" implored Blake.

"I'm sowwy, deah boys—"

"You can put Gussy's name down," said Blake. "I'll see that he comes along, even if I have to run him in by the scruff of his neck!"

"I should wefuse to be wun in by the sewuff of my neck, Blake. I'm sowwy, but it's imposs. I can't play."

"I've heard lots of fellows say that," remarked Monty Lowther, looking into the study over Tom Merry's shoulder. "But you always say you can."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Weally, Lowthah—"

"Gussy is getting remarkably modest and truthful in his old age," Lowther remarked. "How did you first come to understand that you can't play, Gussy?"

"Pway don't be an ass, Lowthah! I'm sowwy to have to stand out of the team at a critical moment, when I realise vewy cleahly that I am wequered, but it's imposs. I've got to go in for the exam. on Wednesday aftahnoon."

"Why not chuck the exam?"

"I am hardly likely to do that, Tom Mewwy, aftah swottin' for it. It's wathah thoughtless of the Head to fix it for a half-holiday. But there you are!"

"So you're really going in for it?" grinned Tom Merry.

"Yaas, wathah!"

"You'll get a duck's egg in the marks."

"I twust I shall be at the top of the list."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Levison thinks it will be all wight," said D'Arcy. "I was beginnin' to have some doubts myself, but Levison thinks—"

"Does Levison say that he thinks you've got a chance at the medal?" asked Tom Merry, with a stare.

"Yaas."

"Then he's spoofing you!"

"Weally, Tom Mewwy—"

"And I'll jolly well tell him so, if he talks such rot to me!" said Tom Merry wrathfully. "You going in for the medal is the joke of the season, Gussy; and Levison knows it better than anybody else, as he knows Greek."

"Wats!"

"I've told Gussy all along that Levison is only pulling his tilly leg!" said Herries. "But Gussy always was an ass!"

"I wefuse to be called an ass!"

"Blessed if I can see what Levison's little game is," said Blake. "He knows Gussy can't win, as well as we do. Is he simply trying to make the duffer look an ass?"

"Weally, Blake—"

"Looks to me like one of his old rotten tricks!" said Digby. "It's a rotten joke up against this study, I suppose, leading Gussy on to make a fathead of himself!"

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"Weally, Dig—"

"There's more in it than that," said Herries. "Levison's been spending a lot of time, and taking a lot of trouble, over Gussy's Greek. He's got some game on that I can't quite savvy; but I know he's up to his old tricks."

"I wefuse to entah into a discush like that!" said Arthur Augustus, with a great deal of dignity. "Levison has been vewy good to me, and I twust him."

"Ass!"

"You wemembah that it was agweed to give Levison a chance, and not to wun him down," said D'Arcy. "We all agweed to that?"

"Yes, if he played the game," said Tom Merry. "But he's not playing the game. He's taking you in!"

"I decline to think anything of the sort."

And Arthur Augustus, leaving his tea unfinished, picked up Xenophon and quitted the study, with his nose very high in the air.

Blake chuckled.

"Gussy's on his dignity again," he remarked. "But I'm not going to pretend to think that Levison isn't making an ass of him. It's all rot about the exam."

"Blessed if I can quite see what Levison is up to, though," said Tom Merry. "So far as I can see, he's only trying to make Gussy look an idiot before the whole school, by entering into an exam. he knows nothing about!"

"That's it!"

"We jolly well ought to rag Levison and make him stop!" growled Herries. "If Gussy is cackled at by every chap at St. Jim's, it's up against this study!"

"Hallo, here he is!" said Tom Merry, as Levison of the Fourth came along the passage, past the open door of Study No. 6. "Let's tackle him now! Will you step in here, Levison?"

"Certainly!" said Levison.

He came into the study.

"We want to ask you a question," said Tom Merry.

"You know Greek, don't you?"

"Pretty well."

"You've seen old exam. papers for the medal?"

"Yes."

"Then you know jolly well that Gussy is only playing the giddy goat by going in for it, don't you?"

Levison shook his head.

"I don't know anything of the sort!" he replied.

"Do you think he can win?"

"I think he's got a good chance."

"You think Gussy's got a good chance at a difficult examination with a Greek paper, when he's never studied Greek?"

"He's been swotting lately."

"You can't swot up enough Greek for an exam. in a week, or in six months for that matter!" said Tom Merry warmly.

"Gussy's vewy quick," said Levison, "and I'm a good coach. I know all the exam. tricks inside out, and I've got an idea of what the paper will be like. Exams. aren't won by knowing a subject, but by cramming for the special paper required. You ought to know that."

"Yes, I do know that," said Tom Merry, with a nod.

"Chaps pass exams. in French who can't read a paragraph in a French newspaper. But there's a limit. You know perfectly well that Gussy hasn't a ghostly chance for the medal."

"Well, I don't."

"He won't get a single mark!" said Blake wrathfully. "You're making a fool of him! He wouldn't even be allowed to enter if the rules allowed anybody to be excluded. I know Railton is annoyed at his name being down!"

"Well, I think he's got a chance," said Levison obstinately. "I believe he'll come in second, if not first!"

"It's impossible!"

"Wait and see."

"You're making a fool of him!" growled Herries. Levison shrugged his shoulders.

"I suppose I might have expected that from you, Herries!" he said. "Well, it's all right. I know you had no reason to trust me, when I used to be here. It's no good telling you I've changed a good deal, unless I prove it by my actions. I'm trying to do that by helping D'Arcy and backing him up. It will be a credit to this study if he carries off the Greek Medal."

"But he can't do it!"

"I think he can!"

Tom Merry looked very hard at Levison. The Fourth-Former's face was perfectly serious.

"Well, if I'm doing you an injustice, I'm sorry," said Tom Merry slowly. "But I can't believe that you really think that, Levison."

"No fear!" said Monty Lowther emphatically.

"It's impossible!" said Blake again.

"Wait and see. If D'Arcy gets the medal, or honourable mention even, I suppose you'll admit then that I have been playing fair and square?"

"Yes; but he won't."

"You'll see to-morrow."

"Rot!" grunted Herries. "He won't get a single mark, and the whole school will be yelling over his making a fool of himself. He ought to withdraw."

"Well, if he withdrew at the last minute, it would look as bad as his getting plucked in the exam," said Levison. "I don't see that it would make much difference."

"Well, that's so," Blake had to admit. "You oughtn't to have egged him on at all."

"I believe he'll get through."

"Rats!"

"Leave it till to-morrow before you call me a liar!" said Levison. "That's not much to ask. The exam. will be over at half-past four to-morrow afternoon."

"And you think Gussy will get through?" Tom Merry demanded.

"Yes."

"Well, if he does—"

"If he does, I hope you fellows will say you're sorry for having called me over the coals like this, when I'm doing my best for a friend of yours," said Levison.

"Right!" said Blake. "But—"

"I sha'n't say I'm sorry," said Herries. "Gussy can't win. If it should be made out that he does, it will only be another of your swindling tricks."

Tom Merry grinned.

"That's too thick, Herries, old man!" he said. "If Gussy gets the medal, it will be fair and square, and it's up to us to ask Levison's pardon. But I'm blessed if I can see how he's going to do it!"

Levison left the study. He left the juniors very much surprised, and wondering. His manner was so assured, and the time was so short before the event—which must prove whether he had spoken truly or falsely—that they simply did not know what to make of it. But if Levison was telling the truth, and Arthur Augustus D'Arcy had a chance for the medal, one thing was certain—the chums of the School House had greatly underrated the abilities of the swell of St. Jim's.

CHAPTER 11.

The Scheme!

ARTHUR AUGUSTUS D'ARCY came into Levison's study with a somewhat sombre look on his aristocratic face. Levison was seated in the armchair, and did not have his books out ready as usual. There was a faint trace of cigarette-smoke in the study, but Arthur Augustus was too preoccupied in his mind to notice it.

"Weady, old man?" he asked.

"Quite."

"I'm beginning to think that I've taken on a big thing, dear boy," said Arthur Augustus, in a tone of discouragement. "The other fellows keep on chippin' me about it. I've told Tom Mewy that I'm standin' out of the House match to-morrow because of the exam. I suppose you still think I'd better go in?"

Arthur Augustus looked at Levison very doubtfully as he put the question. The nearer the hour of the examination came, the more stupendous seemed to be the task the swell of St. Jim's had imposed upon himself. The old saying, that fools rush in where angels fear to tread, had been borne in upon the mind of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

"I want to have a talk to you about that," said Levison gravely. "Never mind the books for a minute. You've told pretty nearly everybody that you're in for the exam."

"Yaas. The whole coll. knows it."

"And your people?"

"Yaas. My patah doesn't take it seriously, I fancy. But since you've backed me up, I've written to him again and told him that I'm practically certain of the medal, and that a Gwecian here thinks the same. He's weplied, that if I win the medal he will be vewy agreeably supwised, and he'll send me a banknote for twenty pounds!"

Levison's eyes glistened.

"That's good!" he exclaimed.

"Yaas, wathah!"

"It would make things pretty rotten for you if you drew out now," Levison remarked, watching the face of the swell of St. Jim's.

Arthur Augustus looked dismayed.

"Bai Jove! Wathah! It wouldn't have been so bad if I'd drawn out last week; but to put it off till just before the exam. would look wotten. You see, the fellows will say I've been bwaggin', and I shall be laughed to death."

"And your people—"

"Oh, it would be awful!" said D'Arcy, in great distress. "I couldn't face them aftah it! I simply can't withdraw now, Levison, dear boy. I'd wathah go in and get nothin'. But I suppose I'm bound to get a few marks, to keep up appearances, anyway. You were sayin' to Blake that I'm practically certain of the medal."

Levison suppressed a grin.

"I've been sticking to you, D'Arcy," he said. "You can't say that I haven't been helping you and backing you up. But—but the time was so short. I've had a talk with Lefevre, of the Fifth, and I've looked at some of his papers. He's been swotting hard, and he's in great form. I didn't know that before."

"Yaas. But—"

"I told you you should get the medal, and I'd see you through, D'Arcy," said the cad of the Fourth. "I had an idea in the back of my mind, though, for seeing you through all the same, even if you weren't in form to tackle the exam."

Arthur Augustus stared.

"I weally don't see, Levison—" he began.

Levison paused. For the proposition he was going to make he knew that he needed all his cunning, and all the simplicity of D'Arcy's unsuspecting nature. He had so encouraged the swell of the School House in his project, keeping him to it till the very last moment, that it was almost impossible for D'Arcy to recede. Still, Levison was not feeling quite sure of his ground, and he paused before he went on.

Arthur Augustus was silent, looking at his false friend in uneasiness.

"I said I'd see you through," said Levison.

"Yaas."

"You've relied on me?"

"Yaas, wathah! When I began to get doubtful myself, you see, I natuwallly welied on a chap who knew Gwec, and knew all the chances of the exam. In fact, I've already awwanged with the chaps to have a big celebration when I get the medal."

"You can't back out now."

"Imposs.!" said D'Arcy, in alarm.

"Then there's only one thing to be done."

"What's that, dear boy?"

"You've got to get the medal, and I've got to help you."

D'Arcy stared.

"I don't see—" he muttered.

"Look here," said Levison, "getting a medal is like everything else. If you don't feel inclined to take the trouble yourself, it's all right if a friend does it for you."

"Eh?"

"Suppose you run a horse in a race," said Levison. "You don't ride yourself. You put up a jockey to ride for you, and he wins for you; but it's your race, and you collar the cup, or the plate, or whatever the stake is."

"Yaas, that's all wight."

"Well, in this case I'm your jockey."

"What!"

"You don't want the trouble of riding yourself, so you put up a jockey, in a race. You don't want the fag of the exam. Yourself, so you put me in to do it for you. See?"

D'Arcy looked at him in bewilderment.

"No, I don't see," he gasped. "It's not allowed by the wules for any chap to have assistance duwin' the exam. Mr. Lathom will be in the woom all the time, to see that it's cawried out all wight."

"I know that. I'm not thinking of sitting on your left ear and prompting you," said Levison impatiently.

"Then how—"

"I'm going in instead of you."

"Imposs. It's too late for you to entah your name. Besides, if you win the medal, that won't be my winnin' it, will it?"

"Yes; in this case it will."

"You're talkin' in widdles, dear boy."

"I'm not going in as myself," said Levison, sinking his voice to a whisper.

"Eh?"

"But as you!"

"As—as me?"

"Yes."

Arthur Augustus pushed back his chair a little, staring hard at Levison. His first thought was that Levison's recent illness had left his brain unhinged, and that he was wandering.

"Levison, old son, you're not well," he said.

Levison laughed.

"You don't see how it's to be done?" he asked.

"Certainly not."

"It's quite simple. You will stay out of examination—"

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room, and lie low. I shall enter it in your name, and walk through the exam. for you."

"But—but the other fellows will know you're not me!" exclaimed D'Arcy, in utter bewilderment.

"No, they won't!"

"What's to prevent them?"

"Don't you remember the time I made up as you, D'Arcy? I took Tom Merry and Blake in. They didn't know the difference."

"Ya-a-a-n-as!"

"I've tried it again. I tried it on Reilly, and he took me for you."

"Ya-as!"

"Well, doesn't that make it quite simple? I shall make up as you, and go into the exam-room. Old Lathorn won't know the difference—and he's short-sighted, too. The other fellows will be wrapped up in thinking of their blessed Greek papers. I shall get through early, and come out. You will lie low in this study all the time. It's a half-holiday to-morrow. The fellows are playing a House match; there won't be a chap in the House excepting the fellows at the exam. Nothing can go wrong. I shall win the exam, hands down; and when the result is declared, the winner will be Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. Nobody will be a penny the worse or a penny the wiser?"

For a full minute the swell of St. Jim's gazed speechlessly at Levison.

Then he found his voice.

"You awful wascal!" he said.

CHAPTER 12.

Levison Explains.

LEVISON winced. He had been prepared for difficulties in carrying out his scheme, but the contempt in D'Arcy's face cut him, all the same. He was considerably hardened to scorn; but contempt, as the proverb declares, will pierce even the shell of the tortoise, and the scorn in Arthur Augustus's look penetrated Levison's thick skin.

The colour came into his face. But he kept himself well in hand. If he had given way to angry feelings then, his deep-laid scheme would have been at an end, and all his trouble would have been taken for nothing, and his scheme of future profit would have been balked. Levison kept quite cool.

"I'm sorry you should look at it in that light, D'Arcy," he said. "I've tried to help you, out of sheer friendship. If you don't want my help, I think you might say so civilly."

"Weally, Levison—"

"But I suppose you've come round to Herries' way of thinking, and you fancy that I'm doing this to benefit myself in some way."

"Oh! No, no! I don't see how you would profit by it. You would get only the hard work of the exam, and nothin' else."

"Well, that ought to show you that I'm disinterested in the matter, at all events," said Levison drily.

D'Arcy flushed. In the first moment of surprise, he had certainly spoken rather hastily; and as he remembered Levison's services of the past week, he repented.

"I—I'm sowwy I called you a wascal, Levison!" he stammered.

"I—I weally didn't mean that. I only meant that the scheme was a wascally one. It is, you know!"

"I don't know it is," said Levison. "I've thought it out to help you, and save you from becoming the laughing-stock of the school."

Arthur Augustus winced in his turn.

"Bai Jove!" he said.

"You can't win, as the matter stands," said Levison. "I hoped to be able to coach you up to it, and get you a chance; but there isn't time. You can see that for yourself."

"Yaas. But you told me—"

"I don't claim to be infallible," said Levison. "Say I was mistaken. I always had this idea at the back of my mind, that if you couldn't do it, I could go in for you and

save you the trouble. If my friendship only makes you consider me a wascal, though, the less we say about it the better."

D'Arcy looked deeply distressed.

"I'm sowwy," he said—"I'm weally sowwy. I apologise most sincerely."

"Well, that's all right," said Levison, more cordially. "I know some of the fellows have considered me unscrupulous. But I don't see anything wrong in this. If there's anything wrong in it, I think you might allow it's a mistake on my part, and not set it down to my being a wascal—"

"I withdwaw that word, Levison, deah boy. Pway excuse me. I was so vewy much surprised, you know—"

Levison nodded.

"It's all right. As you won't let me help you, I suppose you're going to withdraw your name from the list?"

"Bai Jove! That would be wotten! The whole blessed school will be cacklin' over it," said Arthur Augustus miserably—"and my patah will cackle, too."

"It's a wotten position, certainly. I don't seem to have been of much use to you, after all," said Levison dejectedly. "I thought I could make it all right. It would have been better for you if I hadn't come back to St. Jim's. I've only made matters worse for you. After what's been said, you can't possibly withdraw."

"Pway don't wewpwoach yourself on my account, deah boy. You have done a great deal for me, and I'm weally vewy gwateful."

"But, you can't withdraw from the exam, now!"

"No; it would be too widiculous, the vewy day before the exam."

"But if you enter, and don't take a single mark—"

"Bai Jove! I shall be laughed out of the school."

"No doubt about that."

"It's an awfy wotten posish, isn't it?" said Arthur Augustus, in dismay. "What would you advise me to do, Levison, deah boy?"

Levison shrugged his shoulders.

"I've given my advice," he said. "There's only one thing to do, but you won't do it."

"But—but it would be w'ong!" faltered D'Arcy.

"It's the only way to save your face."

"Yaas; but it would be w'ong."

"Now, look here, D'Arcy. I suppose you can give me credit for being commonly honest, can't you?" demanded Levison.

"Yaas, certainly!"

"Very well. If I don't think it would be wrong, you must admit that it's a matter of opinion whether it's wrong or not."

"Yaas," said D'Arcy slowly.

"I think it would be right," said Levison. "In fact, I think you ought to do it. The laugh will be up against your study, as well as up against you, if you are made to look ridiculous over the exam."

"Widiculous, bai Jove!" murmured D'Arcy, touched in his tenderest point.

"And you ought to think of me, too," said Levison.

"You, deah boy?"

"Yes, me! Your friends have been saying things about me—that I've been leading you on, intending to let you down at the last minute, and make you look a fool. If you speak out of the exam, now—"

"Weally Levison—"

"That's the right word," said Levison. "If you speak out of the exam, now, you let me down. Every fellow who's against me will say at once that that was what I've been planning all along—to make a fool of you and turn the laugh against Study No. 6. And that, when I've been trying ever since I came back to play the game and make the House think well of me. Do you think that's fair to me?"

"Well, no, it isn't, deah boy."

"Very well, then. Why can't you do as I suggest? It isn't as if there were a money prize to be won. That would be dishonest, if you like. But it's only a medal—there's no pecuniary value in it."

"Yaas; that's true."

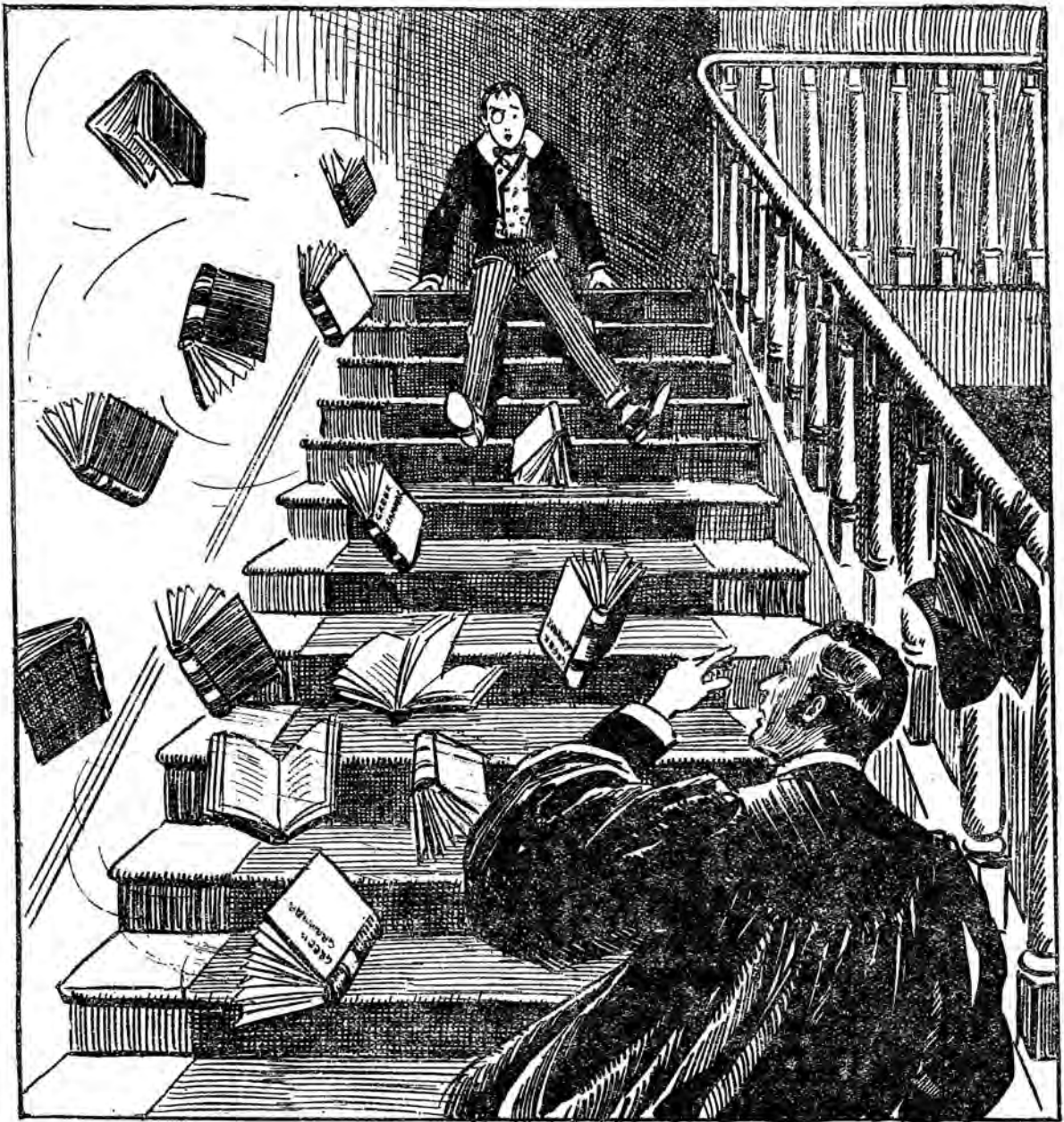
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Arthur Augustus's Form-master caught at the banisters; but as he did so a volume of *Æschylus* caught him in the neck, and he let go. *Euripides* and *Plato* smote him forcibly on the waistcoat, and he sat down, with *Plutarch* and *Sophocles* thundering round him. (See Chapter 2.)

"If you had time to swot over the exam. you could pull it off easily enough?"

"Yaas, wathah!"

"You entered too late, that's all. Well, you put me up to pull it off for you, just as a racehorse owner puts up a jockey to ride for him. It's the same thing."

Levison's sophistry would hardly have imposed upon Blake or Tom Merry; but he had an easier victim in Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. It did not even occur to the swell of St. Jim's to suspect that Levison had ulterior motives. So far as he could see, Levison, right or wrong, was working in his interests, and could have no motive but the most uninterested friendship. So far as appeared, Levison was arranging to give himself hard work and considerable risk, in order that D'Arcy might save his face before the school. If he had other motives, they were not apparent, and it was no wonder that Arthur Augustus placed faith in him.

"But—but it's not quite like that," said D'Arcy feebly.

"A fellow's supposed to pass an exam. off his own bat, you know."

"Yes; but this is a peculiar case. If you had a little more time you could do it hands down."

"Do you really think so?"

"I'm certain of it."

"Of course, that makes a difference," said Arthur Augustus thoughtfully.

"Of course it does. And if you sneak out, you'll be grinned to death by the whole school, and your friends will say that I purposely led you into the position. I think you might consider me a little."

"My deah chap, of course I will. I shouldn't like you to suffah fwom havin' been too good a fwend to me."

"That's exactly what will happen, unless you agree to my scheme. I've been trying to live down what happened when I was at St. Jim's before, and now you're going to muck it all up, and make my position quite hopeless!"

"Bai Jove! I wouldn't do that for anythin'!"

"I daresay I deserve it," said Levison. "I suppose I've got no right to expect that you will consider me in any way." "Don't say that, deah boy!" said D'Arcy, in great distress. "I'm thinkin' of you more than anybody else. The fellows in my study are saying now that this is one of your old twicks, I admit. It would be wotten if—"

"I shall be sent to Coventry."

"I shall stand by you, deah boy."

"Well, even if you do, it won't be very pleasant for me, being out by the whole House," said Levison. "Besides, I shouldn't allow you to do it and sacrifice yourself. No! If the fellows get down on me again I shall leave the school!"

"Oh, bai Jove!"

"It will mean the finish for me here."

"It's awfully wotten," said D'Arcy, rubbing his forehead in an effort of thought. "The way you put it, it doesn't seem vewy w'ong; but somehow I feel that I oughtn't to do it, you know."

"If it's wrong, it's my fault, not yours. I'm going to do it," said Levison. "You will simply keep quiet."

"Yaas; but—"

"I think you ought to make up your mind to it, for my sake, D'Arcy. I've got myself into this position for your sake."

"Yaas; but—but I'd bettah think it ovah," said D'Arcy. "I—I'll think it ovah and let you know, deah boy."

"All serene. Not a word about the scheme outside this study, you know. Whether we do it or not, it's to be kept dark."

"Yaas, wathah!"

"I rely on you for that."

"Honah b'wight, deah boy."

And Arthur Augustus left the study with his brain in a whirl.

Left alone, when the door had closed behind the swell of St. Jim's, Levison chuckled softly. It was a chuckle full of cynical derision. He felt that success was in his hands, and once Arthur Augustus had consented to take part in the cheat, Arthur Augustus would be under his thumb. And that prospect made the cad of the Fourth chuckle with great satisfaction.

CHAPTER 13.

D'Arcy's Double.

TOM MERRY slapped the swell of St. Jim's on the back. It was the day after Levison's talk with D'Arcy in his study, and morning lessons were over. The afternoon was a half-holiday to all St. Jim's, excepting the five competitors for the Greek Medal and the master in charge of the examination. Tom Merry came upon D'Arcy in the passage after dinner, but the swell of St. Jim's was so deeply preoccupied in thought that he did not notice the Shell fellow approach. He started, with an exclamation, as Tom Merry bestowed a hearty slap upon his shoulder.

"Bai Jove! Ow!"

"Penny for your thoughts, dear boy!" said Tom Merry cheerfully.

Arthur Augustus coloured. He was not likely to tell Tom Merry what his thoughts were at that moment.

"Weally—" he began.

"Going to chuck the exam., and play in the House match after all?" asked Tom Merry.

D'Arcy shook his head.

"Then you're really going in for it?"

"Yaas."

"More duffer you!" said Tom Merry. "Better come and play cricket!"

"Blow the cricket! Look here, Tom Merry—"

"Yes?"

"I—I say—"

"Well?"

"If I—I ask your advice—"

"About the exam.?" said Tom Merry, with a grin. "I should advise you to chuck it."

"Not exactly the exam.—something else."

"Go ahead, my infant," said Tom Merry solemnly. "I'm open to give advice free of charge to all deserving youngsters in difficulties. Is it a new topper?"

"No."

"Something new in the fancy waistcoat line, that you want an expert opinion upon?"

"No—no!"

"Then what is it? Go ahead!"

"Suppose a chap—"

"Yes," said Tom Merry gravely, as Arthur Augustus paused, "I'm perfectly willing to suppose a chap. What else?"

"Suppose a chap—" hesitated D'Arcy.

"Yes."

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"Sup-suppose a chap—"

"I've done that already. We've supposed the chap. Isn't there anything more?"

"Suppose a chap—"

"My hat!"

"Suppose a chap was twyin' to do you a big favah, at a considerable wisk to himself, out of the pawest motives, and—"

"Pile in!"

"Would you feel justified in lettin' him down and gettin' him wogared as a wottah, if—if—"

"No fear!" said Tom Merry. "I would stand by him to the last shot in the locker—that is, of course, unless there was anything rotten in the bizney."

"Suppose that was a mattah of opinion?"

"H'm! I'm afraid I should have to know the particulars before I could go into that," said Tom Merry. "I'm not a giddy Delphian oracle, you know! Can't you be a bit clearer?"

"Well, suppose a chap—"

"We've got past that."

"Suppose—"

Manners and Lowther came along the passage, and took Tom Merry by the arms.

"Time!" said Manners. "You're late already. Come on!"

"Wait a minute. I'm giving Gussy fatherly advice."

"Oh, blow!" said Lowther. "Figgins & Co. are on the ground already."

"Hold on! Gussy is supposing a chap—"

"It's all wight," said D'Arcy. "I can't vewy well tell you any more. I'll come and have a look at the cricket when the exam's ovah."

And he went up to Levison's study.

The Terrible Three walked out to the cricket-field, Tom Merry looking puzzled. But the House match with the New House team soon drove the remembrance of D'Arcy's half-confidence from his mind.

Arthur Augustus entered Levison's study and found that valuable friend there.

"Time for the exam. in half an hour," said Levison. "It's to be held in the Fourth-Form-room, begins at half-past two. Two hours allowed. We've got no time to waste if we're going in."

Arthur Augustus looked undecided.

"I've thought ovah it a lot," he said.

"I hope you've decided."

"No, I haven't."

"I'm sorry. I can't do more than I've done," said Levison. "If you choose to make yourself look a silly ass, and set the whole gang against me, I suppose I can't stop you. I think I deserve something better at your hands, that's all."

D'Arcy winced.

"I wish you wouldn't put it like that, Levison. If it weren't for thinkin' of you in the matter, I should chuck the whole thing now."

"I think it's up to you to think of me."

"Yaas; that's what wovvies me," said Arthur Augustus, with a sigh. "I feel that I can't wefusa to stand by you. But I don't like the idee."

"If there's anything wrong in it, it's on my shoulders, not yours," said Levison. "If I'm willing to do so much for you, you might let me do it."

D'Arcy looked him full in the face.

"Will you give me your word, honah b'wight, Levison, that you don't think there is anything w'ong in doin' this?"

"Certainly," said Levison, without moving a muscle.

"Honah b'wight?"

"Honour bright!"

Arthur Augustus looked relieved.

"Well, I giva in, then," he said. "Go ahead!"

"Good!" said Levison. "Lend me a hand."

And he set to work, after locking the door of the study. He had everything that he needed ready to hand, and he worked with wonderful facility. Arthur Augustus watched him in silence.

He helped Levison as much as he could, but the cad of the Fourth did not need much help.

In a suit of D'Arcy's clothes, with D'Arcy's well-known waistcoat and high collar, with fair hair skilfully placed over his dark head, with his complexion made fairer, his dark eyebrows lightened, and other changes, Levison soon made himself into D'Arcy's double.

Doubtful as he was in his mind, the swell of St. Jim's could not help regarding the startling transformation with wonder and admiration.

"Bai Jove!" he said. "It's wemarkable!"

Levison jammed an eyeglass into his eye, and grinned.

"I think I shall pass," he remarked.

"But if you are bawled out?"

"I'll pass it off as a lark of my own, without mentioning your name. You stay here and keep the study door locked."

"Yaas."

"I'm off!"

Levison, with a firm step, quitted the study, and waited till D'Arcy locked the door behind him. Then he descended the stairs.

It was a warm September afternoon, and the House was naturally deserted on the half-holiday. All the fellows were in the quad., or out on the playing-fields. Levison did not meet a soul till he reached the door of the Fourth-Form class-room, and when he entered it, he found it empty. He was early. He took a seat in the shadiest corner of the room, and waited.

A few minutes later the other competitors came in. They took their places. Mr. Latham entered with papers in his hand and handed them to Langton of the Sixth, who distributed them to the boys.

Levison's heart was beating fast, as the prefect handed him his paper.

But there was not a shadow of suspicion in Langton's face. Such an unheeded imposture naturally never entered his head, and Levison's impersonation was perfect—a work of art that would probably have passed muster even in the open sunlight of the quad.

And the competitors were thinking of the exam., not of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. Mr. Latham sat at his desk, and the five fellows worked at their papers in silence. And even Levison soon forgot the fact that he was impersonating D'Arcy, in the difficulty of grappling with one of the hardest papers he had ever tackled.

CHAPTER 14.

Too Late!

ARTHUR AUGUSTUS D'ARCY paced up and down Levison's study for the next hour and a half in an unenviable frame of mind.

D'Arcy had thought over the matter incessantly from the time Levison had first made his insidious proposition, until he felt his head turning round with trying to think it out.

Now that he was fairly committed to the deception, however, he was more troubled about it than ever.

The door was locked, and everyone out of doors; but the slightest sound in the house made his heart beat almost to suffocation.

If someone should find him there, when he was supposed to be in the Form-room at the examination.

He shuddered at the thought.

No one came to the study. From the window D'Arcy could see the cricketers and the big crowd watching the House match.

He wondered what Tom Merry & Co. would have thought if they had known what was going on in the School House.

Two or three times he started towards the door, feeling that he could stand it no longer, and that the deception should not be allowed to go on.

But the thought of what would happen to Levison restrained him.

Levison was in the examination-room under his name.

To show himself now would be to betray Levison, who was taking the risk for his sake; or so D'Arcy in his simplicity still believed.

But the waiting in the study was intolerable.

The hour and a half seemed like centuries to the unfortunate swell of St. Jim's.

Footsteps sounded in the passage at last, and there was a knock at the door. Arthur Augustus almost choked.

"Let me in!"

It was Levison's voice, and D'Arcy breathed more freely.

He unlocked the door, and Levison came in, so strangely like D'Arcy in appearance, that the swell of St. Jim's started, prepared as he was to see his double.

Levison locked the door again.

Arthur Augustus gazed at him in silence. His throat was dry and husky, and his face was pale. There was no sacrifice the swell of St. Jim's would not have made at that moment to get clear of this wretched entanglement. But Levison was in great spirits.

"I think it's all right," he said.

"The exam. isn't ova yet, deah boy, is it?"

"I didn't need the full time," explained Levison. "Langton is finished, too, but the others are still slogging away."

"You've finished your papah?"

"Yes."

"And—and you think—"

Levison nodded.

"I don't know, of course," he said. "But I think it will be all right. This kind of thing is easy enough to me."

"You are an awfully clevah chap!" said D'Arcy, in admiration.

Levison grinned. He had been told that before, and it was true. Tom Merry had remarked once that Levison was clever enough to do anything but run straight, and Tom Merry was quite right. Levison began to divest himself of his disguise.

"Better get these things off," he remarked. "We've got to keep all this jolly dark, or there will be a fearful row."

Arthur Augustus hesitated.

"Levison, old man," he said, "I—I can't have it!"

"What do you mean?" asked Levison.

"I can't let it go on! It's awfully good of you to stand by me like this, but I—I've thought it over, and it isn't honest, old fellow!"

"Leave that to me!"

"I can't leave it to you. It's all vewy well about there bein' no money pwize; that's true enough. But the medal won't weally belong to me. I shall be goin' about undah false pwetences, you know."

"Oh, that's all right!" said Levison easily.

"It isn't all wight! I should feel an awful cad!"

"Perhaps the medal won't be given out for your paper, after all," said Levison. "Perhaps the paper I've done will be lowest in the list."

"Bai Jove! I hope so!"

"But if it wins—"

"If it wins, I can't accept the medal, Levison!"

"You must!"

"Weally—"

"You can't give me away! I should be expelled from St. Jim's if the Head knew that I'd done what I've done to-day!" said Levison angrily. "You know that!"

"I—I forgot that!"

"It's too late for thinking about it now," said the cad of the Fourth. "We've got to go through with it. But there's nothing to worry about, it's all right."

"I feel like a feahful wottah!" said D'Arcy miserably. "I shall be takin' cwidet for what I haven't done—it's like buyin' honahs, you know."

"Well, bought honours are as good as any other honours," said Levison cynically, "and much more common, I can assure you."

"I don't want them."

"Besides, they're not bought in this case—you've given me nothing. I've taken all the risk and all the trouble for nothing."

"It's jollay good of you, Levison. But—"

"I suppose you don't want to ruin me, after what I've done for you?" said Levison testily.

"Wathah not!"

"Well, I shall be done for if you say a word."

"I—I suppose so."

"Go down to the cricket now and show yourself," said Levison, "and mind, not a word."

"All wight."

Arthur Augustus quitted the study.

His face was gloomier than anyone had ever seen it before as he left the School House and walked down to the junior cricket ground.

Tom Merry's wicket had just gone down to the doughty bowling of Fatty Wynn of the New House, and he came off the pitch, and stopped to speak to Arthur Augustus.

"Hallo! Exam. finished?"

"Yaas."

"Got through all right?"

"I don't know, deah boy."

"Result's made known on Saturday," said Blake. "I wonder whether we shall have the glory of seeing Gussy presented with the giddy medal before all St. Jim's."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"We'll have a high old celebration if he gets it," said Digby. "But I hardly think we shall be called upon to celebrate."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, I hope against hope that he'll get it," said Tom Merry. "He's going to have twenty quid from his pater if he does—and we'll make him spend it."

"Hear, hear!"

D'Arcy started.

"Bai Jove! I'd forgotten that!" he exclaimed. "I sha'n't accept it."

"What?"

The juniors stared at the swell of the School House in amazement.

"Not accept twenty quid!" yelled Blake.

"Wathah not!"

"Well, you ass! Why not?"

"Because—because—well, I sha'n't, that's all, deah boy!" And Arthur Augustus walked away to avoid further questioning.

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NEXT
THURSDAY: "THE SPY OF THE SCHOOL!"

"Well, there's not much risk!" grinned Tom Merry. "I really don't think *Levison* Eastwood will be called upon to hand over that twenty quid."

"Ha, ha, ha! Not much!"

And, strange to say, Arthur Augustus hoped sincerely that his paper would not be the one to capture the medal, and failure in the exam. would open a way to him out of the difficulties *Levison* had brought upon him. The swell of *St. Jim's* waited eagerly and anxiously for Saturday, eager to hear, not that he had won, but that he had lost.

CHAPTER 15.

The Winner.

"WALK up!" said Jack Blake cheerily. "Come and see Gussy capture the giddy medal!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

It was Saturday, and the order had gone forth for the school to assemble in Hall, to witness the award of the yearly medal for the Greek paper.

The general opinion of *St. Jim's* was that *Langton* of the Sixth would capture it. As for Arthur Augustus *D'Arcy*, his chance was never mentioned without a smile.

It was generally understood that *D'Arcy* himself had given up hope, for during the last few days he had been very moody and downcast.

His chums had vainly tried to cheer him up.

In order to rouse him out of his deep despondency, Blake had even tried to pretend to think that he had a chance of the medal; but to his astonishment that seemed to worry *D'Arcy* more than the previous chipping on the subject.

The swell of *St. Jim's* could not endure to hear the subject mentioned, and it had been dropped in *Study No. 6*.

But the rest of *St. Jim's* still took *D'Arcy's* entry into the exam. as a joke.

The juniors chuckled over it as they assembled in Big Hall for the award. The name of the successful competitor was not yet known, as it was to be announced by the Head himself from the platform.

Arthur Augustus walked in with the rest of the Fourth, in a troubled frame of mind. The other competitors were looking hopeful and anxious; but Arthur seemed to be plunged into gloom.

Tom Merry tapped him on the shoulder.

"Cheer up, Gussy!" he said encouragingly. "You'll soon know the worst now, at all events."

Arthur Augustus nodded without speaking.

"Blessed if I can understand Gussy!" said Digby. "He was so jolly cocksure about it at first, and now—"

"Pway let the subject drop, Dig," said *D'Arcy*.

"Get ready to cheer!" said Blake.

"Silence!" called out *Kildare*.

The Head had entered by the upper door. The buzz of voices in the hall sank into silence. Upon a table, where *Dr. Holmes* rested his hand, the medal was lying—a handsome medal with a Greek inscription upon it. The *St. Jim's* fellows were about to learn to which of the five competitors it was to be awarded.

The five fellows stood before the platform waiting. Arthur Augustus tried to look calm and composed; but his hands were trembling. He was in dread of hearing his name announced as that of the successful competitor. Since *Levison's* deception, he had thought the matter over more fully, and realised more and more clearly what he had done. He still believed that *Levison* had acted out of friendship for him; and the fear of repaying *Levison's* devotion by getting him into trouble had forced him to keep silent.

He was under a spell, as it were; he was in honour bound to let a dishonourable trick succeed; but it weighed fearfully upon his mind, for when he had had time to look at the matter in all its bearings, he could no longer disguise from himself the fact that it was a dishonourable thing.

The crowd in the hall waited for the Head to speak.

"I have to announce the result of the examination for the Greek Medal!" said *Dr. Holmes*. "I am glad to say that all the papers are very creditable, and prove that, in spite of modern changes, the love of classical learning is by no means dying at our old school!"

There was a cheer.

And fellows looked at one another in surprise. If all the papers were creditable, Arthur Augustus's entrance into the exam. was not so absurd after all. Blake rubbed his nose in perplexity.

"Blessed if I quite understand this," he said.

"I told you *D'Arcy* had a chance," said *Levison*.

"But he hasn't—he can't have—"

"You'll soon see!"

"First on the list," resumed the Head, "comes a paper that is the work of a junior—the second time in succession that the Greek Medal has been won by a member of the Fourth Form."

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There was a buzz!

"The winner of the medal is *D'Arcy*, of the Fourth!"

"Great Scott!"

"Oh, my hat!"

"Gussy!"

"Crumbs!"

Even the respect of the fellows for the presence of the Head could not restrain the exclamations of amazement.

Dr. Holmes held up his hand.

"Second on the list is *Langton's* paper," he said. "The rest are not so good, and are very nearly equal with one another—all very creditable. *D'Arcy*, will you come forward?"

Then there was a roar.

The Saints were astounded—so astounded that they could scarcely believe their ears. But the juniors, at least, were delighted after the first surprise. *D'Arcy* of the Fourth had beaten competitors in the Fifth and Sixth—old Gussy had won!

"Bravo!"

"Good old Gussy!"

"Bravo, bravo!"

"Hip, hip, hurrah!"

The Big Hall rang with the cheering.

Jack Blake slapped *Levison* on the back.

"I take back all I said!" he exclaimed in the fulness of his heart. "You're a brick, *Levison*. It's splendid! You knew what Gussy could do better than his old chums."

"Looks like it," said Digby. "I beg your pardon, *Levison*!"

"Now, then, *Herries*!" urged Blake.

Herries snorted.

"I don't beg *Levison's* pardon!" he said. "There's a trick somewhere."

"Oh, rats!"

"Hurrah, hurrah, hurrah!"

Arthur Augustus stumbled up the step to the platform. His face was very red, and his eyes downcast; but that was attributed to modesty, and it only made the fellows cheer him more loudly.

The Head, with a few complimentary words, landed the medal to Arthur Augustus, who took it with a nerveless hand. He certainly did not look much like a conqueror.

There was a rush of his friends towards the platform. In their delight at the victory of their Form-fellow, utterly unexpected as it was, the Fourth forgot everything else.

"Shoulder-high!" roared Blake.

"Yes, rather!" yelled Tom Merry.

"Hurrah!"

The Head smiled. Arthur Augustus *D'Arcy* was flung up on the shoulders of Jack Blake and Tom Merry, and the crowd swept out of the hall with *D'Arcy* proudly aloft. Out into the sunshine of the quadrangle, with the famous medal gleaming in the sun.

The cheers were deafening.

"Hurrah! Hip, hip, hurrah!"

"Bravo, Gussy!"

"Hurrah!"

Arthur Augustus was too dazed to speak. Every cheer, every hearty hand-shake, every word of congratulation, went to his heart like a knife. In the midst of the universal delight and congratulation, *D'Arcy* felt himself, for the first time in his life, an impostor—and he knew that there was not a fellow there who would not despise him, if he could have known that the hero of the hour was glorying in false honours!

CHAPTER 16.

Too Clever.

IT was over!

The scene of wild enthusiasm had ended, and Arthur Augustus had been carried back to his study—and left there. He pleaded a headache, and friends left him alone, and hurried away to prepare the feast of celebration in Tom Merry's study.

In *Study No. 6* Arthur Augustus was glad to be left alone, to think.

His thoughts were agony to him.

Never before in his life had *D'Arcy* been unable to look his friends in the face, never had he shrunk from fearlessly meeting the eyes of fellows he knew.

But that was all changed now.

The honour he had won was not his—the praise heaped upon him was a hollow mockery, and would have been turned at once into scorn if the truth had been known.

Langton, of the Sixth, had the second place in the list, and to *Langton*, of the Sixth, the Greek Medal rightly belonged.

Arthur Augustus realised that most clearly now.

He had taken Langton's medal; he had appropriated Langton's honours; he had usurped a place that was not his own. He was a cheat!

Arthur Augustus was not a rapid thinker, and before the exam. Levison had given him little time to think over the precious scheme. Levison's specious reasoning, too, had imposed upon him; he had not realised what he was doing.

And afterwards, it had been too late.

Without betraying Levison, he could not tell the facts; without betraying to punishment the fellow who had taken so much risk for him, he had to make up his mind to let the deception go on.

And his last hope, that Levison's paper would fail, had now been torn from him. The cad of the Fourth, with the cleverness which he had never turned to any good use, had won the exam., and beaten senior rivals.

And Levison, who had succeeded, was standing aside to allow D'Arcy to reap all the glory.

The unfortunate swell of St. Jim's was in a hopeless position. He could not betray Levison—the commonest principles of honour forbade that. Without betraying Levison he could not decline to accept the medal.

Having once allowed himself to enter into the downward path of deception, he was bound to go forward.

But he suffered intensely in the position thus thrust upon him. The cheers of the juniors rang mockingly in his ears. Kildare's warm handshake, Mr. Railton's clap on the shoulder made him writhe with shame.

What a fool he had been.

If he had listened to Herries, he would never have trusted Levison. The fellow was utterly crooked; even when he felt a disinterested friendship, and tried to help a friend, he could only do it in his own crooked way, by trickery and wretched intrigue.

But it was impossible to betray him.

The swell of St. Jim's groaned aloud as he sat in the study with his head resting in his hands, and realised how firmly he was bound, how utterly impossible it was to escape from the entanglement he was in.

The door opened.

Arthur Augustus looked up, and saw Levison. The cad of the Fourth was grinning with satisfaction. Evidently the declared result of the examination gave him no qualms, or any feeling at all but the gratification of success. He closed the door carefully behind him, and came towards D'Arcy.

"Well, it's worked!" he said.

Arthur Augustus nodded dully.

"Yass," he said. "It's worked."

"You've got the medal?"

"Here it is!"

"Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, Greek Medallist!" said Levison, with a grin. "That's how your name will go down in the school reports, D'Arcy. Sounds all right, doesn't it?"

"No, it doesn't!"

"Eh?"

"I wish your paper had not won," said D'Arcy drearily. "I suppose it's no good speakin' to you about it. You wouldn't undahstand. You've done this for my sake, and I can't say anythin'."

Levison looked very unpleasant.

"It's a bit late to say anything, isn't it?" he said. "If the fellows knew that you had got the medal by fraud, I think you'd be sent to Coventry pretty sharp."

"By fwaud?"

"Yes; that's the word."

D'Arcy looked at him strangely.

"But you were sayin' that it was all wight, fwom your point of view," he said slowly. "Does that mean that you've come wound to my way of thinkin'?"

Levison grinned.

"Never mind that. Better send a wire to your pater announcing the glorious victory."

D'Arcy shook his head.

"I don't want to do that," he said.

"But the twenty quid?"

"I sha'n't accept it."

"What!" yelled Levison.

"I can't take it, of course," said D'Arcy. "It would be swindlin'. It's bad enough to swindle poor old Langton out of his medal, without swindlin' my own patah."

"Do you mean to say that you're not going to take the twenty pounds?"

"Certainly I am not!"

"Are you mad?" said Levison roughly.

Arthur Augustus rose to his feet.

"I am not mad!" he replied coldly. "I am as honest as I can be undah the circs. I don't blame you for leadin' me into this, I blame myself. But nothin' will make me act worse than I've done already. Besides, I don't need the

money; and fwankly, Levison, I don't see that it's any bizney of yours."

Levison smiled unpleasantly.

"There are several things you don't see, that I'm going to point out to you," he said. "In the first place, the Head would expel you if he knew you had cheated at the exam."

Arthur Augustus started as if he had been stung.

"Cheated!" he said breathlessly.

"What else do you call it?" asked Levison coolly.

"Levison!"

"You didn't win the exam.—I won it! If the Head knew, he'd sack you from the school at once, and you know he would!"

"And serve me wight, too," said D'Arcy. "But I suppose you'd have to go along with me."

"No fear! I should get off all right; from acting under your influence."

"What!"

"Especially if the Head knew that you threatened me with getting me sent to Coventry, unless I played this trick for you."

D'Arcy gazed at the cad of the Fourth in silence, deprived for the moment of the power of speech. The utter baseness and duplicity of the young rascal slowly dawned upon his mind. He realised, at last, that he had been a tool in Levison's hands from the first, for Levison's own purposes.

"You'd better buck up and send that wire to your father," went on Levison coolly. "I want the money."

"What!"

"I think I told you my pater had cut off my allowance. Well, I'm stony; and I haven't taken all this trouble for nothing. You are going to get that twenty quid. from your father, and you're to hand it over to me."

"Bai Jove!"

"And whenever I want any money in future, you're going to shell out," said Levison, with biting coolness. "And you're going to stand by me, and be my best chum, and generally make things easy for me in the house."

"Levison!"

"Now you know," said Levison. "And if you don't want to be shown up as a swindler and a cheat, and sacked from the school, you'd better toe the line."

For some moments Arthur Augustus stood stricken, gazing in silence at the unmitigated young scoundrel before him. It was hard for the swell of St. Jim's to realise that Levison was in earnest; but he undoubtedly was, and D'Arcy had to realise it.

But the effect of that discovery upon D'Arcy was wholly different from what the cad of the Fourth had anticipated.

For Arthur Augustus, overwhelmed with shame and mental agony at finding himself degraded in his own estimation, unable to meet the eyes of his friends, and humiliated as he had never been in his life before, had only been restrained from publicly announcing the truth by fear of betraying the friend whose devotion had brought him into this web of deceit.

And Levison's revelation of his real character and of his real intentions removed the restraint.

D'Arcy was no longer under the obligation to keep silent. Levison certainly never doubted for a moment that he would keep silent for his own sake. But he did not know Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

"Let's have it out plain, Levison," said D'Arcy, breaking silence at last. "You didn't do this out of fwendship for me at all?"

Levison grinned.

"You were deliberately entwapping me into this, to make money out of me afterwards, when I came in your powah?"

"Anybody but you would have smelt a rat, my son," said Levison. "We can't be too trusting in this world without paying for it."

"And when you assured me that the twick was perfectly honest you knew all the time that it was a wotten swindle?"

"So did you."

"I did not. I—"

"Oh, rats! Of course it was a swindle from beginning to end, and a fellow can't enjoy bought honours without paying for them."

"You awful wascal!"

"Hard words break no bones," said Levison, with a shrug of the shoulders. "I've stood plenty of insolence from this study, and now it's my turn. I've got the upper hand, and you're going to toe the line."

"And you calculated, I suppose, that I should keep the medal, and keep silent about the way I got it, for feah of bein' sacked?"

"Of course you will!"

"And I am uttably undah your thumb?"

"Utterly!"

Arthur Augustus smiled.

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"I don't see anything to grin at," said Levison savagely. "It's my turn to grin."

"I wathah think not," said D'Arcy. "You came here to pin me down, you feahful cad, and instead of that all you've done is to give me my freedom."

"What do you mean?" said Levison uneasily.

"I mean that I am goin' stwaight to the Head to tell him the whole stow, and hand back this medal that doesn't belong to me," said Arthur Augustus, turning towards the door.

"You dare not!" yelled Levison, in utter dismay.

"I'd wathah be sacked fwom the school than wemain here a liah and a swindlah," said D'Arcy. "I don't expect you to undabstand it, you wotten cad, but that's how I feel. When the Head gave me the medal I should have told him the whole facts, but for one weason—I couldn't give you away, because I believed you had done this dirty twick out of friendship for me. Now I know the twuth there's no weason why I should hold my tongue."

"Stop!" yelled Levison, as D'Arcy opened the door.

"You—you fool, stop!" He sprang after the swell of St. Jim's in his terror and dismay, and caught him by the arm. In his rage and fear at discovering how utterly he had overreached himself, Levison hardly knew what he was doing.

D'Arcy's eyes blazed.

"Don't touch me!" he shouted. "You're not fit to touch a decent chap! Take your hands off!"

"I tell you—"

"Take that, then!"

Crash!

D'Arcy's fist crashed full into Levison's face, and the cad of the Fourth rolled over on the floor of the study. Without even a glance at him Arthur Augustus hurried away.

CHAPTER 17.

Honour First.

D R. HOLMES, the Head of St. Jim's, was seated in his study chatting with Mr. Railton. They were discussing the award of the Greek Medal. The fact that Arthur Augustus D'Arcy had won it surprised the masters almost as much as the boys.

"I never dreamed that D'Arcy had such abilities," the Head remarked. "I am very pleased to make the discovery. But what is most singular is that he is not one of the juniors who take Greek as an extra."

"That is the extraordinary part of the matter to me, sir," said Mr. Railton. "Instead of taking Greek here as an extra, he must have obtained tuition elsewhere—doubtless with the intention of suddenly surprising his friends with the result. He is not the kind of boy whom one would suspect of a jest of that kind. His entry for the medal was regarded as a joke even by his closest friends."

"It is certainly singular— Come in!"

A sharp knock at the door had interrupted the Head. The door was opened, and Arthur Augustus D'Arcy almost rushed into the study—breathless, crimson, panting for breath.

The Head and Mr. Railton stared at the excited junior in amazement.

"D'Arcy!"

"What does this mean?"

Arthur Augustus laid the medal upon the Head's desk.

"I have bwrought that back to you, sir."

"Why? What do you mean, D'Arcy?" exclaimed the Head, in astonishment.

"It does not belong to me, sir."

"But it belongs to you, D'Arcy. You have won it—"

"I did not win it, sir."

"What?"

"It was a swindle, sir."

Dr. Holmes started to his feet. D'Arcy's wild and excited look raised a suspicion in his mind that the junior was wandering in his senses—that the strain of the examination and the excitement of the victory had been too much for him.

"My dear D'Arcy—" said the Head gently.

"It is twue, sir. It was a swindle. I couldn't have won the medal if I had twied—but I nevah twied. I nevah entahed the examination-woom."

"But your paper—"

"I did not do it."

"But your name is signed upon it, D'Arcy."

"Not by me, sir."

"It is in your handwriting," said Mr. Railton.

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"I did not write it, sir. Another chap went in instead of me and did the exam. for me, and put my name down."

"What?" exclaimed both the Head and the Housemaster simultaneously, in the greatest amazement.

"It was a swindle, sir," said D'Arcy incoherently. "I was dragged into it. I didn't realise it was a swindle, and the wottah said he was doin' it out of friendship, and—and when I wanted to draw out he said it was too late, and I couldn't draw out without compromisin' him, and so I had to let him wip."

"But Mr. Lathom was present, not to mention the other boys who entered the examination. How was it that such a thing was not observed?"

"The fellow was got up to look like me, sir."

"Is it possible?"

"Yaas, sir. He's an awffy clevah beast, a howwidly clevah beast, and it's a wotten thing that he evah came back to St. Jim's. If I'd known bettah I should have listened to Hewwies, and shouldn't have trusted the awful wottah. But he seemed all wight, and we all agreed to give him a chance."

Mr. Railton and the Head exchanged glances.

"You are alluding to Levison?" asked the Head.

D'Arcy flushed.

"I'd wathah not mention names, sir, if you don't mind. I've come here to own up, and take whatever punishment you think fit, sir. But—but I can't give a fellow away, sir, though he's an awful wottah."

"Let me understand this, D'Arcy. You say this boy, whatever his name is, persuaded you to let him go into the examination under your name to win for you?"

"Yaas, sir. I—I called him a wascal at first, but he talked me wound. He would talk anybody wound, I think. He's fwightfully deep."

"What was his motive?"

"I thought it was fwieship, sir. He said it was, and I believed him. How was I to know what an awful wascal he was, especially when he declared that he had weformed? And—and when he had gone in for the exam. I—I couldn't say anythin' without givin' him away, so I had to hold my tongue. But I felt an awful wascal when I took the medal from you to-day, sir. I hoped the papah wouldn't win, but it did win, and—and I had to take the medal, or else betway Lev—that chap, sir."

"But you are revealing the plot now," said the Head. "Whether you mention the boy's name or not makes little difference; there can be no question as to whom it is. What has made this sudden change in your intentions?"

"Because I've found him out, sir."

"In what way?"

"I fancied he was doin' it all from fwieship, and though he was gettin' me into an awful posish, sir, I—I felt I couldn't say anythin' to wisk gettin' him into a wow. But I've just found him out. Aftah I'd got the medal he thought it was all wight, and he came to me and told me what he'd weally done it for. My patah pwomised me twenty pounds if I won the medal, but undah the cires, of course, I wefused to have it. Lev—this chap, sir, insisted that I should take the money and give it to him. He said I was under his thumb, as I should get sacked for having swindled at the exam. And wight up to the last moment he was tellin' me that he wegarded it as perfectly honest," said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, gasping.

"And then—?"

"Then I came stwaight here, sir. If he had kept it up that he had done it out of fwieship, I couldn't have said anythin'—but now it's all wight."

"This is a very strange story, D'Arcy," said the Head, with his eyes on D'Arcy's face very intently.

"Yaas, sir, I know it is!"

"Probably Levison will have a different account to give."

"Pewwaps, sir. He is an awful fibbah!"

The Head smiled. Mr. Railton suddenly glanced at the door, stepped quickly towards it, and opened it inwards. Levison, of the Fourth, fell forward into the study on his hands and knees. He had had his ear to the keyhole, and the sudden opening of the door had taken him quite by surprise.

"Levison!" exclaimed the Head.

The cad of the Fourth sprawled in the doorway, dazedly.

"Get up!" said Mr. Railton, roughly.

Levison staggered to his feet. His face was crimson. The Head regarded him grimly.

"I need not tell you what D'Arcy has said, Levison," he exclaimed. "You appear to have taken measures to know all that was said in this study."

"I—I—"

"Have you anything to say?"

"It's—it's not true, sir," said Levison. "He—he got me to go into the exam. for him, and—and promised me the twenty pounds he was to get from his father, but I—I refused to take it, sir. I did it all out of friendship, because

he persuaded me, and never thought of benefitting myself in any way. I knew I was running a risk, sir, and I—I didn't like the idea, but he persuaded me, and he threatened me that he'd get me sent to Coventry for what I did before I left St. Jim's, sir, so I—I gave way, sir, and did it."

Arthur Augustus gazed at Levison as he made this precious statement with an expression so astounded, that the Head could hardly help smiling.

"So you did this out of friendship, Levison?"

"Yes, sir!"

"Friendship towards a boy who was threatening to get you sent to Coventry?"

Levison bit his lip. He was fairly caught. As usual, he had been a little bit too clever, and had over-reached himself.

"Well, sir, I—I—it was partly out of friendship, and—and—"

"Please do not tell me any more falsehoods, Levison. I know from your father that you are not being allowed any pocket-money this term, and it is quite clear to me that you have adopted this means of getting a very simple lad into your power for the purpose of extorting money from him."

"I—I—"

"In any case, what you have done deserves a severe punishment. I have never seen so unscrupulous a boy before, Levison. I hardly think you realise the full wickedness of your action, but I shall try to make you realise it. I shall flog you most severely, Levison, and your conduct will be made known to the whole school. I would expel you for what you have done, but for consideration for your father. But you will be very severely punished. As for you, D'Arcy, you have acted foolishly, and have shown too much simple faith in a bad schoolfellow. You have allowed yourself to be duped into wrongdoing, but I think the lesson you have had will make you more careful in future. I shall neither expel you nor flog you. You may go."

D'Arcy gasped.

"B-b-but, sir, I—I ought to be punished!" he stuttered.

"The punishment will be visited upon the guilty party," said the Head, with a stern glance at Levison. "The medal will be handed to Langton, the rightful winner. You may go."

"Thank you, sir!" faltered D'Arcy. "I am vewy glad you believe my explanation, sir. I had a howwid feelin' that pewwaps you might doubt my word, sir, under the peculiar cires. I thank you very much, sir!"

And Arthur Augustus quitted the study, feeling ten years younger. The Head rang for the porter as he went, and five minutes later, wild howls of anguish proceeded from the Head's study, as Levison received the reward of his plotting.

Arthur Augustus made his way up to Tom Merry's study. There was a cheer from the crowded juniors in the study as he appeared.

"Where's the medal, Gussy?" asked Tom Merry.

"I've got somethin' to say to you fellows," said Arthur Augustus. "I haven't got the medal; I've given it back to the Head."

And Arthur Augustus explained, telling the story amid breathless excitement in the study. Quite a crowd of fellows came round the doorway in the passage to hear, and when Arthur Augustus had finished, there were exclamations of amazement, and some laughter.

"It's jolly lucky for you you've owned up, and not waited to be found out," said Blake. "As it is, you'll be believed. If you'd been found out, you'd have been ruined, you champion ass! Thank goodness you had sense enough to go straight to the Head."

"Weally, Blake—"

"But what do you chaps think of Levison?" asked Blake.

"I don't think any of us will speak to him again," said Tom Merry. "Let's send the awful cad to Coventry, and keep clear of him."

"Yaas, wathah!"

"What about the feed?" demanded Fatty Wynn, of the New House. "No good giving that up. As we can't celebrate Gussy getting the medal, we'd better celebrate Levison getting found out. I say, those sausages are done, aren't they?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Yes; pile in," said Tom Merry, laughing.

And the celebration took place all the same. Levison was sent to Coventry, as he fully deserved; and Arthur Augustus D'Arcy felt very much relieved in his mind at having got rid of his bought honours.

THE END.

(Next Thursday: "The Spy of the School," by Martin Clifford. Please order your copy of the "The Gem" Library in advance. Price One Penny.)

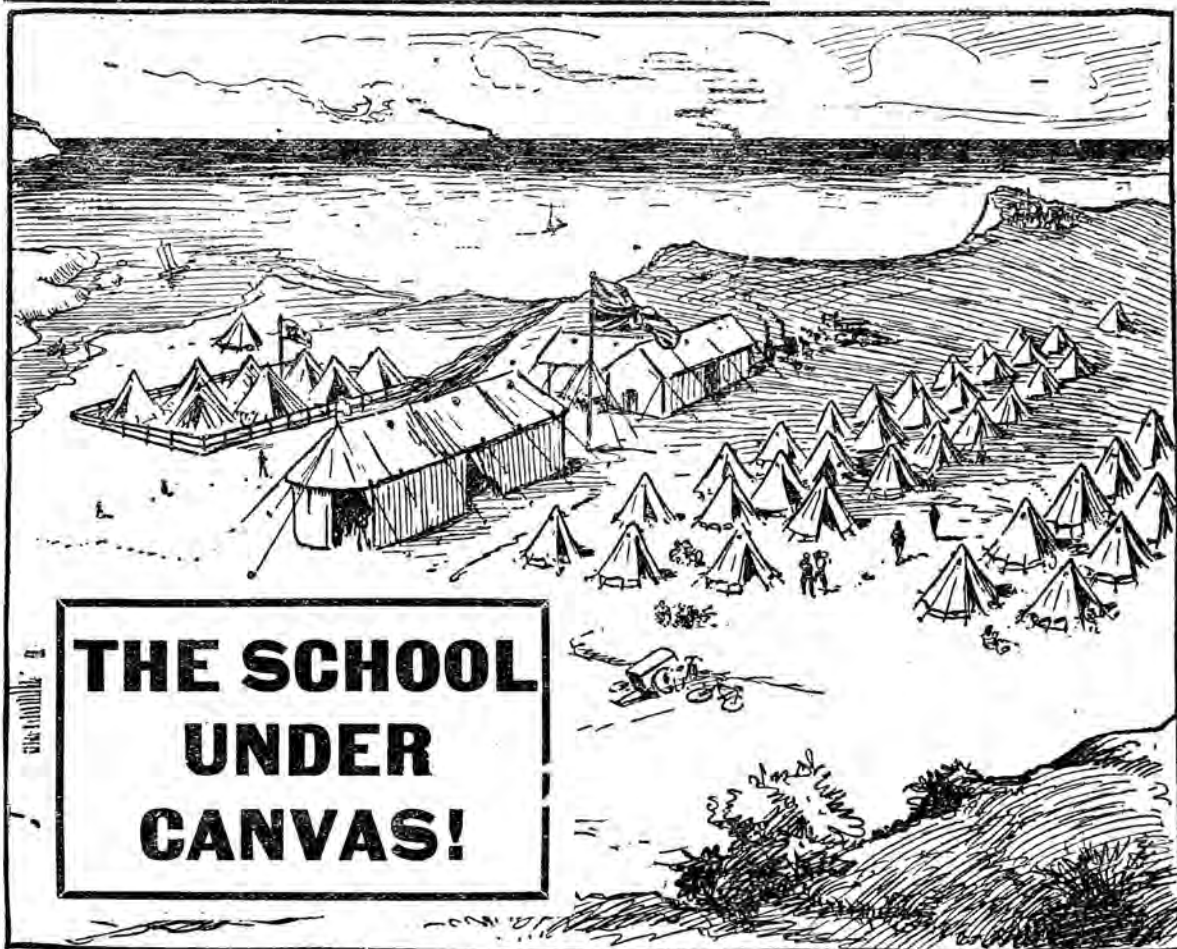
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A Solendid, New, Long, Complete School Tale of Tom Merry & Co. at St. Jim's. By MARTIN CLIFFORD.

NEXT THURSDAY

"THE SPY OF THE SCHOOL!"

THE MOST EXCITING SCHOOL SERIAL EVER WRITTEN.



THE SCHOOL UNDER CANVAS!

A Rousing, New and Original School Story of Gordon Gay, Frank Monk and Co.
BY PROSPER HOWARD.

WHAT HAS HAPPENED SO FAR.

"The School will assemble in Big Hall at half-past six o'clock. An important announcement will be made.

"(Signed), E. MONK, Headmaster."

The appearance of the above brief notice on the school board is the first hint that the Rylcombe Grammar School receives of the great change in its circumstances that is pending—nothing less than the removal of the whole school into temporary quarters under canvas by the sea, on the Essex coast. Just at this time the ranks of the Fourth Form are reinforced by Gustave Blanc—immediately christened Mont Blong—a new boy from across the Channel. Mont Blong, who attaches himself to Gordon Gay & Co., is a slim and elegant youth with a peculiar flow of English, but he quickly shows his worth by holding his own with Carker, the bully of the Fourth. Amidst great excitement the Grammarians travel down to their new abode. During the first few days Gordon Gay discovers that there is more in Mont Blong than at first meets the eye, and that the French junior can speak English

fluently. Gordon Gay and Frank Monk & Co. one day see Herr Hentzel in secret conversation with two German military officers in a cave on the seashore. They are surprised to hear from Mont Blong that the three are spies.

One night, a week later, while Herr Hentzel is absent, Gordon Gay & Co. rag the German master's tent, and Mont Blong, unknown to the others, extracts some private papers and photographs from an iron-bound chest in the tent.

Herr Hentzel, on discovering his loss, informs the Head, and the camp is searched for the missing papers; but without result. The German, however, is convinced that Gordon Gay is the culprit, and meeting him on the beach, offers him a reward if he will return the papers. The Cornstalk junior denies all knowledge of the matter, whereupon Herr Hentzel informs him, in a threatening tone, that a bank-note for £10 was among the missing papers, and that Dr. Monk will be asked to take the matter up seriously.

(Now go on with the story.)

Amazing!

The Cornstalks strolled back to the school camp with thoughtful brows. Mont Blong met them with a smiling face. "You look ferry zoughful, my shum," he remarked, taking Gordon Gay's arm affectionately.

"Yes. Where have you been, Mont Blong?"

The French junior grinned.

"I have been in zo tent," he said.

"What are you grinning at?" asked Wootton major, mystified.

"Ze shoke."

"What joke?"

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"THE FORM-MASTER'S SECRET!"

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"Perhaps I tell you presently. Ah! Here is our good friend ze Sherman!"

Herr Hentzel was coming from the direction of the Head's quarters. Mont Blong suddenly rushed away, and, apparently not seeing the German, he rushed into him.

"Ach!" gasped Herr Hentzel, staggering back.

Mont Blong threw his whole weight upon him, and they crashed to the ground together. The French junior sprawled over the German, clutching at him wildly.

"Ach! Help! Ow!"

Mont Blong scrambled off the gasping German. His manner

was terrified and apologetic. Herr Hentzel's face was convulsed with fury.

"Hélas! It is ze great misfortune!" gasped Mont Blong.

"I am sorry zat have happen! I am desolated!"

"Ach! You pig! Beast!" spluttered the infuriated German. "I trash you! Oh!"

"Monsieur—"

"Beast! Hound! I beat you—"

"Monsieur—"

The German master scrambled up, and grasped at the French junior. Mont Blong dodged behind the Cornstalks.

"Monsieur—"

"Ach! Take five hundred Sherman lines for tat clumsiness!" exclaimed Herr Hentzel. "Gay, you will follow me to te Head."

"Yes, sir," said Gordon Gay quietly.

The German master strode into the Head's marquee. Dr. Monk was sitting at his writing-table, but he was not writing. There was a deeply-troubled look upon his kind old face.

"Gay," he said, "Herr Hentzel has acquainted me with a very serious matter."

"Yes, sir," said Gay.

"He remembers that there was a banknote for ten pounds in the packet of papers that was taken from his tent last night."

"Yes, sir."

"He is still convinced that you took those papers, and he has asked my permission to call in the police to search your tent and your person for the banknote."

Gordon Gay flushed crimson.

"I'm quite ready, sir," he said steadily. "I didn't take the papers, and I know nothing about a banknote."

"Herr Hentzel has given me the number," said Dr. Monk, referring to a slip of paper on his table—00012468. You are willing to be searched for it, Gay?"

"Certainly, sir."

"This is a most unpleasant affair," continued the Head quietly. "But I cannot refuse Herr Hentzel every opportunity of recovering his property."

"I don't believe he's lost it, sir!" burst out Gordon Gay, losing control of his temper for a moment. "I don't believe he had the note at all!"

"Silence, Gay! Herr Hentzel had the note undoubtedly, as I paid it to him myself as his salary," said the Head. "I made a note of the number at the time, as I always do when using banknotes. Undoubtedly a banknote of that number, of the value of ten pounds, was in Herr Hentzel's possession a few days ago."

"Oh!" said Gordon Gay.

"It was only natural that he should keep it in his strong-box among his papers for safety, and that it should be stolen along with them," resumed the Head. "What I cannot credit is his belief that the theft was performed by a boy belonging to this school. But for the sake of your own good name, Gay, every investigation must be made."

"I am ready for it, sir."

"Very well. Call in Corporal Cutts, please, Herr Hentzel."

"Ja, ja, mein Herr!" said the German master, with a savage glance at Gordon Gay, and a gleam of malicious triumph in his eyes.

The old corporal, the school porter of Rylcombe Grammar School, came in, cap in hand. He gave Gordon Gay a commiserating look. There was a crowd gathering outside the tent, and evidently the news was spreading over the school camp, and the corporal knew all about it already.

"You will kindly search Master Gay, and lay on the table everything you find about him, Cutts," said the Head.

"Yes, sir."

Gordon Gay shivered as the corporal approached him apologetically.

He was conscious of innocence—he was convinced in his own mind that the German master had trumped up the story of the missing banknote to get him into trouble.

And yet to be searched like a criminal was horribly humiliating.

"Sorry, Master Gay!" mumbled old Cutts. "Dooty, sir."

Gay nodded.

"It's all right, Cutts. Go ahead."

The corporal searched him.

Many articles were found in the schoolboy's pockets, including a ball of string, some chocolates, a penknife, several bullseyes stuck together in paper, and other articles of the same sort.

But there was no trace of a hidden banknote.

"I tink tat it is more likely to be in his tent, sir," said Herr Hentzel.

"Very well," said the Head, rising. "Restore Master Gay his property, Cutts, and follow me."

"Yes, sir."

The Head crossed over to the junior tents, and entered Gordon Gay's quarters. The Cornstalk and the corporal and

the German master followed him, and behind them came a crowd of Grammarians, seniors and juniors. Word had flown through the camp that Gordon Gay was being searched for a missing banknote. Some of the fellows, like Carker, of the Fourth, and Hake, of the Sixth, grinned with satisfaction at the news; but the greater part of the fellows were angry and indignant at the mere idea of it. There was a deep and general groan for the German master, as the school watched him go into Gordon Gay's tent.

"Search the tent, Cutts," said the Head.

"Yes, sir," said the corporal.

He proceeded to the search. Dr. Monk and Herr Hentzel and Gordon Gay watched him in silence.

Beds and bags and boxes were turned out, and Gordon Gay's own box came in for special attention.

The corporal turned out every article it contained, and announced that the banknote was not there, and the German master uttered a sharp exclamation.

"Look again!"

"I've looked once, sir," said Corporal Cutts.

"Look again. It must be dere!"

"It isn't there, sir."

"Herr Doctor, order tat he look again, I demand!"

"Search through the box again, Cutts," said the Head.

"Werry well, sir."

The corporal rather sulkily turned out the box again, and the German master watched him with starting eyes.

It was perfectly evident that he fully expected the banknote to be found in Gordon Gay's box, and that he was amazed at its non-appearance.

The corporal, with deliberate care, turned out every separate article, holding them up to show to the German master.

But the banknote did not appear.

"It is ferry strange," muttered the German master hoarsely.

"I do not consider it strange at all," said the Head tartly.

"I do not suspect Gordon Gay of dishonesty for one moment, and I have only consented to these proceedings to clear him of any possible suspicion."

There was a cheer from the crowd of fellows outside the tent.

"Bravo!"

"I—I cannot understand it," muttered the German, passing his hand across his brow, which was damp with perspiration. "It is strange. I know tat to banknote is here."

"It is evidently not here," said the Head.

Mont Blong stepped into the opening of the tent.

"May I suggest, Monsieur le Docteur?" he exclaimed.

Dr. Monk glanced at him.

"Have you anything to say about this matter, Blanc?"

"I suggest, sir," said Mont Blong, "I zink zat it is possible zat Herr Hentzel he put ze note somewhere, and forget all about zat."

"Fool!" muttered Herr Hentzel.

"Kindly use milder expressions, Herr Hentzel," said the Head sharply. "I think Blanc's suggestion is quite probable. But—"

"I zink zat Herr Hentzel should be searched now, sir," said Mont Blong. "Ha have not proved yet zat ze banknote is really lost. Perhaps it is zat it is in van of ze pockets of Herr Hentzel all ze time."

Gordon Gay looked at his French chum. Mont Blong closed one eye for a moment, and the Cornstalk understood. He was to back up Mont Blong, and although he did not see what the French junior was driving at, he was quite willing to follow his lead. It could do no harm, if it did no good.

"Nonsense!" said Herr Hentzel gruffly. "Te poy do not talk to sense."

"If you please, sir," said Gordon Gay quickly, "Herr Hentzel has put me under suspicion by saying that he has lost a banknote for ten pounds, and that he thinks I have taken it. I think very likely he's got it about him all the time. It's only fair play, sir, for him to be searched as well as me."

"Hear, hear!" shouted the crowd outside.

Herr Hentzel turned purple.

"It is all nonsense!" he exclaimed fiercely. "Gay have stolen tat banknote and hidden it."

"And I say that the banknote hasn't been stolen at all, and that you've got this up against me out of sheer spite!" retorted Gordon Gay.

The Head frowned.

"Silence, Gay! You must not say that."

"Let him let the corporal prove that he hasn't got the banknote about him all the time, then," said Gay. "It's only cricket."

The Head glanced at Herr Hentzel.

"I haf no objection," said the German master savagely.

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"It is folly, and to waste of time, but tat is all. I am ready, but it is nonsense."

"Of course, if it should be a case of careless oversight, it is a very serious matter for the boy you have accused, Herr Hentzel."

"Let te corporal search, if you choose, sir."

"If you do not object—"

"Of course he objects!" came a voice from outside. "He's got the note in his trousers' pocket all the time."

"Silence!" called out Mr. Hilton.

"Under the circumstances, Herr Hentzel, I think it would be as well to demonstrate to the school that you have not the note about you," said the Head.

"I am retty!"

"Very well. You know what to do, Cutts."

"Yes, sir," said the corporal.

And he approached the German master with much more willingness than he had approached the young Cornstalk. And he went through the German's pockets with great keenness. He uttered a sharp exclamation as something crisp rustled under his fingers in the outside pocket of the German's loose coat.

"Somethin' here, sir," he said.

The German started.

"Is it a banknote, Cutts?" asked the Head.

"Yes, sir."

Corporal Cutts withdrew his hand from Herr Hentzel's coat-pocket, and held up a crisp Bank of England note.

There was a yell outside the tent.

"He's found it!"

The German gazed at the note with starting eyes. If it had been a spectre, it could not have startled and amazed him more.

"Let me see the number," said the Head.

He compared the number on the banknote with the number on the slip of paper he held in his hand.

"00012468," he said quietly. "It is the same!"

Mont Blong's Little Game!

Herr Hentzel made a strange, husky noise in his throat.

He looked as if he were going to faint for a moment. His knees knocked together, and he staggered.

"Ach!" he muttered. "Ach! Mein Gott!"

The Head gave him a stern look.

"There is your banknote, Herr Hentzel."

"Ach!"

"It is the one paid you by me—the one you stated you had lost among the missing papers from your box—the one you have accused Gordon Gay of stealing! It was in your own pocket, where you have evidently thrust it thoughtlessly," said the Head. "Herr Hentzel, I cannot find words to express my opinion of your criminal carelessness. You have risked blasting the reputation of an honourable lad on no grounds whatever. I cannot help thinking that, after this exhibition of your carelessness, the papers you have stated to be missing will turn out not to be missing at all, but placed somewhere with equal carelessness. I decline to allow another word to be said on the subject, or any further investigation to be made. And if you bring another accusation against a boy in this school, Herr Hentzel, I shall ask you to resign your position here."

The German turned white.

He had never been spoken to like that in public before, and indeed it was the first time the kind old Head had so lashed anyone with his tongue.

But he was indignant now, and he wanted to make his meaning clear. And he had certainly succeeded in making it clear enough.

There was a yell outside the tent.

"Hurrah!"

"Make him apologise!"

The German gritted his teeth.

"Quite right!" said the Head. "Under the circumstances, Herr Hentzel, I think you cannot do less than express to Gordon Gay your regret for what has happened, and for your wicked and unjust suspicion of him."

Herr Hentzel seemed to choke for a moment.

"I am sorry, Gay," he muttered, at last.

"Very well, sir," said Gay.

Dr. Monk paused for a moment as he left the tent, and regarded the crowd of Grammarians. He held up his hand.

"Boys," he said, in his clear voice, "you have all seen what has happened! Gordon Gay remains without the slightest suspicion upon his name. It was a most careless mistake upon the part of Herr Hentzel. Gay is quite cleared of any possible suspicion."

He walked on.

"Hurrah!" shouted the Grammarians.

"Bravo, Gay!"

"Good old Cornstalk!"

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"Hurrah!"

Herr Hentzel strode away clenching his hands, and with a dazed expression upon his face. The Grammarians gave him a groan, but he did not even notice it. He had too much to think about just then.

Gordon Gay was cheered loudly as he came out of the tent. The Old Co clapped him on the back, and Punter, of the Fifth, came up to him specially to congratulate him. Gordon Gay had never been so popular in the school as he was at that moment.

He left his friends as soon as he could, and drew his chums away for a quiet talk. There were some points in the affair that worried him considerably, and he knew that Mont Blong could explain. The chums sat down on the sands at a distance from the camp, Mont Blong grinning with quiet satisfaction the while.

"Now then, Monty," said Gordon Gay, "I want to know what this means! How did you know that Hentzel had the banknote about him all the time?"

Mont Blong chuckled.

"If it hadn't been found on him, I should be under suspicion now, although it wasn't found in my quarters," said Gay. "It was a suggestion right in the nick of time, Monty, old man."

"Zat's all right. I know ze game from ze beginnina," said Mont Blong cheerfully. "While you go for ze stroll in ze shore after lessons, I stay in ze camp. Ze Sherman master he vatch to find ze missing papers, and I vatch him, but he not see me, n'est-ce-pas. I vatch him walk about, and at last dodge into ze tent of my shums."

Gordon Gay started.

"Into my tent?"

"Oui, oui!"

"But—but, why?"

Mont Blong chuckled.

"Zat is vat I zink—why? I creep behind ze tent, vere zero is zat leetle slit in ze canvas, and vatch. And I see—vat you zink?"

"Blessed if I know!"

"Looking for his papers, I suppose," said Jack Wootton.

Mont Blong shook his head.

"Non, non. Zat is not it! I see him open Gay's box—my shum's box—and take a banknote out of his pocket and put it among ze shirts of my shum."

The three Cornstalks uttered a shout.

"What!"

"Zat is vat he did," said Mont Blong. "Zen I understand zat he get up a scheme against my shum, because he zink zat Gay have ze missing papers, and zat he frighten him into giving zem back, n'est-ce-pas! But I zink to myself somezing else, isn't it? After zat he is gone, I go into ze tent, and take zat banknote, and put it in my pocket, vous savez!"

"Good heavens!" muttered Gordon Gay.

"But I'm blessed if I see how it got out of your pocket into Herr Hentzel's!" said Jack Wootton.

The French junior gave a prolonged chuckle.

"Is it not zat you see me run into him, ven you come into ze camp?" he asked. "I run into him, and biff!—biff!—ovair he go viz himself. And while zat ve struggle on ze ground, I push ze banknote into his pocket, and he know nozing."

"My hat!"

"Well, of all the deep bounders!" said Wootton major. "Blessed if I should ever have thought of a dodge like that!"

"I zink of him," said Mont Blong cheerfully. "It is necessary to have ze long spoon ven zat you sup viz ze Old Nick, as you say in ze English proverb. He is a very deep rascal, but moi, Gustave Blanc—I am more deep!"

Gordon Gay looked very pale.

"My hat!" he said. "If you hadn't done that, Mont Blong, the ten-pound note would have been found in my tent."

"Oui, oui!"

"Great Scott!" said Wootton major. "The awful scoundrel! I say, we oughtn't to keep this to ourselves. The villain ought to be shown up!"

"Non, non."

"He might try some rotten trick like that again," said Wootton major wrathfully.

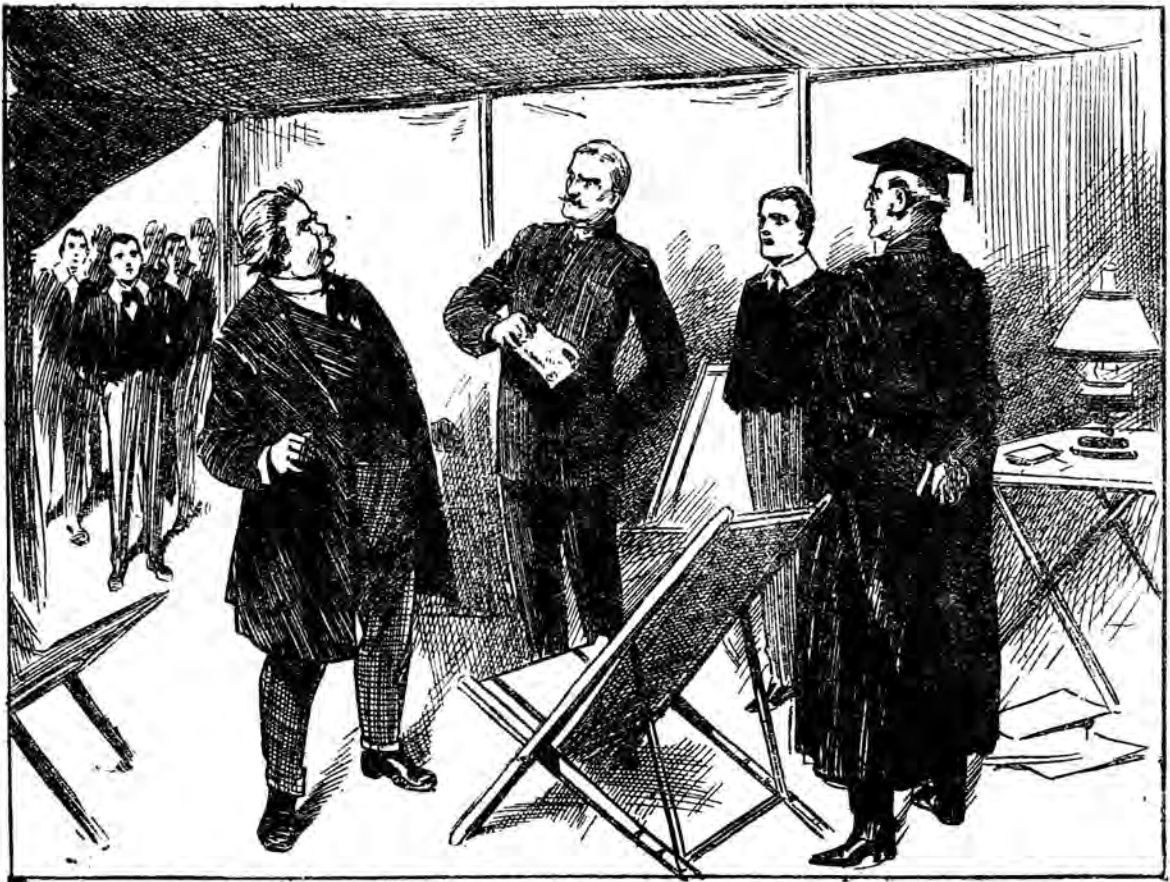
"I zink zat if he make more accusations, ze doctor decline to listen," grinned Mont Blong. "Ze Head is vat you call fed-up viz zem."

"Yes, but he ought to be exposed."

"Non, non. He deny it. Vat zen? His vord against mine. It is not sensible. Bettair to make ze fool of him in zis vay."

Gordon Gay nodded.

"I'd like to show him up to the whole school," he said.



Corporal Cutts withdrew his hand from Herr Hentzel's coat pocket, and held up a crisp Bank of England note. There was a yell outside the tent: "He's found it!" The German gazed at the note with starting eyes. If it had been a spectre, it could not have startled and amazed him more! (See page 24.)

"But it would want a lot of proof, an accusation of that sort against a master. Better let it alone. But we'll keep an eye on the awful rascal."

"I zink zat zere is a prison waiting for him," said Mont Blong cheerfully. "Until zen, ve keep ze open eye on ze rascal, my dear shums."

Gordon Gay gripped the French junior's hand.

"You've saved me from an awful hole, Mont Blong," he said. "I shall never forget this!"

Mont Blong beamed.

"Zat is all right!" he exclaimed. "I kiss my shum!"

And he did, and Gordon Gay bore it nobly.

The Early Birds.

Gordon Gay burst into a sudden chuckle.

The Fourth Form of the Grammar School were coming out of the big marquee after morning lessons.

The school camp looked very bright and cheerful in the sunshine, and away seaward the wide waters rolled and glistened, dotted with white sails, and blurs of smoke from passing steamers.

"Wherefore cackunatest thou?" inquired Wootton major, glancing at his chum.

Gordon Gay chuckled again.

"It's a half-holiday to-day," he remarked.

"Quite so. But—"

"The sea looks ripping, doesn't it?"

"It does it do."

"Then why not have a boat out this afternoon?" said Gordon Gay. "We could get a sail right out to sea, and perhaps have a run along the coast as far as the Blackwater—even get into the Thames and have a look at Canvey Island."

Wootton major laughed.

"That would be a big order, unless we were blown away in a gale," he remarked. "It's a good idea to have a boat out. But what is there to cackle about?"

"I was thinking of Herr Hentzel."

"Thinking of asking him to steer for us?" asked Jack Wootton, with a grin.

"Ha, ha! No. But you know how he has been keeping his eyes on us ever since his precious papers were missing."

"Yes, rather—the silly ass!"

"Well, if we get a boat out, and put a lunch-basket in it, he's bound to think that his precious papers are in the lunch-basket—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And it would be the joke of the season to see him pulling out after us, or one of his fat friends—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

And the young rascals of the Fourth immediately decided to have a boat out that afternoon, and let Herr Hentzel see them carry a big lunch-basket on board.

Tadpole decided to come. He said he would be able to get some extra good colour effects by studying the shore from the sea, and asked Gay to be sure to put his easel and canvas into the boat. To which Gay replied that if he found any easels in the boat he would drop them into the sea, and their owner with them.

Tadpole blinked at him.

"Now, my dear Gay, let us argue the point," he began.

"Br-r-r-r-r! You can bring a sketch-book if you like, on condition you don't ask us to look at your sketches," said Gordon Gay.

"My dear Gay—"

"And that you don't talk art," said Wootton major.

"This is going to be a pleasure trip, you know."

"My dear Wootton—"

"You coming, Mont Blong?" asked Gordon Gay.

"It is viz pleasure zat I sall come viz my shums," said the French junior, nodding.

"Good! That will be five of us," said Gordon Gay.

"Mont Blong can steer, and we can row, if there isn't enough wind. And Tadpole can shut up."

"My dear Gay—"

"There goes the dinner call," said Wootton major, as Corporal Cutts' bugle sounded through the camp. "Come on. We'll go down immediately after dinner and arrange

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 238.

NEXT THURSDAY: "THE SPY OF THE SCHOOL!" A Splendid, New, Long, Complete School Tale of Tom Merry & Co. at St. Jim's. By MARTIN CLIFFORD.

with old Hawksey about the boat, Gay. Hawksey's boat is the best on the beach."

"Yes, rather."

The chums of the Fourth trooped off towards the mess-tent. The longer the Grammar School stayed under canvas, the better the Grammarians were growing to like it. In the old Grammar School at Rylcombe the surroundings had been pleasant enough, but it was ripping to be by the sea—not merely for a holiday, but for their daily life. They could never get tired of seeing the wide North Sea under their eyes when they turned out in the morning, and feeling the sea-breezes on their cheeks when they came out of lessons.

Frank Monk & Co. met them as they were going in to dinner. The Old Co. were looking very cheerful.

"We're going for a little trip this afternoon," Monk remarked. "One of you fellows can come and steer for us, if you like."

Gordon Gay smiled.

"Going out to sea?"

"Yes, we're going to have old Hawksey's boat——"

"Eh?"

"It's the best on the beach," Frank Monk explained genially.

"Yes, I'm aware of that," said Gordon Gay grimly.

"I've ordered it to be quite ready at two," said Monk.

"One of you fellows can come and steer, if you like. Couldn't trust you to row."

"Go on!"

"If the wind gets up a little we shall be able to sail, you know. I expect we shall have a ripping time!"

Gordon Gay grinned.

"I hope you will," he remarked.

Gordon Gay & Co. whispered among themselves to a considerable extent during dinner. Mr. Adams called them to order once or twice. Herr Hentzel watched them from his place at the next table with a very sour expression. During the last few days the German master's temper had been growing sourer and sourer. The loss of his precious papers was evidently weighing upon his mind. True, he was pretty certain that they had not yet been sent out of the camp. His confederates were watching for that. But so long as they remained hidden, he knew that he was in danger. Those papers had only to be sent to the authorities in London for the whole treacherous scheme of spying to be exposed. And the trouble of it weighed upon the mind of the master spy.

After dinner the Cornstalk Co. left the mess tent, and strolled away. It was at a quarter to two that they presented themselves on the beach. Tadpole with a sketch-book and a colour-box bulging out his big pockets. Tadpole affected a loose style of dress, very untidy, as becoming a great artist.

Frank Monk & Co. had not yet appeared. They had ordered the boat for two, and they were not in a hurry.

Old Hawksey, the fisherman, was seated upon the gunwale of the boat, smoking his pipe, when the juniors came up. He touched his hat to them.

"You the young gentlemen for the boat?" he asked.

Gordon Gay nodded.

"Yes, we're those identical young gentlemen," he said.

"My friend Monk engaged you, I think?"

"Yes, that was the name, sir. He said two o'clock."

"It's the early bird that catches the worm," Gordon Gay explained. "Run the boat out, old son. Put in the basket, Harry."

Wootton major put the lunch-basket into the boat, and the coats were put in. The fisherman, with the assistance of the juniors, ran the boat down the shingle. Gordon Gay & Co. piled into it as it splashed in the water, and took in the oars.

"Ship the rudder, Taddy," said Gay.

"Certainly, my dear Gay."

Tadpole took the rudder from the fisherman, but seemed to be extremely uncertain what to do with it. Tadpole was great on Impressionism and even Futurism in art, but he was not great on seamanship.

"Stick it in, fathead!" said Gay.

"My dear Gay, where does it go?"

"Oh, you ass!"

"Don't you know it's a new kind of seat, specially invented for artists going out to sea sketching?" demanded Wootton major.

"Dear me! That is very remarkable!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Gay. "Oh, you ass!"

Tadpole was putting down the rudder to use as a seat, when Gay jerked it away, and slammed it into place. Tadpole gazed at it in astonishment.

"My dear Gay, I shall refuse to sit on it, if it is placed in that very dangerous and exposed position!" he exclaimed.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 228.

"THE FORM-MASTER'S SECRET!" is the Title of the New and Exciting Complete School Tale of Harry Wharton & Co. appearing in this week's "MAGNET" Library. Now on Sale. Price One Penny.

Gordon Gay pushed Tadpole down in the stern, and put the lines in his hands.

"You sit there and steer, and shut up!" he exclaimed.

"My dear Gay——"

"Br-r-r-r-r——"

There was a shout from the beach.

"Hi, there! Gerroust of our boat!"

The Old Co. had arrived!"

"Shove off!" said Gordon Gay hurriedly.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

And the Cornstalk Co. shoved off.

The Sun Dodger!

Frank Monk & Co. came dashing at full-speed down to the beach.

Lane was carrying a lunch-basket, and Carboy had several coats and rugs over his arm.

Frank Monk, having nothing to carry, forged ahead, and came tearing down to the shore as if he were on the cinder-path, waving his hands and yelling.

"Yah! You bounders! Gerroust of our boat! Yah! Stop!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"He, he, he!" cackled Mont Blong. "It is to laugh! He, he, he!"

"Get out, you rotters! Shave them out, Hawksey! That's our boat!"

Mr. Hawksey looked astonished.

"Ain't you the same young gentlemen?" he demanded.

"No!" roared Monk. "Those bounders have got our boat!"

"My heye!"

"Turn 'em out!" roared Lane.

"Chuck the rotters out of our boat!" shrieked Carboy.

The rivals of the Fourth tore down to the beach. But Gordon Gay & Co. had shoved the boat well off, and it was duncing upon the waves a dozen yards from the shore. The Old Co. halted upon the sands, with the water creaming over their boots, and roared:

"Come back!"

"Give us our boat!"

"Yah! Thieves!"

Gordon Gay kissed his hand to the infuriated Grammarians.

"It's all right!" he called out. "We want this boat; it's the best on the beach, you know. We're going to pay for it, of course."

"Look here——"

"The early bird catches the worm!" said Wootton major. "We belong to the N.O.E.B.—the Noble Order of Early Birds."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"If you like to swim, we'll throw you a line!" said Jack Wootton.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Or we'll take one of you to steer!" said Gordon Gay generously. "Of course, we couldn't trust you to row!"

Frank Monk & Co. looked as if they were in danger of going into convulsions, as they stood upon the wet sands and waved their hands and roared:

"Come back!"

"Yah! Rotters!"

"You've stolen our boat!"

"Yah! Come back and be licked!"

"Yah!"

The Cornstalk Co. kissed the tips of their fingers gently and sweetly to their infuriated rivals, and Mont Blong waved his cap and bowed.

Then the boat glided out to sea, Gordon Gay and Wootton major pulling at the oars.

The yells of the Old Co. died away in the distance. Old Hawksey, assured of payment whoever had the boat, returned to his pipe with great philosophy. But it was a long time before Frank Monk & Co. ceased to yell after the boat, and resolved to satisfy themselves with another.

They dwindled to mere marionettes as the boat pulled further and further out. Gordon Gay rested on his oar and gazed back at the beach.

The figures of the Old Co. could still be seen, backed by the white tents of the school camp in the distance.

The Cornstalk chuckled.

"I think we did them that time!" he remarked.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I zink zat you are right, my shum," exclaimed Mont Blong. "I zink zat in ze joy of my heart I embrace you."

"Here, keep off!"

"I kees my shum——"

Gordon Gay started rowing again hurriedly. His oar bumped on the chest of the French junior, and Mont Blong sat down in the bottom of the boat.

"Ow!" he gasped. "My shum!"

"Sorry!" said the Cornstalk blandly. "You shouldn't get too near to a chap when he's rowing, you know!"

"Grog!"

"Hallo!" exclaimed Jack Wootton. "Look there!"

"What on earth is it?"

The juniors ceased rowing.

From the headland, where they had seen the signal lights flashing to the German ship, on that eventful night they were never likely to forget, there came sudden strange flashes of light.

They were too far from the headland to see the ledge, or the cave that opened from it; or a signaller, if he were standing there. But they could see the flashes of light, evidently made by a burnished glass in the bright sunshine.

"It's a signal!" Gordon Gay exclaimed.

"The sun dodgers!" shouted Wootton major.

"The what?"

"Sun dodgers—the heliograph, you know. They use that system for signalling in the Army. If we knew the code we could read it."

The juniors gazed at one another in amazement.

"It must be old Hentzel!" said Gordon Gay, after a pause, during which he watched the flashes from the headland intently. "Nobody else would be likely to be sending signals from the cliff out to sea."

"Quite certain?"

"As it's daytime, he's using the heliograph instead of electric lights," said Gay. "But whom is he signalling to?"

They turned their gaze out to sea.

Once or twice they thought they caught a responsive flash, but they were not sure. The flashes from the headland faded away.

"My hat!" said Gordon Gay, in a low voice. "I had an idea that some of Hentzel's friends might follow us in a boat to watch us—"

"They haven't done it," said Wootton major.

"No. Is it possible this signalling is to some vessel instead—that some vessel out there is going to look for us?"

"My word!"

"It seems rather thick," said Jack Wootton. "But—but if the German thinks we've got his papers, and if they're valuable—"

"He does think so."

"Then—"

"I zink zat ye are in danger, my shums," said Mont Blong. "It is zat ye do not go very far from ze shore, n'est-ce-pas?"

"I don't see that we could be hurt, anyway," said Jack Wootton. "Suppose they searched the boat. They wouldn't find anything. I suppose they dare not do us any harm?"

Gordon Gay looked thoughtful.

"Look!" said Wootton major suddenly.

Wootton major was pointing to the north, past the great headland at the mouth of the river. The throb of engines could be heard over the water, and a steamer was gliding past the headland, and crossing the expanse of blue water, as if to pass between the juniors' boat and the beach. The juniors had not noticed the steamer before. It was a very ordinary-looking tramp-steamer, and looked as if it were engaged in the coast trade between the Thames and Hull or Yarmouth.

"What about her?" asked Jack.

"She's changed her course a little, and she's going to cut us off from the beach," said Wootton major.

Gordon Gay drew a deep breath.

"Do you think that's the vessel the signalling was to?"

Wootton major nodded.

"We can soon prove it," said Jack Wootton. "Let's pull for the beach, and see if they follow us."

"Good!"

Jack Wootton jerked Tadpole away from the rudder-lines and took his place. Gay and Wootton minor bent to their oars. The boat turned, and the juniors rowed shoreward.

Tadpole viewed this proceeding in great surprise.

"My dear fellows, are we returning?" he exclaimed.

"Oh, dry up, Taddy! Don't ask questions."

"Well, I really have no objection, as I have left my cobalt in the tent," said Tadpole. "Of course, a sketch cannot be painted without cobalt."

"Blow cobalt!"

"My dear Gay—"

"B-r-r-r-r! Shut up!"

"I zink zat ze steamer mark us," murmured Mont Blong.

The tramp-steamer changed her course slightly, still keeping on to cut the boat off from the beach.

She was so close now that the juniors, as they pulled, could see the faces of the men looking over the sides, and they could see that they were foreign faces, and watching the boat with intense interest.

(Another long instalment of this exciting school serial story in next Thursday's issue of "The Gem" Library. Price one penny.)

NEXT THURSDAY: "THE SPY OF THE SCHOOL!"

A NEW FREE CORRESPONDENCE EXCHANGE.

The only names and addresses which can be printed in these columns will be from those readers living in any of our Colonies who desire Correspondents in Great Britain and Ireland.

Colonists sending in their names and addresses for insertion in the columns of this popular story-book must state what kind of correspondent is required—boy or girl, English, Scotch, Welsh, or Irish.

Would-be correspondents must send with each notice two coupons. One taken from "The Gem," and one from the same week's issue of its companion paper, "The Magnet" Library. Coupons will always be found on page 2 of both papers, and requests for correspondents not containing these two coupons will be absolutely disregarded.

All requests should be addressed: "The Editor, 'The Gem' Library, 23, Bouverie Street, London, E.C., England."

Miss L. Peterson, 3, Northumberland Street, South Melbourne, Victoria, Australia, wishes to correspond with a boy reader living in the British Isles, age about 14 or 15.

Miss Grace Walker, Wyndeholm, Merlin Street, Neutral Bay, Sydney, New South Wales, Australia, wishes to correspond with a boy reader, age 16, living in England.

Miss L. Fisher, 101, Evans Street, East Brunswick, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia, wishes to correspond with a girl reader living in Southampton.

H. Fanning, P.O. Box 577, St. John's, Newfoundland, would like to correspond with readers of "The Gem" Library in the British Isles.

G. Griffith, Leicester Street, Parkside, Adelaide, South Australia, wishes to correspond with a boy or girl reader living in any part of England.

H. S. Sadler, Montrose, Denman Street, Exeter, South Australia, wishes to exchange picture postcards with readers in England.

L. S. De Groer, The Wigwam, Evans Street, Waverley, New South Wales, age 13, wishes to correspond with other readers.

Miss R. Maund, 2, Myrtle Street, Hawthorn, Melbourne, Australia, wishes to correspond with a girl reader, age 14.

L. Moss, Lake's Creek, Rockhampton, Queensland, Australia, wishes to correspond with a boy or girl reader, of about 15 or 17 years of age.

E. L. Stevens, 6, Octavia Street, St. Hilda, Melbourne, Australia, wishes to correspond with a boy or girl reader, age about 15, living in England.

H. A. Mullen, 69, Flemington Road, North Melbourne, Victoria, Australia, would like to correspond and exchange photographs with a girl reader, age 16-17, living in England.

H. Higgins, age 23, of 55, Reiby Street, Newtown, Sydney, New South Wales, Australia, wishes to correspond with a young lady reader of about the same age.

C. James, 109, Wellington Street, Collingwood, Victoria, Australia, would like to correspond with a boy Gemite, age about 15, living in England or Wales.

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B. Coghey, care of P. O. Baker, Town Hall Chambers, Castlemaine, Victoria, Australia, wishes to correspond with a girl reader, age 15-16, living in England or Ireland.

A. Brown, Matilda Street, Eastwood, Australia, wishes to correspond with a girl reader, age about 17, living in or near the Avenue, Braintree, Essex.

R. Clifton, 253, Bouverie Street, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia, wishes to correspond with a reader, age 17, living in England.

T. Huggan, 73, Moreland Road, Coburg, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia, wishes to correspond with a reader interested in stamp collecting, whose age is 18.

N. J. Smith, 132, Redfern Street, Redfern, Sydney, Australia, wishes to correspond with a girl reader.

The Editor specially requests Colonial Readers to kindly bring the Free Correspondence Exchange to the notice of their friends.

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 238.

A Splendid, New, Long, Complete School-Tale of Tom Merry & Co. at St. Jim's. By MARTIN CLIFFORD.

OUR SPECIAL WEEKLY FEATURE



For Next Thursday.

"THE SPY OF THE SCHOOL,"

By Martin Clifford.

Next Thursday's long, complete story of school life at St. Jim's, entitled as above, is one that is bound to prove popular with every Gemite. A story affecting the good name of no less a person than Kildare, the popular captain, is spread about the school, and St. Jim's wakes up to the unpleasant fact that it harbours a spy and tale-bearer in its midst. How, after much trouble has been caused.

"THE SPY OF THE SCHOOL"

is eventually "bowled out" makes a magnificent school tale of powerful interest, which cannot fail to appeal to every reader.

"Once a Gemite Always a Gemite!"

This week's letter comes from a reader who tells me that he has almost grown into manhood. Many of his boyish views and opinions have doubtless undergone a change as he has grown older, but his opinion of "The Gem" Library, which he gives deliberately in obviously carefully-considered sentences in the following letter, have remained unchanged:

"Highgate.

"Dear Editor,—For some time past I've thought of writing you in appreciation of your famous paper, 'The Gem.'

"I think the name sums it up in two words, as it is undoubtedly 'the gem' of many an hour to those who read it.

"I think your tales are not only very interesting from a schoolboy's point of view, but also very instructive in the way they ought to be. They contain the very essence of a good story—viz., good, clean, straightforward English, without any impossible and absurd ideas.

"The characters in your stories are, I think, quite praiseworthy, and I've no doubt there are hundreds of schoolboys trying to copy their manly and straightforward ways.

"Although I am almost now into manhood, I very much enjoy reading 'The Gem,' after my brother has finished with it (as he will not give it up until he has read every word), and I often have a good laugh at the pranks of the 'Terrible Three.'

"I often pity their poor teachers. What patient beings they must be!

"Wishing you every success, I remain, yours sincerely,

"A WELL-WISHER (W. C. A.)."

Thanks for your appreciation and good wishes, W. C. A. Your letter bears out the truth of the popular saying amongst thousands of "Gem" readers. "Once a Gemite, always a Gemite!"

Replies in Brief.

"True Turkish Gemite" (Constantinople).—I was very pleased to get your letter some weeks ago, and must thank you heartily for the appreciative way in which you speak of "The Gem" Library. What you say on the subject of the published letter from "South African Reader" is perfectly true, and has since been endorsed by many other readers.

H. W. (Peckham).—Thanks for your very nice letter. Soaking stamps in warm water will effectually remove dirt and grease-stains.

L. G. McTrieth (Canada).—I am sorry I cannot publish a full description of how to construct a model aeroplane on this page, as space is so limited. You could probably get a book on the subject from H. Glaisher & Co., 32, Charing Cross, London, W.C., England.

The Dangers of Weight-Lifting.

The lifting of heavy weights is a very effective and spectacular athletic feat, and many young athletes, ambitious to excel in weight-lifting contests, make great efforts to train themselves to this end by constant practice with heavy dumb-bells. Considerable danger, however, lies in this practice, even for unusually strong lads, and training for weight-lifting should be chiefly done with quite light dumb-bells, and in accordance with proper rules. Though great physical strength is, of course, a very fine thing to have, it is by no means all that is necessary to the would-be weight-lifting expert. Science and knack play a prominent part in lifting great weights, especially in the form of dumb-bells, and the athlete, however strong, who forces his body to work itself stiff by doing too much heavy weight-lifting is doing himself considerable harm.

One of the greatest dangers of weight-lifting is the fact that at a certain point in the lift the weight must be in such a position that the slightest slip on the part of the performer will cause the supporting muscles to throw off their burden on to some soft part of the body, such as the abdomen. Such a slip might easily cause a severe rupture, strain of the back, or other serious injury which may leave the unfortunate weight-lifter crippled for life. The trained athlete has the knack of weight-lifting, and has mastered the science of concentrating all his muscular forces, and guarding his body in such a way that the weight is supported by muscle in every stage of its upward career.

The following exercises accomplished with light dumb-bells will show how the knack of lifting "shoving" weights is acquired. Take a light dumb-bell—one that you can handle with the greatest of ease, lift it as high as possible above the head, then let your extended arm slant out from the perpendicular away from the body. You will at once be aware how even a light weight affects the muscles, compelling you in a very short time to drop your arm to your side or raise it to the perpendicular again.

Next, with your abdomen and legs well braced, stand over a five or ten pound dumb-bell, according to your strength. Spring yourself up and down from the toes to get the muscles of the calf and inner thigh working properly. Stiffen up the muscles of the abdomen and back. Stoop, without relaxing a single muscle. Get your hand well round the dumb-bell, and, with a combined effort, bringing into use the muscles of the back, thigh, calves, loins, abdomen and upper and lower arm, steadily lift the bell, without a jerk, level with the waist line.

As you straighten up with it, apply the muscle force to the aid of the biceps muscle, which must then lift the bell to the shoulder. As the weight mounts towards the shoulder, the body should bend away from it and work under the weight, so that it shall be in the best position for the lift or "push" upwards.

This is where the most tricky part of weight-lifting comes in. If you are lifting with your right hand, lean over sideways to the left, and get as nearly under the weight as possible. As you bend the left knee, assist yourself by placing the left hand on the thigh or hip. Then, as soon as you have lifted the weight to the shoulder, and you get your body under it, almost all the strain is taken up, and the only difficulty is in keeping the dumb-bell straight up in the air. As long as you can do that, your arm has little to do except to hold the weight perpendicular. Keep your eye on the bell, and don't let it wobble. The heavier the bell, the more important is this point.

Any lad can develop his muscles and become as physically perfect as it is possible to be by the use of a pair of two-pound dumb-bells, and without the risk of doing himself the slightest injury.

THE EDITOR.

his picture appears on the cover of this week's issue of our companion paper, "The Magnet" Library, which contains a magnificent and amusing, long, complete school tale of Harry Wharton & Co., entitled "The Form-Master's Secret," by Frank Richards, and a grand instalment of Sidney Drew's thrilling adventure serial, "Twice Round the Globe." Buy "The Magnet" Library. Now on Sale. Price One Penny.

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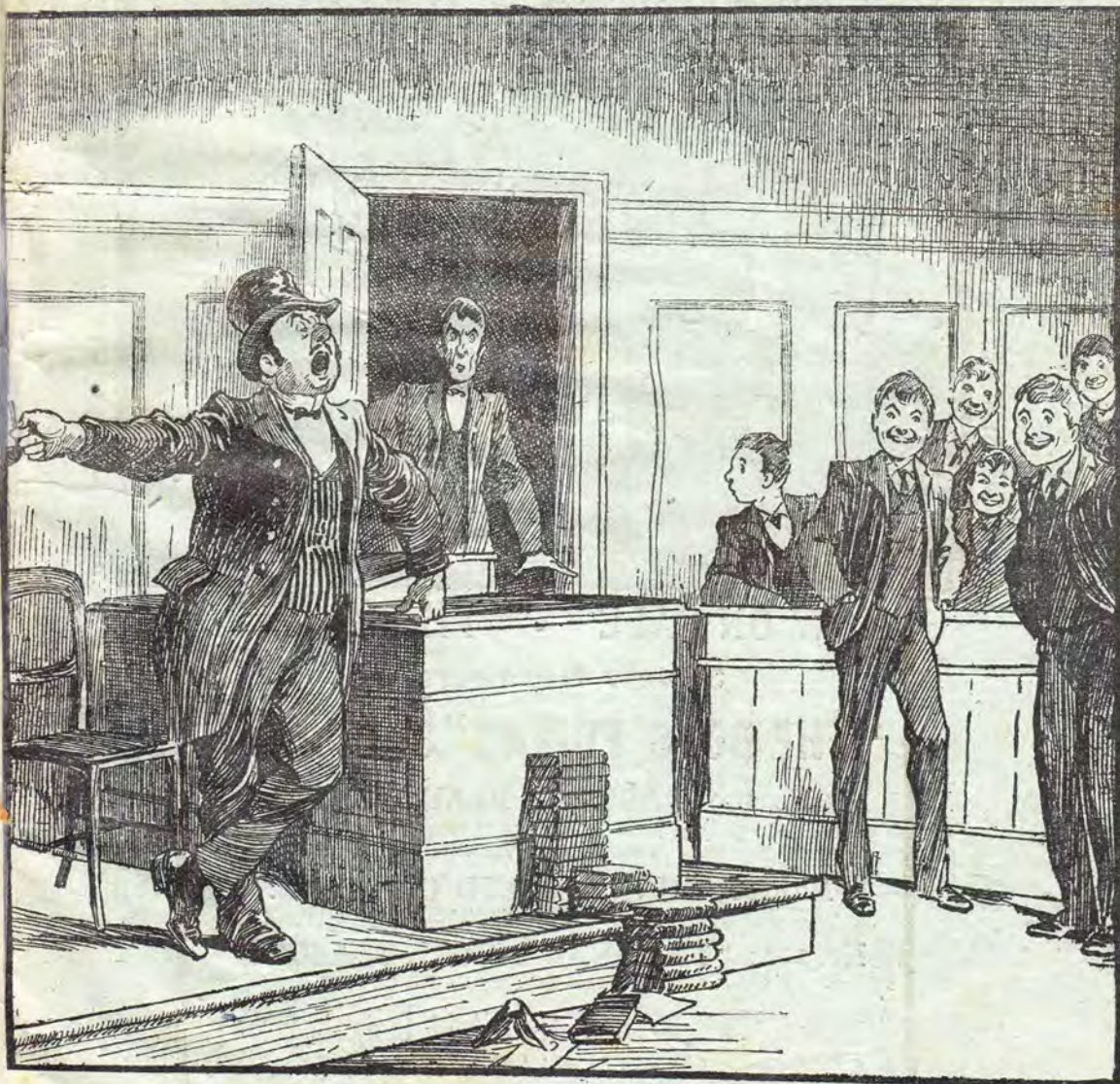
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