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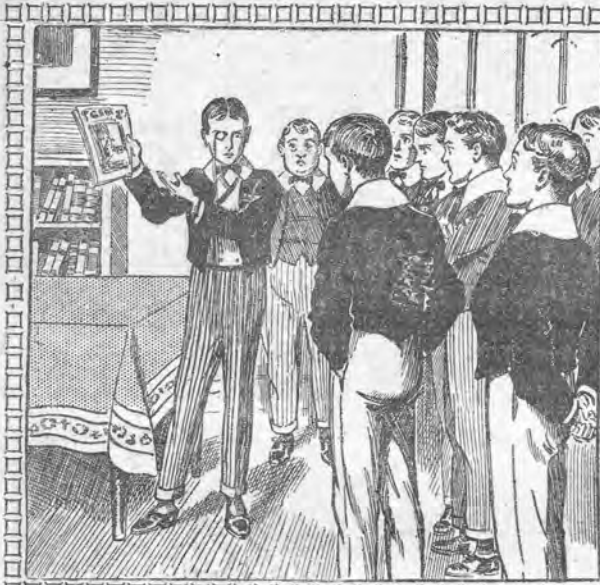


THE AMATEUR ADVERTISER.



GUSSY TRIES HIS HAND AT ADVERTISING!

An Amusing Scene in the Long, Complete School Tale contained in this Number.



THE AMATEUR ADVERTISER!

A Magnificent Long Complete Story dealing with the Adventures of Tom Merry & Co. of St. Jim's.

By MARTIN CLIFFORD.

CHAPTER 1.

A Little Misunderstanding.

TOM MERRY looked in at the doorway of Study No. 6, in the School House at St. Jim's.

Manners and Lowther looked in over his shoulders.

The Terrible Three had rather expectant looks.

"Not ready yet?" asked Tom Merry. The sole occupant of the study was Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, of the Fourth Form.

He was seated at the table, with a pen in his hand, a very thoughtful expression upon his brow, and a smudge of ink upon his noble nose.

He glanced up at the Terrible Three. "Not quite weady," he answered.

"But pway twot in, deah boys. The othahs will be here soon."

Tom Merry & Co. trotted in.

It was teatime; but there were no signs of tea in Study No. 6. The table was spread with periodicals instead of a table-cloth. Arthur Augustus seemed rather busy; but not on the subject of tea.

"Perhaps we could help!" suggested Monty Lowther. Lowther was hungry.

Arthur Augustus nodded.

"Yaas, wathah!" he assented. "I twust you fellows will be able to help vewy considerably."

"I'll start the fire, if you like."

"The fiah!" repeated Arthur Augustus.

"Yes; you'll want a fire, won't you?"

"Not at all, deah boy."

"How are you going to boil the kettle?" inquired Manners.

"There will be no necessity to boil the kettle, Mannahs."

"Oh!"

"The othah fellows ought to be heah," said Arthur Augustus, glancing at the clock.

"I told Blake and Hewies and Dig not to be late; but the duffahs have gone out for a walk, I think. Figgins & Co. ought to be heah, too."

"Quite a party!" remarked Tom Merry.

"Yaas, wathah!"

"We'll get on with clearing the table, if you like."

"The table is all wight, deah boy."

"Oh!" said Tom, rather puzzled.

"Bai Jove! Heah are those boundahs."

Blake and Herries and Digby came in. They looked rather grimly at their noble study mate.

"Not ready?" demanded Blake.

"Figgins & Co. haven't come yet, Blake."

"Oh, bother Figgins & Co. We'll begin," said Herries.

"Imposs, deah boy. All must be pwe-sent," answered Arthur Augustus firmly.

"Well Fatty Wynn at least won't be late on an occasion like this," remarked Tom Merry.

"I twust not. I have told Figgins & Co. is a vewy important occasion," said Arthur Augustus.

"Where's the grub?" inquired Blake.

"Gwub?"

"Yes, grub!"

"What gwub?"

"I suppose we can't have a feed without grub, can we?" ejaculated Blake, staring at Arthur Augustus.

"You seem to be undah wathah a misapprehension, Blake. We are not goin' to have tea."

"What?"

"What!" repeated the Terrible Three, like an echo.

"My deah fellows—"

Again there was a tramp of feet in the passage, and three juniors arrived. They were Figgins, Kerr, and Wynn, of the New House. They came in with very agreeable smiles.

"Here we are again, old top!" announced Figgins.

"I am vewy glad to see you, Figgay."

Fatty Wynn glanced round the study. Like the earlier comers, he seemed surprised to see no preparations for tea.

"Waited for us, what?" he asked.

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Awfully sorry to keep you waiting. We're on time, you know. Now we're here we'll lend you a hand," said Fatty Wynn briskly. "Anything I can cook for you?"

"C-c-cook?"

"Yes, cook! Or is it a cold collation?" asked Wynn.

"Bai Jove! All you fellows seem to be undah a misapprehension," said Arthur Augustus in perplexity. "Did you suppose it was a feed I was askin' you to?"

"Eh?"

"What?"

"Yes, rather!"

"I am weally sowwy; it is a much more important mattah than a feed, deah boys."

"A more important matter than a feed—at tea-time!" said Fatty Wynn, as if he could hardly believe his ears.

"What on earth do you mean?"

"Poor old Gussy's wandering in his mind again," remarked Jack Blake. "He asks us all to a special feed, and then forgets all about it."

"Bai Jove! I asked you to a meetin', Blake."

"You told us all to turn up at half-past five sharp!" exclaimed Fatty Wynn, rather excitedly. "You said it was a special occasion. Of course we thought it was a feed."

"Weally, Wynn—"

"What the thump could we think?" demanded Kerr.

"Weally, Kerr—"

"And it isn't a feed?" inquired Figgins.

"It is not a feed, Figgay."

"Then what the merry thunder is it?"

"It's a meetin', deah boy."

"A—a—a meeting!"

"Yaas, wathah—a vewy important meetin'," said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy impressively. "On a vewy important subject. I am goin' to address you—"

Fatty Wynn blinked at him.

"You're going to speechify?" he gasped.

"That is wathah a cwudo way of desewibin' it, Wynn. I am goin' to address you—"

"And what are we going to do?" roared Fatty Wynn.

"You are goin' to listen, old chap."

"Listen! My only hat! At tea-time! When we're hungry! We're going to hear you chin-wag instead of having tea!" breathed Fatty Wynn.

"Yaas. You see—"

"Fathead!"

"Weally, Wynn—"

"Of all the chumps!" said Fatty Wynn, in measured tones. "Of all the howling asses, of all the burbling jabber-wocks! Let's get off, you chaps! Hurry up! I'm hungry."

"Bai Jove! Pway do not go befoah I have explained—"

"You've explained that there isn't going to be a feed," roared Fatty Wynn.

"That will do! This is one of your little jokes, I suppose; what you School House

duffers call a joke—asking a fellow to a jawing-match when he's hungry! Bump him!"

"Look heah, you New House boundah—Hands off, you fathead. Oh, cwikey!"

Figgins & Co. laid violent hands upon the swell of the School House. They were hungry, and they were wrathful. Arthur Augustus's little joke—if joke it was—had a plentiful lack of appreciation from the hungry juniors.

Bump!

"Yawwooh! Help! Wescue!" shrieked Arthur Augustus, as he sat dazedly on the study carpet.

"That's for your blessed practical jokes!" snorted Fatty Wynn. "Come on, you chaps—we've got to get tea."

Figgins & Co. strode out, leaving Arthur Augustus sitting on the carpet, gasping for breath. Important as the meeting was—according to the noble Gussy—Figgins & Co. evidently considered tea at tea-time, more important still. And they vanished.

CHAPTER 2. Up to Gussy!

"O H, cwumbs!" Arthur Augustus D'Arcy picked himself up breathlessly and groped for his eyeglass.

His study-mates and the Terrible Three of the Shell eyed him grimly. They were strongly inclined to adopt the same measures as the New House juniors.

"Oh, deah! The feahful wuffians! I shall not allow those New House boundahs to have a hand in the bizney now!" gasped Arthur Augustus. "I shall shut them wight out of it!"

"You utter'ass!" said Blake. "You can get ready for another bump! You begin chin-wagging when we're famished, that's all!"

"Weally, Blake—"

"I think we'd better be getting along," remarked Tom Merry. "We've got an invitation to tea in Talbot's study, but we gave Gussy the preference. I think we'll give Talbot a look-in."

"Pway do not go, deah boys!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus, in distress. "Pway do not follow the example of those New House wuffians! The mattah is weally a vewy important one!"

"Rot!" remarked Blake.

Tom Merry hesitated.

"Well, we'll give you five minutes, Gussy!" he said generously. "All the grub won't be gone in Talbot's study in five minutes, I dare say. What's the trouble?"

"I'm hungry!" announced Herries.

"Weally, Hewwies, I wish you would not think so much about your inside!" said Arthur Augustus. "I am not thinkin' of tea. The mattah I allude to is one of the vewy gweatest importance to all of us!"

"What on earth is he burbling about?" asked Blake, in wonder. "Get it off your chest, Gussy! We'll give you a hearing."

"Cut it short, then!" grunted Herries.

Arthur Augustus jammed his eyeglass into his noble eye, and picked up a periodical from the table. It was rather a nicely-got-up paper, with a striking picture on the cover.

"Look at that, deah boys!" he said impressively.

The juniors looked at it.

"Well?" said Tom.

"You see the title of that papah?"

Tom Merry looked again.

"The GEM," he said.

"Yaas, wathah! Every stowey complete, and ewevy one a gem, you know," said Arthur Augustus. "I suppose you

chaps have heard of Mr. Martin Clifford?"

"I've heard the name somewhere," said Herries. "Who is he?"

"Weally, Hewwies—"

"Well, who is he?" demanded Manners.

"Martin Clifford, Mannahs, is the chap who vewy kindly chwonicles the doin's of the fellows at St. Jim's to entahtain the Bwittish public."

"Oh, one of those scribbling chaps!" yawned Herries.

"Not exactly, Hewwies. Mr. Clifford does not scwibble—he uses a typew'itah, I believe. He w'ites wathah well, though sometimes, I must say, he does not tweek a fellow with weally pwopah respect. He chwonicles the things that happen in the school, you know, for the entahtainment and instwuction of the public. I am suah it does the public no end of good. But—to come to the sewious part of the mattah—it looks as if the public are losin' their good taste in mattahs of litewature."

"Let 'em!"

"Pewusin' this numbah of the papah," said Arthur Augustus, "I find the editah wemarkin' that the circulation is dwoppin'."

"Let it drop!" said Herries heartlessly. "Never mind, so long as we have tea!"

"That is not the pwopah way of lookin' at it, Hewwies. I suppose you would not like Mr. Clifford to waste his sweetness on the desert air, while his circulation is collahed by that othah boundah, Fwank W'ichards?"

"Blessed if it would keep me awake o' nights! Anyway, that's his bizney, isn't it—not yours?"

"I am goin' to make it my bizney, Hewwies."

"Oh, my hat!"

"That is why I have called this meetin', deah boys," said Arthur Augustus, beaming upon his astonished chums. "I am goin' to take it upon myself to buck up the circulation of the GEM!"

"Great pip!"

"That is why I am addressin' this wewpresentative meetin' of St. Jim's fellows. My ideah is that we should all put our shouldahs to the wheel, and make an effort, you know. I shall diwect the opewations—"

"Oh, will you?"

"Yaas, wathah! As a fellow of tact and judgment, the leadahship natuwallly falls to me. I have been sketchin' out a little scheme for buckin' up the circulation no end, and I want you fellows to back me up. We are not goin' to slack down in our efforts till the circulation of the GEM is the biggest in the kingdom!"

"Bow-wow!"

"It is up to us, deah boys! You see, it is pro bono publico—"

"Which?"

"For the public good!" said Arthur Augustus loftily. "There is no doubt in any pwopahly-constituted mind that this papah is cawwyin' on a vewy gweat work. By nawwatin' the doin's of weally nice fellows—us, you know—it is settin' a vewy high example for the public to follow. And behold the w'esults!" said Arthur Augustus warmly. "You can see the w'esults on all sides! Look at the splendid way the chaps wallied wound to beat the Huns! I attribute the winnin' of the war vewy largely to the manly and ennoblin' influence of the GEM on the wisin' generation!"

"Oh, my hat!"

"I have not seen this fact w'eferred to in any of the speeches of the political johnnies, it is true. But that is easily explained. Political johnnies nevah deal

in facts, you see. They take the cwedit to themselves. Cheeky asses, you know! But, to come to the point—"

"Oh, you're really coming to a point?" asked Monty Lowther.

"Yaas, wathah, if I am not continually intewwupted by asinine w'emarks, Lowthah! I have dwawn up a scheme for buckin' up the circulation of this vewy admiwable papah."

Arthur Augustus picked up a sheet of impot paper from the table, and proceeded to read it to his grinning chums.

"Firstly, ewevy chap heah makes it a w'ule, when he meets anothah chap, to ask him if he is a weadah of the GEM. And, if not, why not?"

"Hear, hear!"

"Then as soon as it can be awwanged, we go for a twip in a Handley-Page—"

"Good!"

"And dwop copies of the GEM all ovah the place."

"Oh!"

"Thirdly, we can advertise the GEM by pinnin' copies on the backs of pwominent people, like the Head—"

"Eh?"

"And the Housemaster—"

"Oh!"

"And the policeman at Rylcombe—"

"Phew!"

"And the Mayor of Wayland, if we can get at him."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"In all these stunts, deah boys, you can help."

"I can see myself pinnin' a copy of the GEM, or anything else, on the Head's back!" grinned Blake. "I don't think!"

"It would be a vewy effective advertisement, Blake. It would make the whole school talk about the papah."

"They'd probably talk about the floggin' I should get, too."

"I twust, Blake, that you are not goin' to swerve fwom the path of duty on account of a twiffin' lickin'!"

"Well, I'll leave you the job of stickin' it on the Head, Gussy!"

"Ahem! My duty is chiefly leadahship—plannin', you know. Gweat genewals nevah go into action. They w'emain at the base layin' gweat schemes, you know, while the Tommies pulvewise the enemy. You can wegard yourselves as Tommies, you see, and me as a field-marshal."

"I don't think!"

"If you are goin' to argue, Blake—"

"I'm going to have tea, if you've done wagging your chin, Gussy."

"I am not quite finished yet. While you fellows are cawwyin' out my diwections, I am goin' to put in some bwain work. I am goin' to see Martin Clifford."

"Wha-a-at?"

"I wegard that as needful. You see, my ideah is that Martin Clifford wequiah buckin' up, as well as the papah. I have often thought I could w'ite, if I had time!" said Arthur Augustus modestly.

"Write?" said Blake dazedly.

"Yaas, I am thinkin' of callin' on Martin Clifford, and offerin' to give him some tips about w'itin' the stowies in a wathah supewialh mannah."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I weally see no cause for laughtah in that w'emark, deah boys. Now, we are goin' to set to work. Fortunately, I have a fivah in hand."

"Then we'll have something rather good for tea."

"Never mind tea, Hewwies. I am thinkin' of the GEM."

"Blow the GEM! Let's have tea."

"Wats! I am goin' to ordah an enormous numbah of copies, first of all, as a pweliminawy step, you know. You fellows can hand ovah all the cash you

happen to have, to add to my fivah. I shall wequiah ewevy pennay. Pway do not go, Mannahs."

But Manners was gone.
"Tom Mewry—Lowthah!"
But they were gone, too.

Arthur Augustus cast a puzzled glance after them.

"Bai Jove! What on earth have those fellows run away suddenly for, like that?" he ejaculated.

"I wonder!" grinned Blake. "I wonder, too, whether Talbot would like some more guests to tea. Let's try."

"Good idea," said Herries.

"Weally, you fellows, I have a gweat deal more to say—"

"Say on, old top!" said Blake from the passage. "Try to get finished by the time we come back."

"You uttah ass!"

Blake & Co. vanished. Arthur Augustus frowned majestically. Considering the vast importance of the matter he had taken in hand, he was quite shocked at the want of enthusiasm on the part of his chums. They really did not seem to care whether the circulation of the GEM was at its zenith or at its nadir. It was really too bad.

"Bai Jove!" murmured Arthur Augustus. "I shall have to bwing those boundahs up to the scwath, somehow. I am certainly goin' to see this thing through. It weally depends on me. Aftah tea— Bai Jove! I forgot there is nophin' for tea!"

Arthur Augustus paused and reflected. There was a whole fiver in his pocket, and he was tempted to visit the tuck-shop and change it there. But he heroically resisted the temptation.

That fiver was to be devoted to the good cause. It was up to Gussy to teach by example as well as by precept—a method of instruction which is often sadly neglected by great men.

And, leaving the fiver in his pocket, Arthur Augustus meandered along the Fourth Form passage in search of an invitation to tea.

CHAPTER 3.

Trying it on.

"**M**ON Dieu! Mais c'est drole!" Monsieur Morny, the French master of St. Jim's, made that remark to himself the following day after lessons.

Mossoo was walking in the quadrangle, enjoying the fresh air. Under the old elms, Arthur Augustus D'Arcy had bumped into him for a moment, and retired, after profuse apologies. And Mosssoo walked on, blissfully unconscious of the fact that there was a sort of kite's tail attached to his coat behind. It was composed of four or five copies of the GEM, pinned together, and it fluttered gaily behind the French gentleman as he walked.

Naturally, that unusual adornment attracted attention.

Monsieur Morny did not see it, not being blessed with eyes in the back of his head; but everybody else saw it.

Mossoo was rather an important little gentleman, and he had a rather important little strut. He never forgot that he had served his time in the French army, and he still retained a military air, which was just a trifle comic in a little, fat gentleman, with a tight morning-coat. People often smiled sweetly when they met Mosssoo on his walks abroad, which had given Monsieur Morny the impression that the English, cold as they were supposed to be, were a very cheery and good-humoured sort of people. But now

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the persons in the quadrangle were not smiling, they were laughing.

Monsieur Morny could not help noticing it.

He passed Racke and Crooke of the Shell, and they chuckled. He passed Levison, Clive, and Cardew, of the Fourth, and they chortled. He passed Figgins & Co. of the New House, and they almost exploded. Knox of the Sixth grinned at him; Cutts of the Fifth nearly howled. And the countenance of the little French gentleman grew pinker and pinker as he continued his promenade.

Monsieur Morny was very punctilious in exacting the respect that was due to him, and this certainly was not respectful. When he came on D'Arcy minor, Reggie Manners, and Levison minor, of the Third, all three of the fags shrieked. And Mosssoo bore down on them with wrath in his fiery eye.

"Stop!" he exclaimed, as the three fags were bolting. "Halt—la! Sheeky garcons, you laff, isn't it?"

"L-l-laugh, sir!" stammered Wally D'Arcy.

"Vy for you laff?"

"Ahem! I—we—hum—ah—"

"You sall tell me because!" exclaimed Monsieur Morny angrily. "Ozzervise, I reports you to Form-master—oh, yes! You have impudence to laugh me at ze nose."

"We—we didn't laugh at your nose, sir!" gasped Levison minor.

"Ven I say laugh me at ze nose, I do not mean laugh at ze nose, young donkey!" said Monsieur Morny lucidly. "I demand zat you answer vy for you sall laugh."

"Oh, ah—hem—"

"Is it zat my tie he is not straight?"

"Straight as a die, sir!" gasped Wally.

"Vat for ze— Come back!" shouted Mosssoo. "Zat you comes back viz you at vunce!"

But the fags were gone.

Monsieur Morny came very near pursuing them with uplifted walking-stick, but he refrained. Dignity came before vengeance. He walked on, with his chin well up, "pride in his port, defiance in his eye," as the poet has observed.

He came on Grundy of the Shell, and was surprised and relieved to find that Grundy was not laughing. Grundy, having met him full face, could not see the trail of GEMS that dangled behind Mosssoo.

"Mon garcon!" said Mosssoo.

"Yes, sir?" said George Alfred Grundy.

"Is it zat zere is somezings odd viz me?" asked Mosssoo. "Zere is perhaps some spot of black on my nose, isn't it?"

"No, sir," said Grundy, with a stare.

"It is tres drole, zat everybody he laff viz himself ven I pass by," said Monsieur Morny. "Is somezins wrong viz me, Grundy?"

Grundy looked him over.

"Can't see anything, sir."

"Zat is verree strange. Vy for sall ze garcons laugh, zen?" exclaimed the puzzled French master.

Grundy felt himself called upon to make a suggestion. Grundy was not a very tactful youth.

"P'raps its the way you walk sir?" he suggested.

"Vat?"

"You strut a bit, sir; that may be it."

"Mon Dieu!"

"It's a bit comic, if you ask me, sir," said Grundy fatuously.

Grundy was surprised the next moment. Monsieur Morny grabbed him by one ear and pulled it—hard! Evi-

dently Grundy's kind suggestions had not gratified him.

"Yaroooh!" roared Grundy, in surprise and wrath. "Wharrer you at? Leggo! Yow-ow-wooooo!"

"You sheeky young rascal!"

"You asked me, didn't you?" yelled Grundy indignantly. "Leggo my ear! What did you ask me for, if you didn't want me to tell you? It's jolly comic, if you want to know, the way you strut, sir. Yaroooooooh!"

Grundy jerked his ear away. Monsieur Morny strode on, with knitted brows, and then the Shell fellow saw the trail of dangling GEMS.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Monsieur Morny spun round. "Vat! I catch you, isn't it? Now you laff—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Grundy.

Then he dodged as Monsieur Morny swung up his walking-stick, and fled. The French gentleman breathed hard.

"Zis is not to endure!" he murmured.

"Ma foi! Ze next one zat sall permit himself to laugh at me at ze nose, I smite him, isn't it?"

The next one was Herr Schneider, the German master. There was no love lost between the Herr and Mosssoo, which was natural enough, considering their nationalities. And as the fat German master caught sight of Mosssoo with his dangling adornment, he burst into a roar.

"Haw, haw, haw! Mein Gott! Haw, haw!"

Monsieur Morny's eyes flashed, and he strutted up to Herr Schneider like an enraged turkey-cock.

"Ah! You laff, isn't it?" he exclaimed.

"Haw, haw!"

"Monsieur, vous etes cochon allemand!" roared Monsieur Morny. "You are one German peeg!"

Now, Monsieur Morny was really speaking the truth; but there are some natures to whom the truth is disagreeable. Herr Schneider's was one of them. His fat face crimsoned.

He shook a fat fist at Mosssoo.

"You speak to me like tat?" he ejaculated. "You call me names, nicht wahr? You are pig-dog, mein Herr!"

"Scelerat!"

"Hund!"

"Coquin!"

"Dummkopf!"

"Lache!"

"Gentlemen, gentlemen!" exclaimed Mr. Railton, the School Housemaster, hurrying up to interrupt that exchange of compliments in French and German. "Gentlemen! You forget yourselves! Silence, please!"

"Zat Sherman peeg—"

"Tat Franzosisch plockhead—"

"Is it zat I am to be laff?" shrieked Monsieur Morny, in great excitement. "Je suis Francais—j'etais soldat—on me rit au nez! Is it zat I sall endure zat? Jamais, monsieur!"

"Calm yourself, sir!" said Mr. Railton soothingly. "You must expect some merriment, sir, if you walk in the quadrangle with a kite's tail attached to your coat—"

"Vat!"

"Herr Morny, Sie sind ein Dummkopf—"

"Scelerat!"

"Silence!" exclaimed Mr. Railton sharply. "Another word, and I shall report this to the Head! Herr Schneider, kindly retire! Monsieur Morny, you have a kite's tail—"

Monsieur Morny whisked round to look.

The tail of GEMS whisked round with him.

There was a yell of laughter from all



A tall gentleman rose from a revolving-chair to greet the St. Jim's juniors. "The Editor of the 'Gem'?" inquired D'Arcy, bowing politely over his silk hat. "The same!" replied the tall gentleman gravely. "Have I the pleasure of speaking to Master D'Arcy, of St. Jim's?" (See chapter 6.)

directions. Monsieur chasing his tail like a cat was irresistible.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Go it!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Silence!" exclaimed Mr. Railton, frowning—though he found it rather difficult to frown just then. "Monsieur—allow me—"

The Housemaster unhooked the fish-hook that fastened the tail of GEMS to Mossoo's coat. Monsieur Morry gazed at it blankly. He understood now.

"Mon. Dieu! Maintenant je comprends!" he gasped. "Somevun has tie zat ridiculous zing to my coat, isn't it? Zat is D'Arcy, zen—I feel him tooch me in back ven he run into me—"

"I will speak to D'Arcy!" said Mr. Railton severely. "You need have no doubt, monsieur, that the perpetrator of this trick will be adequately punished!"

Mr. Railton strode into the School House with the string of GEMS in his hand. He called to Tom Merry in the passage.

"Merry! Kindly find D'Arcy and send him to my study at once!"

"Yes, sir!"

In five minutes Arthur Augustus D'Arcy entered the Housemaster's study. He entered it in some trepidation. His first step had been a great success—the GEM had been brought very prominently to the notice of half St. Jim's. But the swell of the Fourth was rather doubtful as to how his Housemaster would receive his explanation.

As a matter of fact, Mr. Railton did not

receive the explanation at all. He held up the string of papers.

"D'Arcy, did you attach this to Monsieur Morry's coat?"

"Yaas, sir! I—"

"Then hold out your hand!"

"If you please, sir, my weason—"

"Hold out your hand at once!"

"Certainly, sir, but my weason—"

"If you do not immediately obey me, D'Arcy, I shall report you to the Head for a flogging!"

"Oh, bai Jove!"

Swish, swish, swish, swish!

"Wow-wow-wow-wow!"

"You may go, D'Arcy! Not a word! And if anything of the kind occurs again—"

"Wow-wow!"

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy seemed to be trying to fold himself up like a pocket-knife, as he left the Housemaster's study. His chums met him in the passage—sympathetic but grinning.

"Caught it," asked Blake.

"Yow-ow! Yaas, wathah!"

"Well, you asked for it, you know!" remarked Lowther comfortingly.

"Yow-wow-wow!"

"The Head next, I suppose?" grinned Blake. "He would look no end funny with a string of GEMS trailing behind his gown!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, ewikee! On second thoughts, deah boys—ow-ow!—I wathah think that it is not a vewy good stunt—yow-ow-ow!—and I don't think I shall twy it on the Head!" groaned Arthur Augustus.

And he didn't!

CHAPTER 4.

Gems Wanted.

"OH, there you are!" grunted Blake.

It was Saturday afternoon, and Blake & Co. had decided to spend that half-holiday on a long bike spin. And after dinner, Arthur Augustus D'Arcy had been left in Study No. 6, still coming over ways and means for furthering his new stunt, while Blake & Co. brought the bicycles out. And when Blake looked in the study for him he had disappeared.

Whereat Blake snorted wrathfully, and proceeded in search of his noble chum. He inquired for him right and left, and up and down, and round about. Trimble had seen him in the passage—Durraane had seen him on the staircase—and Julian had seen him speaking to Kildare of the Sixth. To Kildare, therefore, Blake hied himself, and learned that the swell of St. Jim's had requested permission to use the telephone in the prefect's room—a request which the St. Jim's captain had granted. And Blake hurried off to the prefect's room, by that time in a rather excited state, and prepared to punch the aristocratic nose of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy for giving so much trouble.

Arthur Augustus was at the telephone. He did not answer Blake's gruff greeting; he was busy speaking into the transmitter.

"Blankley's—is that Blankley's, Wayland? Vewy good!"

"Gussy!" howled Blake.

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 503.

"Pway shut up a minute! Are you there—Bai Jove! No, I was not addwessin' you—I was addwessin' a sillay ass who was intewwuptin' me! All wight! I am D'Arcy—at St. Jim's, you know—you know me—"

"Gussy!" yelled Blake. "We're waitin'!"

"All wight; I don't mind your waitin', Blake. Are you there? I want you to send me some GEMS!"

Blake stood still. He understood now. Arthur Augustus was attending to business. He came along to listen at the telephone, wondering what the young man at the World's Emporium would say in reply. Blankley's at Wayland was a big store, and Gussy was a well-known customer there.

"Yes, sir!" came the reply from Blankley's. "Certainly, sir! I will put you on to our jewellery department."

"What!"

"Jewellery department, sir—one minute, sir!"

"But weally—Bai Jove, he's gone!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Blake.

Arthur Augustus looked at Blake over the receiver, with a puzzled expression.

"That young man appeals wathah dence," he remarked. "Why the thump is he puttin' me on to the jewellery department?"

"You asked for gems, fathead!"

"But the GEM is a papah—Hallo! Here he is!"

A voice came through from the jewellery department at Blankley's.

"Yes, sir—Master D'Arcy?"

"Yaas, wathah! I wequiah a numbah of GEMS—"

"Certainly, sir. What gems do you prefer? A diamond tie-pin—"

"Bai Jove! No. I am not in want of a tie-pin at pwsent."

"A wrist-watch, perhaps—"

"Not at all!"

"Ahem! What are you needing, then, sir?"

"I wequiah some GEMS—"

"Do you refer to unset stones, sir?" asked the puzzled assistant.

"Bai Jove! This is weally vewy peculiah! I have heard of a chap who asked for bwead and they offahed him a stone; but I nevah heard of bein' offahed stones when askin' for a papah!"

"I did not catch that, sir. Would you mind repeating it?" came over the wires.

"I do not wequiah any stones, young man; I wequiah about a thousand GEMS."

"Eh?"

"Pway send me a thousand GEMS."

"A—a—a thousand?"

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Wha-a-at sort of gems, sir?"

"This week's numbah!"

"Eh?"

"Any GEMS will do, in fact—and a few 'Magnets,' if you like."

"Mum-mum-magnets?"

"Yaas!"

"Your must apply to the ironmongery department for magnets. We do not keep them in this department. As for gems, you must specify exactly what gems you require, and what you are prepared to pay for them," said the young man at Blankley's somewhat testily.

"Thwee-halfpence each, of course!"

"Wha-a-at?"

"That is the pwsent pwice, owin' to the war, you know," said Arthur Augustus.

"Are you joking, sir? We have no gems at that price, or anything like it!"

"I twust, sir, that you are not pwofiteewin' on the GEM!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus sternly. "Bai Jove! That would account for the circulation goin' down. I shall certainly insist upon havin' my copies of the GEM at thwee-halfpence each! Kindly put the ordah in hand at once, and send me all the papahs as soon as poss—"

"Papers?"

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Are you alluding to a paper?"

"Gwent Scott! What did you think I was alludin' to?"

"You said gems—"

"Weally, this is too bad! The GEM is the name of the papah!" shouted Arthur Augustus into the receiver. "Got that?"

"Oh, you require our book-selling department!"

Whirrrrr!

"Now, isn't this weally too bad?" exclaimed Arthur Augustus, in great exasperation. "The uttah ass is puttin' me on to anohtah department!"

"The bikes are waitin'," said Blake.

"Bothah the bikes! Oh, here we are! Hallo! Are you Blankley's booksellin' department? Vewy good! I wequiah a thousand copies of the GEM. I pwesume that you know the papah is thwee-halfpence, and worth thwee-and-six, you know. Yaas, I wequiah a thousand copies. Send them to the school in a bundle. Wight-ho!"

Arthur Augustus rang off, satisfied that his order was through at last. He did not rise from the telephone chair, however. He began to look up numbers in a directory.

"What's the game now?" demanded Blake.

"I am goin' to telephone to all the newsagents in the distwict," explained Arthur Augustus. "Ordahs by telephone will encourage them to keep the GEM, you know."

"And are we going to wait while you do it?" roared Blake.

"Yaas, exactly!"

"I don't think!" Blake grasped his noble chum by the collar and jerked him out of the chair. "Kim on!"

"Welsee me, you uttah ass!"

"Herries! Dig!" shouted Blake.

His chums came in from the passage. "Lend me a hand with this chump!"

Blake. "Take his arms, and I'll help him from behind with my boot! Now, then!"

"Right-ho!"

"Yawwooh! Welsee me, you uttah asses. I pwotest—I welsee—yooop!"

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy departed with Herries and Dig grasping his arms. There was no help for it. He expostulated against going in wrathful tones; but he went.

Blake gave him only one helping with his boot. Then he turned back to the telephone; and as Gussy disappeared with Herries and Dig, he rang up the stores at Wayland.

"Blankley's—bookselling department—right! Order just given for a thousand GEMS to be delivered to D'Arcy at St. Jim's. Hold the order over till you hear further—the papers not wanted just yet. Right-ho! Good-bye!"

And Jack Blake rang off, and followed his chums, with a cheery grin on his face. He found Herries and Digby and Arthur Augustus in the quad—Gussy in a state of frowning wrath.

"I wegard you as slackin' asses, all thwee of you!" he exclaimed heatedly. "Business before pleasuah is the wule; and I have made it my bizney to buck up the circulation of the GEM—"

"Come on!"

"Weally, Blake—"

"Chuck him on his bike!" said Blake.

"I'll tie his feet to the pedals—"

"I welsee to have my feet tied to the pedals, you uttah ass! Howevah, I will come."

And Gussy came. The chums of Study No. 6 started together on their spin, and Gussy's frowns gradually died away.

"Aftah all, I have made a good beginnin'," he remarked at last. "There will be a thousand GEMS delivahed by Blankley's in a day or two. That ought to buck up the circulation of the GEM this week, deah boys!"

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Whereat Jack Blake smiled sweetly—but said nothing. But he certainly thought that the GEM circulation would remain in a drooping condition if it did not improve before those thousand GEMS arrived from Blankley's.

CHAPTER 5.

Follow your Leader!

"YOU fellows comin'?"

Tom Merry glanced up inquiringly as D'Arcy of the Fourth put that question. The Terrible Three had come out after dinner on Wednesday, and were airing themselves in the doorway of the School House while discussing what was to be done with the afternoon. A light rain was falling in the quadrangle, and Mr. Ratcliff could be seen in the distance navigating with an umbrella up. The outlook was not encouraging for a half-holiday.

"Coming where?" asked Tom.

"I am goin' for a wun in a cah—"

"Beloved youth!" exclaimed Monty Lowther, falling in Gussy's arms on the spot. "Say those sweet words again!"

"Lowthah, you uttah ass, you are wuffin' my necktie!"

"What matters necktie at a moment like this? Come to my arms, and let me hug thee—"

"I wegard you as an ass, Lowthah! If you fellows would like to come for a wun in the cah—"

"Hurrah!"

Arthur Augustus had solved the problem of what was to be done with the afternoon. Blake & Co. came downstairs with their coats on.

"These chaps are comin'," said Arthur Augustus. "I asked the patah to send the big Wolls-Woyce, so there will be lots of woom. Betchah put your coats on. Put on your toppahs, too—the cah will be closed, so the wain will not hurt them."

"What's in the wind?" asked Tom Merry.

Blake shrugged his shoulders.

"Blessed if I know!" he answered.

"Gussy's asked his pater to let us have the big car for the afternoon, and the dear old gent has consented—"

"Weally, Blake—"

"The nobby old sport has consented, I mean. And it's at the gates now, snorting like one o'clock," said Blake. "I don't know where we're going. I don't suppose Gussy does, you know."

"Wathah, deah boy!"

"Well, where are we going, then?" inquired Tom Merry.

Arthur Augustus smiled mysteriously. "I will tell you when we get there!" he answered. "You are goin' to see a vewy nice gentleman, and I am goin' to get the address of another gentleman. That is all I am going to tell you at pwsent."

"My hat!"

"I was goin' to scattah GEMS all along the woad to London, only, somehow, they have not awvived from Blankley's," said Arthur Augustus.

"London!" shouted all the juniors together. "Are we going to London?"

"I will tell you pwsently, deah boys; for the pwsent is a scwet."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Weally, deah boys, I see no occasion for cacklin'. Pway get your coats on, and don't forget to sport your toppahs. It is a wathah special occasion."

"All serene!"

Tom Merry & Co. were puzzled, but they were more than willing to spend that half-holiday buzzing along in a big car. It was only Arthur Augustus who had such resources to call upon on a rainy day. In five minutes the seven juniors were packed in the big Rolls-

Royce, all of them sporting their toppers as a concession to the great Gussy.

"Wobinson!" said Arthur Augustus to the chauffeur.

"Yes, sir!"

"Pway let her wip, Wobinson. We have got to get back to-night, you know, or there will be a wov. But pway don't kill anybody on the woad—we have no time for inquests now."

"Right, sir!"

And the big car started, Tom Merry & Co. noted that Gussy had a bundle in his hand. He opened it as the automobile wheeled away towards Rylcombe. Half-a-dozen copies of the GEM were revealed.

"I was goin' to scatter GEMS all the way up!" said Arthur Augustus. "Only those uttah duffahs at Blankley's—What are you gwinnin' at, Blake?"

"Those uttah duffahs at Blankley's, old top," answered Blake blandly. "So they haven't delivered your GEMS?"

"Not yet; I wonder why!"

"I wonder!" murmured Blake.

"However, I have got these copies, and I am goin' to throw them out at favourable moments," said Arthur Augustus. "I wegard that as a vewy nobbey ideah. I have a feelin', you know, that I was weally born to be a great advertisah. When I leave school, I may take it up as a business. I shall pwebably ask for a job as managin' diwectah of a publicity firm or somethin'. I see nothin' whatevah to gwim at in that we mark, Lowthah. I can assuah you that if I were editah of the GEM, the circulation would not have drooped."

"More likely it would have crashed!" murmured Lowther.

"Weally, you ass—"

"We're going, and no mistake," remarked Manners.

The big Rolls-Royce was eating up the miles. Rainy roads and green woods, hamlets and villages and towns, fleeted by. Robinson was doing his best, and the miles fled under the flashing wheels. Fortunately there were no casualties.

London lay before the juniors at last. Tom Merry & Co. had certainly not expected to find themselves in the metropolis that day, and they looked round them with much interest. Robinson had to slow a little as the car entered streets instead of country roads.

"Bai Jove! Heah's a chance!" ejaculated Arthur Augustus.

He picked up his roll of GEMS.

The car had slackened for a moment or two, and Arthur Augustus sighted three or four little ragged boys loitering on the kerbstone. They looked at the car, and one of them, a cheeky-looking youth of about twelve, put a soiled thumb to a soiled nose, and extended four soiled fingers in playful greeting to Gussy as he looked out. But Gussy did not heed. He hurled his bundle of GEMS among the youths.

Gussy's intentions were good. His intentions, in fact, were always of the very best kind. He meant to introduce these dilapidated youths to good and healthy literature by the presentation of free copies of the GEM. Nothing could have been kinder. It was simply ill-luck that the bundle of papers smote the nearest youth full on the nose, and caused him to sit down on the pavement in a state of great astonishment.

"Yooop!" came in a roar from the injured youth. "Wharrer you chucking at me for? Yah!"

"Bai Jove!"

The ragged youth picked himself up and dashed after the car. Traffic ahead compelled Robinson to go slow, and the incensed youth reached the car, and shook a grimy fist at Arthur Augustus' astonished face.

"Yah!" he roared. "Chucking things at me, wot? Yah!"

"My deah chap!" gasped Arthur Augustus. "I—Yawooooop!"

In his anxiety to explain, Arthur Augustus leaned from the window. The grimy youth saw his opportunity, and he gave Arthur Augustus' silk topper a crashing blow on the crown.

Crunch!

"Oh, cwumbs! Yeop! Yaroooooh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The grimy youth chuckled and backed off, what time Arthur Augustus sat down in the car, spluttering. He clutched at his hat, striving to extricate his head therefrom. The car put on speed again, leaving the ragamuffins howling with laughter—an indulgence which Tom Merry & Co. also permitted themselves.

"Bai Jove! The howwid young wascal!" gasped Arthur Augustus, as he extricated his head at last.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"He misundahstood me, you know—"

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

"Pway stop cacklin', you feahful asses! Look at my hat! It is wained! Oh, cwumbs!"

And Arthur Augustus sadly and sedulously polished his damaged topper as the Rolls-Royce ran on into busy streets.

CHAPTER 6.

Calling on the Editor.

TOM Merry looked from the car. "Hallo, this is Fleet Street!" he exclaimed.

"Yaas, wathah!"

"What the thump are we going to do in Fleet Street?" exclaimed Blake.

"Nothin' at all, deah boy!"

"Does the shover know where to go?"

"Oh, yaas!"

Robinson evidently had his directions, for the car turned into Farringdon Street. The juniors blinked at Arthur Augustus. Why he had brought them into the heart of the London newspaper world they could not even guess.

The Rolls-Royce stopped at last at a huge building.

"We stop here?" asked Tom Merry, mystified.

"Yaas, wathah!"

"What show is this?"

"Fleetway House, deah boys!"

"Oh, crumbs!"

Robinson alighted and opened the door. Tom Merry & Co. crowded out on the pavement in a state of great wonder. They were aware that the Fleetway House was the headquarters of the publishers of the GEM, of course, but why they were there they could not guess.

"Now, deah boys," said Arthur Augustus benignly, "you know where you are. We are goin' to call on the editah of the GEM."

"Oh, Jerusalem! Is he expecting us?" howled Blake.

"Pwebably not. That does not make any difference. He is bound to be glad to see us, as we are takin' up the matiah of the circulation of the GEM for him. Are you comin' in with me, old tops?"

"Well, my hat!" said Tom Merry.

"Look here, Gussy, you ass—"

"You had bettah come in," said Arthur Augustus. "I may wequah your assistance."

"Eh?"

"I may as well weveal to you, deah boys, the weason of this call on the editah. I am goin' to learn the address of Mr. Martin Clifford. I trust the editah will give it to me fweely. But if he does not—"

"Well, if he does not—"

"In that case," said Arthur Augustus darkly, "I may wequiah assistance. You had better all come in. I may wequiah you all, as I believe, the editah is a wathah hefty chap!"

"Oh, dear!" gasped Blake.

"Of course, I do not want you to be wuff with him," said Arthur Augustus. "But he has got to tell me Mr. Clifford's address; I have some vewy plain wemarks to make to that gentleman. If it is necessary to use dwastic measures, go as easy as possible, as I do not wish to be wuff on a chap who has been away fightin' the Huns. Follow me!"

Arthur Augustus led the way up the steps, followed by his chums, in a rather slazed frame of mind.

Arthur Augustus led his flock through the swing-doors, and was stopped by a commissionaire, who inquired his business.

"My business is with the editah of the GEM!" explained Arthur Augustus cheerfully. "Pway send in my name—D'Arcy—Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, of St. Jim's, and fwiends."

"Pray, step into the waiting-room, gentlemen!"

The gentlemen stepped into the waiting-room.

Tom Merry & Co. looked at one another while they waited, wondering a little what the editorial gentleman would think of this invasion. Arthur Augustus seemed to have no doubts, however. He criticised the pictures on the walls with the air of a connoisseur, till a lad in uniform came to conduct the visitors to the lift.

Up went the lift, with seven St. Jim's juniors and their conductor in it. Then they were piloted along passages to a big door, at which their guide knocked.

The door was thrown open.

A tall gentleman rose from a revolving-chair to greet his visitors. Arthur Augustus bowed to him politely over his silk hat.

"The editor of the GEM?" he inquired. "The same!" replied the tall gentleman gravely. "Have I the pleasure of speaking to Master D'Arcy, of St. Jim's?"

"Yaas, wathah! I twust I am not intowwupin' you."

"I am always busy," replied the editor of the GEM, "but on an occasion like this, business, naturally, fades into the background."

"Yaas, of course," assented Arthur Augustus unsuspiciously. "Pway allow me to intowduce my fwiends."

"This is a pleasure I have long looked forward to," said the editor of the GEM graciously.

Tom Merry & Co. were presented in turn.

"Perkins!" rapped out the tall gentleman.

"Yessir?"

"Place chairs for the young gentlemen!"

"Yessir. Certainly, sir! But—"

"Well, why don't you place the chairs, Perkins?"

The office youth wheeled a swivel-chair over, and followed it up with a couple of others. Then he paused. The visitors numbered seven, and the editorial sanctum did not boast that number of chairs.

"Please don't trouble, sir!" said Tom Merry.

"Not at all!" murmured Blake.

"Not a bit," said Arthur Augustus.

"These fellahs don't mind standin'."

And Arthur Augustus sat down.

"I can sit on Gussy's knees all right," remarked Monty Lowther.

"Bai Jove! You cannot do anythin' of THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 608.

the sort. Lowthah! I wefuse to have the knees of my twousahs wumpled!"

"My dear young friends, Perkins is equal to the occasion," said the editor of the GEM. "Perkins, raid some chairs at once! You will find two in Mr. MacDonald's room and two in the sub-editor's room. Run!"

Perkins disappeared.

He came back in a couple of minutes. Four chairs entered the editorial sanctum, with small glimpses of Perkins showing among them. Tom Merry & Co. were seated at last.

"If you please, sir—" gasped Perkins.

"Well, Perkins?"

"Which I saw the sub-editor just coming up with Mr. Frank Richards, sir, and if they don't find the chairs—"

"Well thought of, Perkins. In that case, you had better close the door."

"Yessir."

"And now, young gentlemen," said the editor, turning graciously to his visitors, "I need not say how delighted I am with this call. That goes without saying. But no doubt you had some special object in coming up to-day?"

"Yaas, wathah, sir!" said Arthur Augustus. "We have taken up the question of the circulation of the GEM."

"That is very kind of you."

"Yaas, wathah! We are goin' to buck it up no end, or perhaps I should say I am goin' to buck it up no end. These chaps are goin' to cawwy out my dwectiuns."

"I don't think!" murmured Blake.

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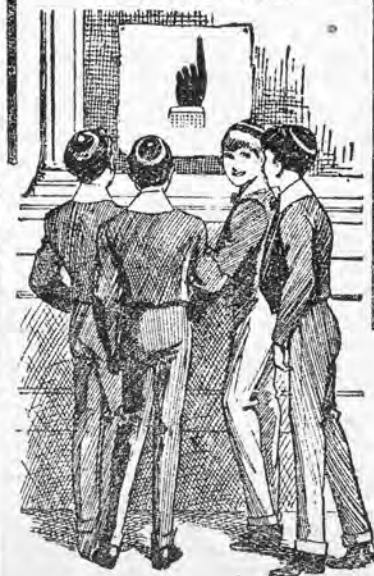
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"I have several bwilliant ideahs already in my mind," continued Arthur Augustus, fixing the editor with his eye-glass. "As a fellow of tact and judgment, you know, I wegard myself as capable of givin' vewy valuable assistance in this mattah."

"I have no doubt of it."

"As soon as we get a holiday we are goin' up in a Handley Page, and we are goin' to scattah GEMS all ovah the place."

"Excellent! But will you not find this rather expensive?"

"Not at all. You see, I am goin' to send the bill in to you!" explained Arthur Augustus.

"Oh!"

"Anothah ideah I have is to take motah-cah twips all ovah the country and distwibute copies of the GEM to ewevybody wight and left."

"Ah! You have a motor-car at your disposal?"

"Not exactly. I have bowwowed my patah's cah to-day; but as a wule he wants it himself. You are goin' to pwovide the motah-cahs!"

"Oh!"

"Anothah ideah is to advertise that I have buwied a copy of the GEM somewhere, with a fifty-pound note wolloed up in it. That will make ewevybody talk about the GEM, I think."

"Undoubtedly. And you have a fifty-pound note to spare?"

"Oh, no! You will supply the fifty-pound note."

"Oh!"

"And you will pay for the advertise-ments."

"Oh!"

"Anothah ideah is to distwibute cuckoo-clocks by the million. The cuckoo comes out, you know, and instead of sayin' 'Cuckoo!' he says 'Wead the GEM! Wathah stunnin' wath!'"

"Quite stunning. But the cost—"

"That's all wight! You will pay for them!"

"Oh!"

"The fact is, I am simply wollin' in good ideahs," said Arthur Augustus.

"Those will do to go on with, what?"

"Oh, quite!"

"But the most important thing is to buck up Martin Clifford. I have some vewy sewious things to say to Mr. Clifford. He is wathah a good w'ith—"

"He is generally considered a pretty good writer," assented the editor of the GEM.

"Yaas; but I am not wholly satisfied with him," said Arthur Augustus, shaking his head seriously.

"Mr. Clifford would be distressed to hear that."

"Yaas, I pwesume so. I do not want to distwess him, of course; but I feel bound to point out to him how he could turn out bettah stuff. I have often thought of w'itin' myself, if I had the time, you know."

"An excellent idea, if you had the time," assented the editor.

"There are some sewious faults in Mr. Clifford's work. F'winstance, he makes hardly any mention of clothes."

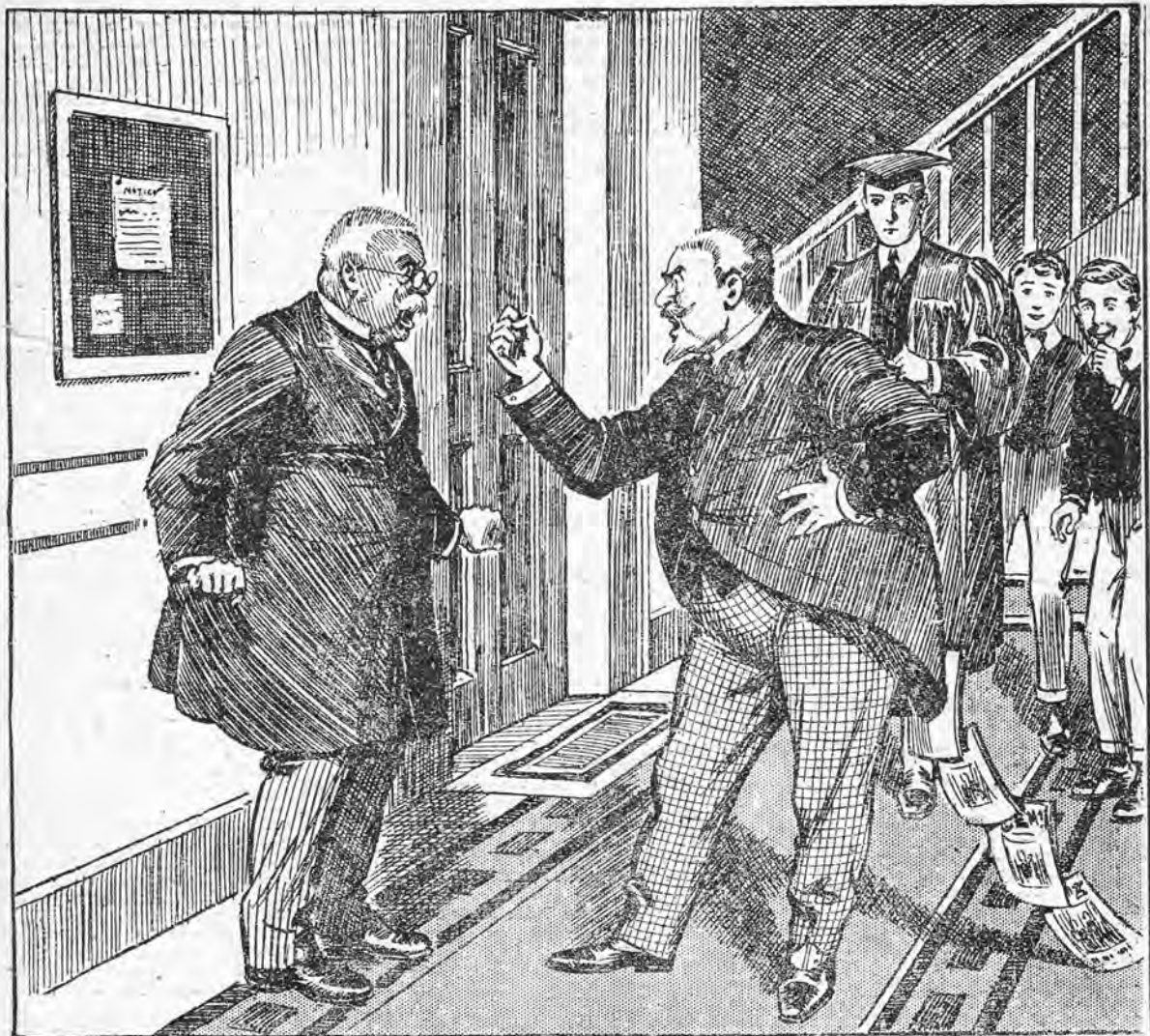
"Clothes!"

"Yaas. I am suah that a full desewiption of a fellow's clobbah, takin' up, say, a column, would be vewy populah. Then ties—"

"Ties?"

"Yaas, neckties, you know. There is a heap of vewy intowestwin' information to be given about neckties, and Mr. Clifford hardly touches on the subject. I wegard that as vewy sewious!"

"It had not occurred to me before."



Herr Schneider shook a fat fist at Monsieur Morry. "You speak to me like tat?" he ejaculated. "You call me names, nicht wahr? You are a pig-dog, mein Herr!" "Gentlemen!" exclaimed Mr. Raitton, hurrying to the scene. "You forget yourselves! Silence, please!" (See chapter 3.)

said the editor. "But now you mention it—"

"Yaas: I thought you would see it," said Arthur Augustus, with a nod. "Then there are twousahs."

"Trousers!"

"Yaas. My ideah is that in a stowv instuaction should be combined with entahtainment, and, so fah as I wemem-hah, Mr. Clifford nowhere gives his weaders tips about keepin' a good eweave in the twousahs. That sort of thing would make the GEM buck up no end!"

"I must telephone to Mr. Clifford exactly what you say—"

"Not at all. I am goin' to see him."

"Oh!"

"I simply wequal you to give me his address."

"Ahem!"

"I trust you will not wefuse."

"H'm! The—the fact is, Mr. Clifford is a very busy man, and—and—"

"Pway give me the address!"

"Ahem! Without Mr. Clifford's permission, I fear—"

Arthur Augustus rose.

"Pway stand at the door, Blake! Tom Mewwy, keep an eye on Perkins! My deah s'r, I shall be sowwy to use wuff measures—"

"Eh?"

"But I am bound to have Mr. Clifford's address. Pway do not put me to the unpleasant necessity of bumping you—"

"Wha-a-at!"

"I feah that unless you give me Mr. Martin Clifford's address, I shall have no wesome but to bump you—"

"Gussy!" murmured Blake.

"Pway do not intewrupt, Blake. I—"

BOZZZZZZZZ! The telephone-bell rang and interrupted Arthur Augustus.

"Will you excuse me a moment?" inquired the editor of the GEM gracefully.

"Certainly, my deah sir!"

The editor crossed to the telephone and took up the receiver.

"Hallo! Yes, Mr. Clifford? How do you do? I was going to ask you—"

Sending it along to-night? Right! By the way, I have some visitors here who want your address. Tell 'em to go and eat coke? My dear sir, I could not possibly tell them anything of the kind! Tell them to go and chop chips, then? I couldn't tell them that. Quite a nice little boy—"

"Bai Jove!" murmured Arthur Augustus.

"A very nice little boy. You will be

pleased to see him. You know him, you know. Master D'Arey. Send him along? Oh, all right! Good-bye!"

The editor turned from the telephone.

"Mr. Clifford will be glad to see you, Master D'Arey," he said. "Here is his address—on this card. I am sure he will be delighted to hear your criticism on his work—very! Now, may I offer you a cup of tea?"

Half an hour later, Tom Merry & Co. streamed out of the Fleetway House, and embarked in the big Rolls-Royce.

"Warrah a decent chap," said Arthur Augustus, as the car buzzed away. "I am vewy glad Mr. Clifford wang up just then, and we did not have to bump the editah. He seemed to show quite an intelligent intewest in my suggestions. Don't you think so?"

"Polling your leg!" remarked Hetties.

"Weally, Hewwies—"

"I dare say lots of silly asses drop in and wag their chins at him," observed Monty Lowther. "An editor gets used to that."

"Weally, Lowthah—"

"And when are you going to see Martin Clifford?" grinned Blake.

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"Next week, deah boys."
 "And you're going to give him tips how to write books?"

"Yaas, wathah."
 "Better take a cushion with you."
 "Bai Jove! Why should I take a cushion with me when I call on Martin Clifford?"

"To fall on, when he shows you out."
 "Wats!"

The juniors chuckled as the big car rushed on. The shades of night were falling fast as the chums arrived at St. Jim's—just in time for calling-over. Tom Merry & Co. rushed in in time to answer to their names—which was very fortunate, as Arthur Augustus remarked afterwards.

"I don't suppose Waiton would have undahstood how important it was for us to go to London, if we had been late," he observed. "He would probably not wowwy vewwy much about the circulation of the GEM."

And Tom Merry & Co. agreed that he probably wouldn't.

CHAPTER 7.

Not According to Programme.

"WHOS going to fly to-day?"
 Tom Merry asked that question on Saturday afternoon.

"Fly?" repeated Monty Lowther.
 "Fly?" said Manners.

"Exactly! They're giving flights at the Wayland Aerodrome," explained Tom Merry. "You simply have to pay ten-and-six, and they take you up in a Handley Page. Cheap at the price. No extra charge, you know, if you come down somebody's chimney."

"It's not very easy to go up—"
 "Easy as falling off a form."

"I tell you it's not easy—"
 "And I tell you it is!"

"Fathed! I mean about the ten-and-six!"

"Oh!" said Tom Merry thoughtfully. "Of course, there might be some difficulty about that item in the programme. Anybody got any money?"

He ran his hands through his pockets, and then through his curly hair. The total sum he was possessed of was eighteen-pence.

"I can put a bob to that!" said Monty Lowther.

"Count me in for six!" said Manners.
 "Eight-and-six!" said Tom Merry lugubrically. "Oh!"

"Perhaps they make a reduction for quantities?" suggested Monty Lowther. "If so, we can take a dozen chaps for eight-and-six—"

"Ass! This is what comes of wasting money on films!" said Tom Merry, with a stern look at Manners.

Manners grunted.

"Wasting money on new footers, you mean!" he answered. "And cinemas!" he added, severely, to Monty Lowther.

"Why haven't we been economical?" sighed Lowther. "I was going to turn over a new leaf. And if we'd turned over a new leaf, we could now turn over in a new Page! Ha, ha, ha!"

Monty Lowther had his laugh to himself. It was a serious moment, and his little joke was too feeble to lessen its gravity.

"Rotien!" said Tom Merry. "I'd really like a run up into the clouds this afternoon. Look at the beautiful weather. Besides, chaps ought to get used to it. Travelling will all be done by aircraft in the near future. In ten years' time people won't consent to crawl about in silly railway-trains and creeping motor-cars. We ought to go up, just to

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encourage the new business, you know."

"Let's tell 'em that's why we're going up, and perhaps they'll take the three for eight-and-six!" suggested Lowther.

"Ahem! It's cheap!" said Tom Merry. "We've got to go! The question is, how to raise the wind?"

"Might be a letter," said Manners hopefully. "Let's go and look."

"Perhaps!"

The Terrible Three went in search of a possible letter containing a possible remittance. But there were no letters and no remittances for the chums of the Shell. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy joined them as they were turning away from the rack.

"Just lookin' for you fellows!" he said cheerfully.

"In funds?" asked Lowther.

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Come to my heart, my dearest pal—"

"Wats! You fellows comin' along this aftahnoon?" asked Arthur Augustus.

"Blake and Hewwies and Dig are comin'. I'm standin' tweat!"

"Where?" asked Tom.

"Up in a Handley-Page."

"Beloved youth!" said Monty Lowther affectionately. "Doesn't Gussy always do the right thing at the right moment—sometimes? We were just talking about Handley-Pages, but the exchequer has failed us in the hour of need. There's a shortage of cash."

"That's all wight, deah boys. I'm goin' to pay!" said Arthur Augustus cheerily. "My tweat, you know! I asked my governah for a vewy special tip, for a run up with my friends, and he's interested in the air bizney, you know, though old Conway bein' in the Air Force. The petah has spwung a fivah for the occasion."

"I suppose you wouldn't swop your puter for my uncle?" asked Monty Lowther.

"Wats! Get your coats on and twot along."

"Hear, hear!"

"You see," said Arthur Augustus, "I have been up befoah in old Conway's machine, and I enjoyed it vewwy much. But this time I am combinin' business with pleasuah. I am going to distribute Copies of the GEM fwom the Handley-Page."

"Oh, my hat!"

"I have got no end of them," continued Arthur Augustus. "They have awived fwom Blankley's at last. It was vewwy queeah. It appeahs that aftah I telephoned for them, somebody else telephoned and cancelled the ordah. That is why they were not delivahed befoah. But they have come now, and we are takin' them with us."

"Are we?" said Tom Merry doubtfully.

"Yaas, wathah! I am goin' to scattah them awound, you know. Wathah a nobbay ideah, isn't it?" chuckled Arthur Augustus. "GEMS wainin' down like hailstones, you know!"

"They won't let you!" said Manners.

"Wats!"

Arthur Augustus had evidently made up his mind. As Gussy was the founder of the feast, however, the Terrible Three did not argue. They fetched their coats and caps, and joined Blake and Herries and Digby. Arthur Augustus led his flock out of the gates of St. Jim's, all of them in a very cheery mood. It was a bright, sunny afternoon, and certainly it could not be better spent than in a trip in an aeroplane.

Arthur Augustus had a huge bundle with him—which looked, from its size, as if it must have bucked up the circulation of the GEM for one week, at least. His

comrades wondered how he was going to carry it as far as Wayland Aerodrome. But Gussy didn't. Outside the gates a car was waiting.

"Jump in, deah boys!" said Gussy.

"Extravagant youth!" said Monty Lowther chidingly.

"You see, we could have walked to Wayland, but I have some hundweds of GEMS to cawwy," explained Arthur Augustus, "so I thought it bettah to 'phone for a cah. Woll in!"

The big car buzzed away to Wayland with the seven juniors packed in it. Arthur Augustus glanced at his watch.

"Bai Jove! We haven't any too much time!" he exclaimed. "Make her wip, Wobinson!"

"Yes, sir!" said the chauffeur.

The chauffeur came from Blankley's, and his name was not Robinson; but to Arthur Augustus all chauffeurs were "Wobinson." The car ran swiftly. Arthur Augustus nursed his bundle on his knees.

"How many GEMS have you got there?" inquired Lowther.

"Five hundwed, deah boy."

"Oh, Great Scott! And you're going to chuck them down on people's heads?"

"Not exactly on their nappahs, Lowthah. I am goin' to distribute them fwom the aeroplane, and let them dwop where they like. A chap is bound to become awah of the existence of the GEM if it lands on his hat fwom the sky, you know, and probably he will become a weadah."

"Especially if it catches him in the eye!"

"I twust it will not catch anybody in the eye. But, of course, accidents will happen."

The juniors grinned.

Arthur Augustus was quite satisfied with his remarkable scheme for advertising the great paper; but his chums were not so satisfied. They had an idea that the law might have something to say about such a method of advertising. Monty Lowther rose to the occasion. While Arthur Augustus looked out of the window Lowther unfastened the string where it was tied at the end of the parcel.

It was quite a simple operation, and it was likely to be effective. As soon as Gussy started carrying his big bundle again the five hundred GEMS were pretty certain to slip out at the open end of the bundle, and certainly the Handley-Page would not wait while Gussy gathered them up again. Monty Lowther regarded this as a thoughtful and friendly act. Fortunately, Arthur Augustus was not aware of it.

The car came buzzing up to the aerodrome. There was no time to lose; the huge Handley-Page, surrounded by an interested crowd, was getting ready for the trip.

"It's all wight—our places are booked," said Arthur Augustus. "Help me out with this parcel, deah boys. Wait heah for us, Wobinson."

"Yes, sir!"

"My hat! They look as if they're starting!" exclaimed Manners. "Run for it! The pilot's getting on!"

"Yaas, wathah! Wun like anythin'!"

The juniors ran.

There were several passengers aboard the Handley-Page, but the places booked by Arthur Augustus had been kept.

"Hurry up, or you'll be late!" came a shout.

"Oh, ewikey! It is weally not vewwy easy to huwvy up with this bundle— Oh, bai Jove!"

From the open end bundles of papers flew out of the parcel, and they were followed by a regular stream. The wrapping-paper collapsed in Arthur Augustus' grasp as its contents streamed out.

As he ran the swell of St. Jim's left a trail of GEMS behind him.

There was a howl of surprise and merriment from the crowd in the aerodrome.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, ewikey! Stop for me; deah boys

"Hurry up!"

"Pway help me collect up my papahs

"Come on, Gussy!" roared Blake.

"I cannot come on without my GEMS, Blake—"

"You'll be left behind—"

"Pway assist me—yawoooooh!"

Arthur Augustus was frantically collecting up scattered GEMS with both hands, when Blake grasped him by the arm and rushed him on. Tom Merry and George were on board already; and Arthur Augustus was rushed on by Blake, who declined to heed his excited expostulations.

"Blake, you ass! Welsease me! My GEMS—"

"Buck up!"

"But I am only goin' up to distribute the GEMS, you ass—" gasped Arthur Augustus.

"They're distributed already!" grinned Lowther.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I pwotest! I—"

"There you are!" gasped Blake. "Sit down!"

"Weally, Blake—"

"Keep your place there, sir!"

"Yaas, but—"

Three or four of the juniors held Arthur Augustus in his place. He looked as if he would jump out for his missing GEMS. There was a buzz and a roar, and a cheer from the crowd.

"We're off!"

"Hurrah!"

"Oh dear!" groaned Arthur Augustus. The Handley-Page was off.

With a rush and a roar, the juniors found themselves rising, and in a few minutes Wayland was a tiny picture beneath them.

"This is ripping!" exclaimed Tom Merry.

"Yes, rather!"

"Oh dear! I say, you know, this is watah wotten!" said Arthur Augustus. "I have not a single GEM with me—only the dashed 'wupin-papah! I wegard this as a sell. How evah did that bundle come open?"

"I wonder!" said Monty Lowther.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Tom Merry & Co. enjoyed their trip hugely; but Arthur Augustus remained in a very thoughtful mood. When the Handley-Page returned to the aerodrome, after a flight over the country, Arthur Augustus looked round for his lost GEMS. But they had all disappeared by that time. But the swell of St. Jim's found a reflection that comforted him, as the car buzzed them home to the school.

"Afah all, they are distributed!" he remarked. "Somebody will weed them. Next time I see the editah of the GEM I will inquah whether he has had a vewy large demand for the papah from Wayland. But it is weally a puzzle to me how that bundle came to be open at the end. I am suah I fastened it up vewy safely. It is weally a pwoblem."

And a problem it remained to Arthur Augustus.

CHAPTER 8.

A Personal Statement by Mr. Martin Clifford.

SINCE I first took up the pen to chronicle the adventures and exploits of my young friends, Tom Merry & Co., I have never had occasion to drop into the first person singular. But the occasion has arisen

now. Only in a personal statement can I deal with my rather remarkable interview with Master Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, the younger brother of one of my old school-fellows.

I had been rather hard at work that day, finishing a very special story for the "Holiday Annual," and had gone for a "blow" along the sea-front with Frank Richards, who was staying with me at the time. When we returned I was informed that a visitor had called, and was waiting for me in the library.

"Master D'Arcy, sir," said George.

George is the gentleman who is sometimes butler, sometimes chauffeur, and sometimes gardener. At the present moment he was butler.

I am sorry to say that my first remark was, "Oh, bother!"

Frank Richards had been spinning me yarns of his adventurous youth in the Far West as we walked by the sea, and my mind was so full of the subject that I wanted to get right on to the next instalment of my series in the "Boys' Friend." However, courtesy to a distinguished visitor came first.

"Never mind, old chap!" said Richards. "I'll do the yarn for you, if you like. It would be rather a special treat for your readers."

"My dear man," I answered, "you're very kind; but I cannot risk having any casualties among the readers of the 'Boys' Friend.' They are second in my affections, next to the readers of the GEM."

"Why, you ass—" began Richards warmly.

"You can go and talk to Hilda," I interrupted. "I must go and get rid of my visitor."

"Bai Jove! I assuah you you won't get wid of me vewy easily!" came a well-remembered voice. "I am goin' to talk to you vewy plainly, Mr. Clifford, and tell you some home twuths."

There he was, standing in the doorway of the library, and he had heard my rather unfortunate remark.

I blushed, and Frank Richards chuckled.

"My dear young friend—" I began.

"All sewene, Mr. Clifford," said D'Arcy. "It's all wight. How do you do, Mr. Richards? I am very pleased to make your acquaintance. I am goin' to give Mr. Clifford some tips about impwovin' the stowies, and if you would care to heah them, you are vewy welcome, so fah as I am concerned."

"Not at all," said Richards politely. "I won't rob Martin of these advantages. He needs improvement more than I do."

And Frank Richards went into the billiard-room, to play a hundred up with Hilda, while I disposed of my visitor. I accompanied Master D'Arcy into the library, where he accepted my invitation to be seated. I assumed my meekest expression. I saw I was in for it.

"I'm sorry to have kept you waiting," I said.

"Not at all," said D'Arcy politely. "I have been talkin' to Miss Richards. Besides, you did not know I was comin' this aftahnoon. I should have appwised you of my intention, of course. But I had a weason. The fact is, Mr. Clifford, I am goin' to call you oval the coals."

"Deal gently with me!" I murmured.

"I am sowwy it is impos, Mr. Clifford. As Shakespiah wemarks, I must be cwuel to be kind," replied D'Arcy firmly.

I sighed.

"Pway don't be discouraged, my deah sir," said D'Arcy. "I was afwaid you might be out if I appwised you of my intention of callin', and I was bound to see you, for your own good, you know, to say nothin' of the GEM. Are you

awah that the circulation of the GEM has dwopped?"

"I have learned as much from the editor," I replied. "The drop is not really alarming. Besides, the GEM still beats any other paper in the kingdom, except the 'Magnet.' And it beats the 'Magnet' in everything but circulation."

"Pwobably Mr. Richards would not agree to that!" grinned D'Arcy.

"Mr. Richards is a very clever man," I answered. "But he has his weaknesses. That is one of them."

"The pwof of the puddin' is in the eatin'!" said Arthur Augustus sagely. "The GEM circulation has got to buck up, Mr. Clifford. I have been thinkin' the mattah out vewy carefully, and have already seen the editah on the subject. He is watah an intelligent chap—he agrees with all my ideahs."

"Than which there could be no greater proof of his intelligence," I suggested.

"Exactly. Now, why has the circulation dwopped?"

I reflected.

"For one of two reasons," I said. "Either because it has not risen, or because it has not remained at the former level."

"This is not a jokin' mattah, Mr. Clifford," said D'Arcy severely. "The GEM chronicles the doin's at my school, and I wegard that as an important mattah. It is not ewery fellow who is willin' to be put into a book. Of course, it gives a fellow a wight to exahcise some supervision, and see that the books are witten in the pwopah way. I have often thought that I could w'ite, if I had time."

"Is it only the time that is lackin'?" I inquired.

"Yaas. We are kept watah busay at school, you know, what with ewicket, and football, and things; and then there are lessons. Then clobber takes up a good deal of a fellow's time. Some of the chaps in the Fourth are fwightfully careless in their dress, and it falls to me to keep up appeawances for the Form, as it were. You see?"

"I see!" I assented.

"Howevah, I am goin' to put in some time on this affah; I am devotin' the pwesent half-holiday to it. Now, how do you w'ite your stowies, Mr. Clifford?"

"On a typewriter," I answered meekly.

"I was not referrin' to the instwument. I mean, how do you manage about the plots?"

"The plots!" I said thoughtfully. "So far as plots are concerned, George is a great help."

"George?" repeated D'Arcy. "May I inquah who George is?"

"George, Master D'Arcy, is the gentleman who admitted you. He was, at that moment, my butler. This morning he was my chauffeur. At the present moment, he is my gardener, as I can tell by the sound of breaking flower-pots that floats in at the window. It is in his capacity as gardener that George furnishes me with plots."

"Bai Jove! That is weally vewy we-markable, Mr. Clifford. I do not see any connection between gardenin' and plots."

"The connection is very close, never-theless. George has divided the whole garden into plots—"

"Eh?"

"It is a large garden, and the number of plots is very extensive."

"Weally, Mr. Clifford, you are jokin' again. I was not wefferin' to garden plots, of course. I suppose you constwuct your stowies somehow?"

"Certainly."
 "How do you begin?"
 "Frequently at the beginning. This is quite a common custom with authors."
 "If you are pullin' my leg, Mr. Clifford, I can only remark that you are wastin' valuable time. I did not come heah to waste time," said D'Arcy sternly.
 "Then I have been labourin' under a misapprehension," I confessed.
 "You would not mind if I gave you some advice?" asked D'Arcy. "Pew-waps it would be a good ideah for me to sit at your typewritah, and dash off somethin'. It is said that example is bettah than pwecept."
 "I should be very pleased to see you dash off—"
 "Eh?"
 "I—I mean, come with me, and see my den."
 "Yaas, wathah."
 I opened the door leading into my den, and Arthur Augustus D'Arcy stepped in. He was pleased to glance round the room with an approving eye.
 "Wathah a nice quartah for workin', I should think," he remarked. "Lookin' on the sea—very nice. Wathah wippin' to see the watah tumblin' while you are at work. May I glance at the books?"
 "Pray do."
 Arthur Augustus walked round the bookshelves. Books are my little weakness, and perhaps I have a rather large number of them stacked round my den. The elegant junior read the titles of some of them with approval.
 "Homeri Ilias!" he remarked. "Are you fond of Homer, Mr. Clifford?"
 "After working on the GEM, I turn to Homer for light relaxation," I replied.
 "My ideal of happiness is to lie on the sands, with a volume of Homer and a banana. I eat the one and read the other. The one I eat is, of course, the banana."
 "Bai Jove! And heah is Omar Khayyam in the original. Do you wead Persian, Mr. Clifford?"

"It is Greek to me," I answered.
 "Weally, Mr. Clifford, you seem to be very humowous, this aftahnoon. Is this your typewritah?"
 "That is it. Pray sit down."
 Arthur Augustus sat down before the typewriter.
 "You have used a typewriter before?" I ventured.
 I felt a little uneasy, remembering a visit from a lady musician who attempted to play scales on the keys.
 "Oh, that's all wight! I know all about machinewy," answered D'Arcy reassuringly. "I have not exactly used a typewritah, but I have mended a bike, you know, and been up in a Handley-Page."
 "The construction of a typewriter," I said, "differs in some important respects from that of a Handley-Page. As you see, there are no planes, and the propeller—"
 "Pway do not be so humowous, Mr. Clifford. You should put that into the GEM."
 "I will!" I said.
 "I suppose you work it like this?" said D'Arcy. "Does it mattah if two of the keys catch togethah?"
 "Oh dear!"
 "Don't alarm yourself, Mr. Clifford. They have come apart again. Somethin' seems to have broken off one of them. Does it mattah?"
 "Not at all," I said, with deep sarcasm. "It will not take me more than half an hour to put it on again."
 "That's all wight, then; I'm glad it's not sewions. Now, you must not think me cheeky, Mr. Clifford, but I weally feel that I could give you some valuable tips. I am goin' to dash off a first chaptah in a bwright, snappay style, you know."
 "So that I can see how it ought to be done?"
 "Yaas."
 "That is very kind of you, Master D'Arcy."

D'Arcy sat at the machine and reflected. I stepped to the window, and signalled to George in the garden. George came up to the window.
 "Yessir!" said George.
 "Hush!" I murmured. "George, what speed did you tell me you could put into the car?"
 George's eyes sparkled.
 "Fifty miles, sir!" he breathed.
 "Without casualties?"
 "Accidents will happen," said George philosophically. "When I was driving for Captain Filbert, sir, I practically never killed anybody. And you couldn't see us pass!"
 "George—hush!—get the car ready."
 "What-ho, sir!"
 "Break the record as soon as—"
 "You bet, sir!"
 "Break nothing else, if you can help it."
 "I'll do my best, sir. I've never really showed you what that car can do, Mr. Clifford, sir," said George eagerly. "When I was driving Captain Filbert—"
 "Exactly. Hush!"
 I turned back from the window. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy had not started work yet. He was gazing at the typewriter keys with a fixed, abstracted gaze. I watched him for some time.
 "How is it going?" I ventured, at last.
 "It is vewy odd!" said Arthur Augustus, looking round. "My brain is simply full of splendid ideahs, but, somehow or othah, I do not seem to get started. It is possible that there is more in 'witin' stowies than I supposed."
 "Barely possible," I assented.
 "On second thoughts, Mr. Clifford, I will not dash off a chaptah at the present moment. I shall have to leave you in a few houahs to get back in time for callin'-ovah. I must not lose a moment. I have a list in my pocket of points for you to wemembah in doin' futuah GEMS."
 "Is it a long list?"
 "It will not take me more than a couple of houahs to wead it out, explainin' the points as I go along. I shall requiah your most pwofound attention."
 Arthur Augustus felt in his pocket.
 In the distance, I heard the whir-whir that showed that George was ready.
 "One moment," I said. "I must speak to George."
 "Pway buck up, then, Mr. Clifford!"
 I stepped from the window. I disappeared round the corner of the house. I stepped into the car. George was at the wheel, and George's nephew was holding the gate open.
 "George," I said, "go it! Let the British public off as lightly as you can, but go it!"
 "Wot-ho, sir!" said George. And he went it.

Precisely how Master D'Arcy's visit terminated I cannot say. I heard from Frank Richards afterwards that he left in a state of great perplexity, mingled with wrath, after three hours and a half. His reflections during that period I cannot place on record.

CHAPTER 9.

Something like a Stunt!

"I HAVE another ideah, deah boys!" Monty Lowther raised his eyebrows.
 "Draw it mild!" he murmured. "You've had one idea already this term."

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"Weally, Lowthah—"

"Still on the same stunt?" grinned Blake.

"I am stickin' to it, deah boys, till the GEM has the biggest circulation in the kingdom. I wegard that as bein' up to me. My pwesent ideah is sandwich-boards."

"Sandwich-boards!"

"My hat!"

"Yaas, wathah! We can bowwow some sandwich-boards in Wayland."

"Can we?" grinned Digby.

"Yaas, and paste copies of the GEM on them—the covahs, you know. Then we pawade through Wayland—"

"Wha-a-at?"

"All in a wow," said Arthur Augustus, with enthusiasm. "Now, ordinawy sandwich-men do not attwact vewy much attention. But we shall be wathah remarkable, you know. We shall dwess in our best Etons, and wear our Sunday top-pahs—"

"Look here, ass—"

"I wefuse to be called an ass, Blake. I have thought out the scheme, and I wequiah the assistance of you fellows in cawwyin' it out. In fact, I have already ordinahed the sandwich-boards."

"Fathead!"

"There are seven of them—fourteen in all, as we shall be cawwyin' them back and fwoat," explained Arthur Augustus. "Blankley's are supplyin' them. They are goin' to paste the covahs of last week's GEM on the boards for me. I have given them full instructions."

"You've given the order?" yelled Tom Merry.

"Yaas, wathah! The sandwich-boards will be weady on Saturday aftahnoon, and we are goin' to put them on at Blankley's, and start pawadin' down the High Street at Wayland!"

Tom Merry & Co. gazed at the swell of St. Jim's. They sympathised with his object; it was really a very worthy one. But it was possible for enthusiasm, even in a good cause, to be carried too far. There was a limit, and the opinion of Tom Merry & Co. was that Arthur Augustus had reached it.

"Now, look here, you champion ass—" began Tom Merry patiently.

"Wats! I wefuse to let you off," said Arthur Augustus. "You have agreed to back me up in buckin' up the GEM circulation."

"Yes; but—"

"There are no buts in the mattah, Tom Merwew. Success is the only thing to be considered. I wequiah you to come with me, and pawade Wayland on Satahday aftahnoon, with GEM sandwich-boards."

"But—" roared Blake.

"Wats!"

And Arthur Augustus D'Arcy walked away, to put an end to discussion. It was evident that his noble mind was made up.

Tom Merry & Co. looked at one another.

"Of all the chumps—" began Herries.

"Give Gussy his head!" said Monty Lowther, with a chuckle. "Let him lead off with his merry sandwich-boards. It's up to Gussy to take the lead; but we can please ourselves about following."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy had probably expected some further argument on the subject of his striking advertising scheme. But there was no further argument. Tom Merry & Co. seemed to have submitted to their fate. On Saturday afternoon the company appeared clad in their very best Etons and toppers, and Arthur Augustus surveyed them with some satis-

faction. The swell of St. Jim's himself was a thing of beauty and a joy for ever.

"You fellows look quite wespectable," he said. "Even Hewwies is almost tidy."

"Why, you ass—" began Herries.

"Howevah, you all look unusually wespectable. This sandwich-board pawade will attwact no end of attention."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I see nothin' to laugh at in that remark. Pway come on."

And they started.

The juniors seemed in a merry humour as they walked to Wayland. Arthur Augustus was a little surprised, but very pleased, by the obedience of his followers. Evidently they felt that they could not do better than follow the lead of a fellow of tact and judgment.

The party arrived at Blankley's.

At a door of that emporium, opening on a quiet side street, the sandwich boards were ready, and they were handed over by a grinning individual. The juniors lifted them into the street, and set them up against the wall there.

"Get them on, deah boys—"

"You first, old scout," said Monty Lowther. "We want you to show us how it is done, you know."

"Yaas, that is vewy twae. Lend me a hand."

The Co. lent a hand, and Arthur Augustus was soon fixed inside his sandwich-boards. They covered him from his chin to his ankles—Gussy not being quite full-size for a sandwich-man. The rear board seemed to give a little trouble to adjust, and Tom Merry & Co. took quite a long time in adjusting it comfortably. Arthur Augustus did not guess that they took so much time in order to allow Monty Lowther to carry out a little private scheme of his own.

While the other fellows were busy adjusting the board, Lowther extracted a small tin of paint and a brush from his pockets. Over the GEM cover that was pasted on the big board, Lowther deftly painted, in huge letters:

PLEASE THROW SOMETHING!

Then the paint and the brush disappeared.

"All right, now," said Tom Merry cheerily. "Does it feel quite comfy, Gussy?"

"Yaas, that seems all wight. Buck up and get into your boards, you fellows, and let's get out into the High Street."

"Ahem!"

Tom Merry & Co. donned their boards, and Arthur Augustus surveyed them and nodded with satisfaction. Then he led the way.

"Follow me, deah boys."

"Lead on, Gussy!"

"Yaas, wathah!"

Arthur Augustus strode on, and the juniors followed him—as far as the corner of the street. Arthur Augustus marched boldly on into the High Street, his shining silk hat and his celebrated monocle gleaming above the board in front.

But his devoted chums did not round the corner. Having seen Arthur Augustus started in full career down the crowded High Street, they backed away, and slipped off the sandwich-boards.

"May as well take these things back, as we're done with them," remarked Monty Lowther.

"Ha, ha! Yes, rather!"

The boards were piled in the side-entrance of Blankley's. Meanwhile, Arthur Augustus marched gallantly on down the High Street, his chin well up; in the full belief that his faithful followers were marching in single file behind him.

The good town of Wayland had cer-

tainly never seen a sandwich-man like the Honourable Arthur Augustus D'Arcy before. Certainly he attracted plenty of attention. But it was the rear board that attracted most attention—especially from the juveniles in the crowd.

There was a roar of laughter as Lowther's inscription was read, and Arthur Augustus smiled with satisfaction as he heard it. He did not know the cause of the merriment.

"Bai Jove! There's no doubt that we are attwactin' attention," he murmured. "The people seem to think it is wathah funnay! Howevah, they can think what they like, so long as they wead the boards."

Crash!

A heavy stone clinked on the board behind, and it gave Arthur Augustus quite a nasty jar. He spun round.

"Yawwooop!"

"If that is one of your sillay twicks, Lowthah—bai Jove!"

Arthur Augustus blinked.

His followers were nowhere to be seen. Tom Merry & Co. had vanished, and the swell of St. Jim's was alone in his glory.

"Bai Jove! Where are you? The uthah asses, they have taken the w'ong turnin', I suppose—yawwoooooch!"

A cheap egg caught Arthur Augustus's hat.

He made a clutch at the silk topper, and just saved it. He also saved a considerable quantity of the egg.

"Oh, ewumbs! What—what—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Give 'im wat he's askin' for!"

"Throw something."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You young wascals!" roared Arthur Augustus, in great wrath. "What are you peltin' me for?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You've asked for it, cocky."

Crash! Smash! Splash! Squash!

"Oh, ewikey! You feahful little wascals, I have not asked for anythin' of the kind! I shall thrwash you all wound—yawwoooooop!"

There was a shortage of some things in Wayland, but there seemed to be no shortage of missiles. Clods and cabbage-stumps, ancient potatoes, and over-ripe eggs, fairly rained upon the amateur sandwich-man.

Arthur Augustus made a furious rush at his tormentors, and tripped over the board in front, and fell with a terrific crash. There was a shriek of merriment.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Give him beans."

"Yawwooch! Help! Wesene!"

But there was no rescue for the unhappy sandwich-man. He struggled to his feet amid a shower of missiles. It was impossible to face the fire, and Arthur Augustus fled. With clattering boards, he sped away down the middle of the street, with a yelling mob in pursuit. The boards were a little too cumbersome for flight, and Arthur Augustus tore them off and abandoned them. Then he ran for his life, leaving a score of triumphant ragamuffins dancing on the sandwich-boards.

Arthur Augustus limped into the School House, amid yells of laughter. And for some days afterwards, the swell of St. Jim's was not heard to refer to the circulation of the GEM. For the present, at least, Arthur Augustus had had enough!

THE END.

(Next Wednesday—"TALBOT'S GIRL CHUM!" by Martin Clifford. Order your copy of the GEM LIBRARY well in advance.)

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 608.

The Opening Chapters of our Great New Adventure Serial Story.



CHAPTER 1.

Captain Kidd.

"TWO million sterling, in bar gold and money!"

"Plus the Dragon's Eye!"

"And what may that be worth?"

"Another fifty thousand pounds at least!"

"Pon my soul, lad, we're with you! What say you, Stella?"

The beautiful girl of fifteen, whom Captain Morgan Kidd, owner and skipper of the auxiliary schooner Foam, had introduced to Dick Danby, the third of the trio, as his daughter and first-mate, laughed merrily.

"As I have only a vague impression that Mr. Danby has found a treasure valued at two million pounds, and something that he calls the Dragon's Eye, which he wants you to help him recover, I'm not exactly in a position to say," she replied.

Captain Kidd brought his fist down on the table with a force that made everything in the little cabin dance again.

"The girl is right—"

"Perhaps you'd better let Mr. Danby tell me, dad; I'll get the yarn first-hand then," interposed Stella.

"Right again, my girl. Fire and brimstone, what a wife you'd have made for my ancestor, the great Captain Kidd, or my namesake, Sir Harry Morgan!" cried the skipper of the Foam.

Captain Morgan Kidd was of medium build, fresh of face, red of hair, and with a pair of blue eyes which, though they could smile, and often did, could flash with the cold glitter of a Toledo blade.

At such times his face would harden, his red beard bristle, until he became the living likeness of the old-time pirate from whom he boasted his descent.

The girl's merry laughter made music in the neat little cabin, as she nodded encouragingly to the stalwart youngster of sixteen whom her father had brought on board the schooner, then moored alongside the wooden wharf of a small Fijian seaport.

"Perhaps, if it won't bore you, I had better start at the beginning," said Dick.

"I come of a good seafaring stock, like yourselves, but my mother died when I was only a kid, and my father went down with his ship, which was torpedoed off the Shetlands in 1915."

Dick Danby coughed huskily, for he had dearly loved his sailor father.

Captain Kidd muttered fiercely, whilst Stella glanced sympathetically at the speaker.

"I was then a ship's boy on the Pathan; for the purser, an old friend of my father's, had promised to look after me. And well he kept his promise, for when the Pathan left Hong Kong for Sydney with a mixed cargo, and two million pounds in her strong-room, I was rated as purser's mate."

Stella Kidd looked quickly up.

She was already favourably impressed by the boy's frank, open countenance, and the fact that he had been deemed worthy a position of trust at so young an age, strengthened her good opinion of him.

"Just before the Pathan sailed," continued Dick, "a man entered the purser's cabin with a sandal-wood box, which he opened, disclosing the finest diamond I have ever seen. It was uncut, but shone with a strange brilliancy, and was about the size of a pigeon's egg."

"The purser whistled when he saw it, and after the man had gone, leaving the box to be deposited in the ship's strong-room, he told me that he believed it to be the Dragon's Eye, a famous stone which had been stolen from a temple in the interior of China some three years before, and—"

Dick Danby ceased speaking, and, to the astonishment of his companions, rushed on deck.

A few minutes later he had returned.

"I thought I saw a Chin's face peering through that open port; but there was no boat against the side, so perhaps I was mistaken," he explained.

"Wasn't there anyone on deck?" demanded Captain Kidd.

"Only a Kanaka, and he was curled up asleep in the shade of the cookhouse," replied Dick.

"Cutlasses and dirks, I'll teach him to sleep on watch! I'll flay every bit of skin off his back! I'll— It's Aola, the Samoan, and he's been kept awake two nights with a hollow tooth, poor beggar! A sleep won't do him any harm! Carry on, lad," he added. And Dick, who had already taken the worthy skipper's measure, and knew that, despite his harsh words, and the piratical blood which he tried in vain to live up to, he

was, in reality, one of the kindest-hearted men on earth, continued:

"We hadn't many passengers on board, but a full cargo, and, as I have said, a more than usually full strong-room. As Hun submarines were known to be about, the port admiral ordered us to steer north of the Philippines, and to sail west until we had passed the Carolines, then to head due south for Sydney. How the Huns came to hear of our change of route, I don't know; but they did, for they got us about ten miles north of the Equator—"

Again Dick Danby's narrative was interrupted.

This time it was by Captain Kidd, who sprang to his feet with a howl of anguish.

"Scuttle that cat, it's clawed off half my leg! Catch it, Stella! I'll wring it's neck! I'll flay it alive! I'll tear it limb from limb!" he roared, until, some what to Dick's surprise, Stella caught the offending animal and delivered it up to her father, who, sinking back in his chair, stroked the purring animal until it settled to sleep in his arms.

"It's a miracle how the old Pathan kept afloat, for she had a hole in her sides big enough to drive a tank through," continued Dick, when quiet had once more been restored. "But her bulkheads held, and, evading the submarine in the darkness, her skipper sent her along as fast as he dare, intending to beach her on the Island of Ronaka, some fifty miles away."

"He'd have done it, too, but towards morning a cyclone drove her off her course. It was just getting light when she struck a rock, and broke in halves. That was the last I saw of her, for I was swept away by a wave, and the last thing about the wreck I remember was clambering up a sloping beach, and falling unconscious just above high-water mark."

"When I came to myself, I was a prisoner in the hands of as nasty a looking lot of islanders as it has ever been my lot to meet, and, so far as I could make out, the only survivor of the Pathan's crew or passengers."

"That's right, lad, she was reported missing with all hands. It was thought she had gone down in the cyclone. No one ever supposed a Hun U-boat would be so far out of the beaten track," commented the skipper.

"I will tell you of my adventures whilst a prisoner on the island another

time, if you care to hear them, but it's enough for the present if I explain that, after several months, I managed to escape on a catamaran, and, after passing from island to island, was at last taken off by a trading boat, and here I am."

CHAPTER 2.

The Eavesdroppers.

AS Dick Danby ceased speaking, Stella Kidd looked thoughtfully at him for a few moments.

"Why did you approach my father in this matter?" she asked bluntly. "Young Harry Fielding introduced him to me on the veranda of Kerrick's Hotel," interposed the Skipper. "He was getting nicely under way with his yarn when I saw that German dog, who calls himself a Dutchman, Otto Schwab, drinking in every word; so I brought him here, where we would be safe from eavesdroppers."

Stella Kidd looked surprised. "You know Harry, then?" she asked Dick.

"It was his father's schooner that picked me up. He and his cousin, J. A. Maddox, were on board, and we got quite chummy," explained the young sailor.

Stella nodded comprehendingly. "Harry Fielding is all right, so is Joe Maddox. They are both good boys," she remarked. "I suppose you have told them about the treasure?"

"Yes. The fact is, I rather hoped Mr. Fielding senior would have interested himself in the business; but when we reached Fiji he had gone to Melbourne on business. As the Pathan is lying in shallow water, there is no telling when she may be found, so I decided to ask your help," replied Dick.

Father and daughter exchanged glances.

After a few minutes' thoughtful silence, Stella nodded her head.

Captain Kidd rose to his feet and held out his hand.

"Right, my lad! Put it there!" he cried heartily. "We'll help you get the gold, and divide up fair and square afterwards."

"Agreed!" cried Dick Danby.

And thus the bargain was struck which was fated to lead them into so many strange adventures and hairbreadth escapes.

Striding to a cupboard, Captain Kidd drew out a large chart of the Pacific, which he spread on a table beneath the skylight.

"Here's Ronako," he said, laying his finger on a tiny spot an eight of an inch above the dark line that marked the Equator. "Where do you reckon your island is?"

"It must be one of these atolls," replied Dick, pointing to a number of dots marked as a reef on the chart some fifty miles north-west of the larger island. "Here is a map of the island I have made from memory, and a rough plan I scratched on the inside of a piece of coconut-shell."

As he spoke, Dick Danby spread out a sheet of foolscap paper, saying:

"Here's the rock on which the Pathan struck. When I left her her forepart had slid into the water, but her stern, in which is the strong-room, was still showing above the waves, and— Hang the paper!" he added, as the map curled up at one edge.

With a light laugh, Stella Kidd reached a silver-framed mirror from the wall by her side, and, smoothing out the rebellious curl in the paper, laid it, face upwards, on one edge.

(Continued on page 16.)

The Editor's Chat.

The Companion Papers are:

THE MAGNET. Every Friday. THE BOYS' FRIEND. Every Monday. THE GEM. Every Wednesday. THE PE'NY POPULAR. Every Friday. CHUCKLES. Every Friday.

YOUR EDITOR IS ALWAYS GLAD TO HEAR FROM HIS READERS.

A SHORT STORY.

George Growler was a very miserable boy; he always had something to grumble about. If there was not any real trouble about, he always managed to make some. In short, he was Growler by name and Growler by nature.

Well, ever since 1915 George Growler has been grumbling because the "Greyfriars Herald" stopped coming out. He wrote to me and grumbled about it, and he grumbled to every boy and girl he met.

That will just show you what an unreasonable young fellow he was. As though I wanted to stop the "Greyfriars Herald"!

Most of the Companion Paper readers realised that the "G. H." had to stop because of the war. There was a shortage of paper, and I simply could not go on with the "Herald." I realised, and most of my readers realised, that it could not be helped. We blamed the Huns for it, and decided to keep smiling, and make the best of a bad job.

Not so, George Growler! Oh, no! He wrote to me very angrily, and said that he couldn't see the point at all.

"Just because we're fighting Germany I don't see why the 'Greyfriars Herald' shouldn't come out!" he wrote.

And that was after I had explained all about the shortage of paper!

Anyhow, I couldn't get George Growler to be reasonable about the business. He kept on writing and grumbling, until I got too tired to take any notice of him. Then, at last, he said he wouldn't read any of the Companion Papers again.

Of course, I was sorry he felt so upset about it all, but I couldn't see what I could do to make him feel any happier, so I let the matter drop.

Well, he still went about grumbling because the "Greyfriars Herald" had stopped appearing, and he grumbled and grumbled month in and month out.

Now, this is where the funny part of the story comes in. The other day he met a loyal reader named Charlie Cheerful.

"Hallo, George!" cried Charlie. "Have you seen this week's 'Gem'?"

"No, I haven't!" snapped George Growler. "I don't want to, either! The 'Greyfriars Herald' was stopped through no reason at all, and I haven't seen the other papers since. The 'Greyfriars Herald' was the best paper going!"

"But if you haven't seen this week's 'Gem'—" began Charlie Cheerful, when George interrupted him again. He had started grumbling once more, and he meant to go on grumbling.

"If they were to start bringing out the 'Greyfriars Herald' again—"

"But—"

"It's no good to keep on telling me about the 'Gem' and all the other papers—"

"Listen to me a minute—"

"I don't want to hear anything about them, so it's no use to keep saying, 'Look here!'"

"I want to tell you something—"

"About the 'Gem' or 'Magnet,' I suppose, and I don't want—"

"Oh, dear! If you'd only shut up for a jiffy, and give me a chance to say something, perhaps you wouldn't want to keep on grumbling so much!"

"Well, you only want to tell me something about Tom Merry or a new serial or something—"

"No, I don't, you silly young chump!" shouted Charlie Cheerful, almost out of patience. "I was going to tell you about the 'Herald'!"

"Going to tell me it stopped because of the shortage of paper, I suppose!" grunted George Growler.

"No!" yelled Charlie at the top of his voice. "It's coming out again on October 20th!"

He had to gasp for breath after shouting so loudly, and he glared triumphantly at George.

At first that young fellow looked decidedly unbelieving, then he seemed to be considering Charlie's startling news.

"I believe you're only kidding me!" he said at last. "Who told you it was coming out again on October 20th? And how do you know it's true?"

"This is how I know!" cried Charlie Cheerful. And he dived quickly to his pocket, and drew forth a copy of the previous week's 'Gem', containing all the news about the reappearance of the "G. H." "Look at that!" he exclaimed excitedly. "October 20th! Going to be better than ever it was before!"

George hastily looked at the Editor's Chat, and gradually his face lost its miserable expression, and he began to smile.

"See, they are going to give Tuck Hampers away again!" cried Charlie. "I'm not going to miss that. I've ordered my copy of No. 1 already. You'd better go and order yours straight away, or you might be too late!"

But George did not hear the last remark; he was devouring the news about all the good things that are going to appear in the new "G. H." Then he started doing a step-dance on the pavement, and the people passing by wondered what was wrong with him.

Charlie stood roaring with laughter.

"That's not the only thing!" he exclaimed, clutching George's arm. "The great 'Holiday Annual' is going to be on sale on October 15th. It's going to be a big, thick book, full of all sorts of jolly fine things—coloured plates, long school stories, hundreds of pictures, tricks, puzzles, articles, and a grand play, a picture-gallery, lots of other stories, contributions from Harry Wharton & Co., and Tom Merry & Co., and all the rest of the famous boys of the schools!"

He finished up breathless, while George stared in amazement. He had missed all this good news because he left off reading the Companion Papers.

"My mother's ordered a copy of the 'Annual' for me," went on Charlie. "It's going to cost 5s., but mother says it's worth much more than that, and she certainly wouldn't let me miss it. So I'm all right!"

Then he, too, started dancing about on the pavement.

"What a treat—eh?" cried George Growler; and he wasn't grumbling now. He was laughing all over his face.

"You'd better hurry home and tell your mother all about it!" said Charlie eagerly. "You can borrow my copy of the 'Gem' that tells you all about it, and show it to her."

"Yes, rather!" cried George. "On the way I shall order No. 1 of the 'Greyfriars Herald'."

"That's the idea!" laughed Charlie. "Your mother will order the 'Annual' for you when you've told her all about it!"

"What ho! Good-bye, old son! Thanks for telling me all the news!"

"So-long, George!" cried Charlie.

And the two boys went on their ways as happy as could be; and George hasn't been heard to grumble since.

NOTICES.

Correspondence, etc., Wanted.

Miss Trixie Clark, Iona, 23, Moorhouse Street, East Camberwell, Victoria, Australia—with girl readers anywhere, 10-12.

Miss Gladys Dove, Chandos Lodge, Ellenborough Park, Weston-super-Mare—with readers anywhere.

F. Holland, 65, Cheadle Street, Higher Openshaw, Manchester, wants members all over the world for new Correspondence Club; magazine issued.

S. R. Broughton, 47, Cammell Road, Firth Park, Sheffield—with readers in the South Sea Islands and in British Columbia.

F. Brown, 80, New Town, Ashford, Kent, has for sale No. 3 Meccano, in good condition. Cost price 21s. 6d.

THE TREASURE SEEKERS.

(Continued from page 15.)

Captain Kidd grunted in a dissatisfied manner.

"Seems to me that if she is out of the water, as you say, the islanders will have stripped her as clean as a clamshell by this time," he remarked.

"They'd never get into the strong-room if they worked at it with their primitive tools for a thousand years!" declared Dick confidently.

As he spoke he glanced at Stella, and was struck by the strange expression on her face.

Stretching out a hand that trembled as though with excitement, she picked up a pencil, and seemed to be scribbling aimlessly on the edge of the map.

But as Dick watched the swiftly-moving point, whilst answering a question put to him by her father, he saw her form the words:

"Don't move, but look into the mirror."

Wonderingly Dick obeyed, and, with difficulty, repressed a start of dismay when he saw the faces of the two men, who were watching them through the open skylight, reflected in the shining surface.

It needed all Dick Danby's self-control to keep himself from looking up, and to talk to the skipper as though he had seen nothing.

Saying he scarcely knew what, Dick took the pencil from Stella's hand. So clumsy was he that he let it fall on the floor at the foot of the tiny companion-way.

Leaving the table as though to pick up the pencil, he dashed up the stairs, and was on deck before those above realised the meaning of his manoeuvre.

Springing hastily to their feet, the two men confronted him.

One he recognised as the supposed Dutchman, Otto Schwab; the other was a tall, thin, wiry individual, with the swarthy skin of a half-breed, and the most revoltingly ferocious face Dick had ever seen.

Otto Schwab glowered furiously at the indignant young Britisher, whilst his companion's hand moved instinctively to a knife concealed in the waistband of his trousers.

But Schwab shot a warning glance at him, as, with an oily smile, he said:

"Is Captain Kidd on board, my boy?"

"Why ask when you know he is?" retorted Dick contemptuously.

Otto Schwab flushed angrily.

"Keep a civil tongue in your head,

boy! In my country we teach—" he began, when Dick interrupted him.

"I don't care what you do in Germany! It's what we do in the British Empire that counts nowadays!"

Otto Schwab went as white as a sheet with fury, but ere he could repudiate the nationality thrust upon him, Captain Kidd burst from the cabin.

"Hallo! What is all this?" began the skipper.

Then his eyes fell upon the Malay half-breed.

With a roar like an enraged bull, he flew at him.

Terror-stricken, the other turned to flee.

It was a Heaven-sent opportunity, and the irate skipper took advantage of it.

Lifting his right foot, he raised the fleeing man well clear of the schooner's low freeboard, and sent him sprawling on to the wharf beyond, with a kick which would have gained him rounds of applause on the football-field.

"Hail and lightning, you yellow-skinned skunk, with a figure-head that'd frighten a stone idol, didn't I tell you I'd wring your scraggy neck if I caught you within a hundred yards of the Foam again?" he roared.

"Fig! Mad Englishman! This only adds to the score I owe you! And Sulah Mendoza always pays his debts!" shrieked the Malay, literally dancing with rage, until Captain Kidd took a step towards him, when he darted off like a scared rabbit.

Then the skipper of the Foam turned to Otto Schwab.

"Get off my ship!" he thundered. "I don't remember having sent for you! And, if ever I do, you may come with a straight waistcoat and a brace of keepers to cart me to the nearest lunatic-asylum!"

Otto Schwab looked as though he would have liked to try conclusions with the angry captain then and there, but the burly skipper was evidently no easy proposition.

Besides, the last thing the pretended Dutchman wanted at that particular time was to claim the attention of the Fijian police.

He was not known in that part of Polynesia, it is true, but too close an inquiry might have elicited the fact that the Dutchman, Otto Schwab, and the commander of a certain U-boat which had sunk the Pathan and many another good ship, was one and the same.

Clicking his heels, he raised his hand in a formal military salute; then, wheeling round, marched off, the very picture of offended dignity.

Captain Kidd's hearty laughter rang over the sleeping waters of the harbour.

"Given yourself away this time, Herr Otto von Schwab!" he chuckled. "But

it's not a laughing matter, though! I wonder how much the slinking spies saw?" he added, more seriously.

"Enough to guide them to the treasure, I am afraid," returned Dick ruefully, as they re-entered the cabin, to find that Stella, by standing on the table, had been an amused spectator of the whole scene.

"Wasn't that Mendoza you helped overboard so politely, dad?" she asked.

"Yes, the-thieving toad!"

"Who is he?" asked Dick.

"If he wasn't the biggest coward unhung, he'd be the most dangerous man about the islands," returned Captain Kidd. "He nearly made a 'black-bird' of me once. But, as soon as I tumbled to his game, I sailed round to the other side of the island from which he had taken the doped natives, and set 'em all ashore again. He tried to knife me for that, so I chucked him overboard."

"And jumped in after him!" said Stella, gazing proudly at her father.

"Oh, well, I was a bit hot, and wanted a swim, anyhow!" retorted the skipper.

"But I'd have let the sharks have him if I'd known the kind of reptile he was! He has tried to do me a score of dirty tricks since then. He even tried to kidnap Stella; but her old father hadn't taught her to shoot for nothing, and all he got for his trouble was a bullet in the leg."

Dick Danby glanced admiringly at the beautiful girl, who looked so frail and demure in her plain, white, drill coat and skirt, that he could hardly imagine her capable of defending herself.

"Oh, you don't know Stella yet!" laughed Captain Kidd, reading the boy's thoughts. "Wait till you've seen her conning the schooner through a dangerous opening in a reef, or furling sail in a storm! But, come, lad! Schwab may be a Hun, but he's a precious lively Hun, and if we don't get to business we'll find him ahead of us! The trouble will be to get a diving-suit. Stenson, the pearl-fisher, has got one of the newest out. Carries its own air. No tubes of life-lines to get in the way. But I don't know if he will lend it to us."

"I think he will if I ask him, father," interposed Stella.

"He ought to, after your nursing his child through that last bout of typhoid. The doctor said she would have died but for you," returned her father.

"Mr. Fielding has two diving-outfits, which we are going to borrow. Harry Fielding and Joe Maddox are overhauling them now," replied Dick.

"That's all right, then. I rather fancy we'll leave Schwab standing, after all!" chuckled Captain Kidd.

Another long instalment of this grand new adventure serial will appear in next Wednesday's GEM. Order your copy now.



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