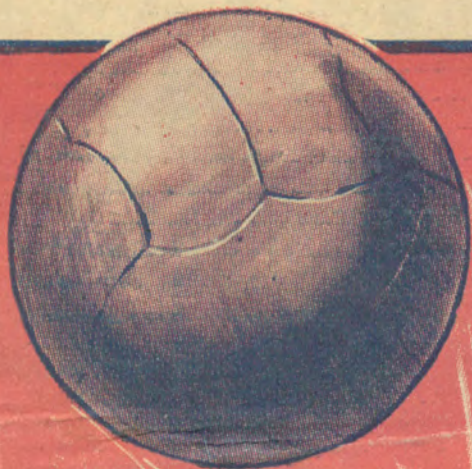


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2^D



**THIS BOY'S
JOKE WINS
A FOOTBALL—**

*His Future
Son: "I don't know whether to be
a barber or an author."
Father: "Toss for it—heads or tails."*

**GEM FOOTBALLS
FOR JOKES. (SEE PAGE 11)**

**—WHAT'S
YOURS?**

GUSSY "RETIRES" FROM ST. JIM'S! READ ALL ABOUT IT—

GUSSY'S SACRIFICE!



Who tarred Mr. Selby, the Third Form master? It's the "sack" for the offender! And poor old Gussy is booked for a flogging unless he tells who did it—and it was his own brother Wally!

CHAPTER 1.

Arthur Augustus is Anxious!

"WALLY—Wally! Weally, Wally—" Arthur Augustus D'Arcy's voice rose crescendo. D'Arcy was strolling in the quadrangle at St. Jims, with his hands in his pockets, and a thoughtful shade upon his brow, when he caught sight of his hopeful young brother.

D'Arcy, as a matter of fact, was thinking out a rhyme for a poem he was composing for the next number of "Tom Merry's Weekly," and he was deep in thought; but he was brought back suddenly to the things of the world by the peculiar actions of the younger scion of the house of D'Arcy.

Wally D'Arcy—who resembled his elegant brother as much as chalk resembles cheese—was stealing along by the wall of the Head's garden, in the stealthiest possible manner. Following him, in the same stealthy manner, were Jameson and Curly Gibson, two of the brightest lights of the Third Form at St. Jim's—the Form of which D'Arcy minor was the acknowledged leader.

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It was evidently the intention of the three Third-Formers to steal into the Head's garden—forbidden ground to the juniors. Prefects in the Sixth were allowed to walk there, in great state; but the juniors were barred, on the ground that they did not keep to the paths, and that damage was done in the garden when they were admitted. They frequently admitted themselves, all the same; and damage certainly was sometimes done to the garden.

"Wally!"

Arthur Augustus called out to his minor as the latter nipped over the wall in the shadow of an overhanging tree. Wally did not even look round. He must have heard his major's voice, but he did not take the slightest notice. Like the dying gladiator, he heard, but he heeded not.

Wally was over the wall in a twinkling. The curly-headed inky-fingered hero of the Third disappeared from the gaze of his anxious major.

"Wally!"

There was no reply.

"Jameson! Gibson!"

The two fags followed D'Arcy minor over the wall without so much as looking round. The colour came into Arthur Augustus D'Arcy's cheeks. He felt that he was being

—IN THIS DRAMATIC STORY STARRING THE D'ARCY BROTHERS!

By Martin Clifford

treated with less respect than was due to Wally's major, and to a member of a higher Form.

"Bai Jove!" he ejaculated.

He quite forgot the fact that he had been seeking a rhyme to moonlight. He was only thinking of his minor now.

He stood undecided what to do.

Wally & Co. were certainly up to some mischief.

What was it?

As an elder brother, D'Arcy felt he ought to look into the matter. Only to do so he would have to follow Wally into the forbidden precincts of the Head's private garden, and if he were caught there, there would be painful explanations with the Head.

"Hallo, Gussy! Here you are!"

D'Arcy started at the sound of a voice behind him, and staggered as he received a hearty slap on the shoulder.

"Ow!"

He swung round, and jammed a monocle into his right eye, and glared wrathfully at the cheerful, sunny-faced junior who had greeted him. It was Tom Merry of the Shell.

"Weally, Tom Mewwy—"

"I was looking for you," said Tom Merry brightly.

"Manners and Lowther have come to help me look."

"Exactly!" said Monty Lowther. "We were afraid there would be an accident."

"And we came to administer first-aid," said Manners.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy looked puzzled.

"I fail to comprehend, deah boys," he said.

"Why, you are making up poetry for the 'Weekly.' Well, poetry is made up with the brain," said Lowther.

"That is a scientific fact, which Skimpole could prove to you in words of six syllables. Now any unaccustomed exercise is likely to cause damage to any organ in a human being—"

"Weally, Lowthah—"

"So when we heard that you were doing brain work, we naturally felt anxious—"

"Weally—"

"And so we came to look for you."

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy turned his monocle upon the Terrible Three in turn.

They met his withering stare with cheerful grins.

"I wegard you as an ass, Mannahs."

"Oh, really, Gussy—"

"I wegard you as anothah ass, Tom Mewwy!"

"Rats!"

"I wegard you as a greatah ass, Lowthah!"

"Well, you ought to be a judge of your own kind," said Monty Lowther cheerfully.

"Weally, Lowthah—"

"Have you found the rhyme?" asked Tom Merry.

"No, deah boy. I was twyin' to think out a word to rhyme with moonlight. What do you think of 'soon light'?" asked D'Arcy.

"There isn't such a thing. I've never heard of soonlight, anyway. Is it a new pronunciation of sunlight?"

"Weally, Tom Mewwy—"

"Well, what is it? I've never heard of it."

"It is not a substantive at all, you duffah. I meant somethin' like this:

"The fields of ether will soon light
In the waptuwous glowy of moonlight."

"My only hat!"

"Do you think that is good?"

"Ripping! Does it mean anything?" asked Lowther.

"Weally, Lowthah—"

"Oh, don't be exacting!" said Tom Merry. "The best poetry doesn't mean anything—especially if it's in blank verse. That will do."

"I wegard you as a chap of taste, Tom Mewwy."

"So I am," agreed the youthful editor of "Tom Merry's Weekly." "Come and help us make up the copy. We've got to get it to the printer to-day."

D'Arcy shook his head.

"I haven't quite finished my poem."

"Never mind. You can put in 'To be continued in our next.'"

"That would wathah spoil the effect, I am afwaid, Tom Mewwy. But it isn't only the poem. I have anothah engagement at pvesent."

"I always knew it would come to this," said Lowther, with a shake of the head. "This is what comes of being a lady's man. Who is she, Gussy?"

"I fail to undahstand you, Lowthah."

"I suppose you cannot be engaged without a 'she' in the case," said Lowther. "Is it the young lady at the draper's in Rylcombe?"

"Weally, Lowthah—"

"Or the charming girl at the confectioner's—"

"I wefuse to listen to wibald jokes," said D'Arcy, with dignity. "You know perfectly well that you are wottin', and that you did not think I meant that I was engaged to be mawwied."

"Well, I only go by what you say. But, of course, I ought to have remembered that you generally talk out of your hat," agreed Lowther.

"Weally, you ass—"

"But what is the other engagement?" demanded Tom Merry. "As chief editor of the 'Weekly,' I can't have my staff buzzing off to other engagements on publishing day."

"It's my young bwothah—"

"Oh, Wally in trouble again!"

"Yaas, wathah!"

"He'll get out of it all right," said Manners. "Come along to the study."

"Quite imposs, deah boy. Wally has just gone into the Head's garden."

"The young ass!" said Tom Merry. "He's been in trouble once to-day already."

"Bai Jove!"

"Selby was in a bad temper with the Third, I hear," said Tom. "Wally cheeked him in the Form-room, and was sent in to the Head to be caned."

"That was wathah wotten."

"Yes, Selby has a down on D'Arcy minor," Monty Lowther remarked. "It's curious, too, when he is such a kind, nice, inoffensive, peaceful, and lovable youth."

"Weally, Lowthah—"

"Still, his Form master is hard on him," said Tom Merry. "Selby never seems to let him alone. Wally caught it hot this morning, though, of course, he oughtn't to have cheeked Selby."

"Yaas, he is wathah a cheeky young duffah," said D'Arcy. "I weally do not know how it is, as I have bwrought him up vewy carefully."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I fail to see any cause for laughtah in that wemark. I must go and look aftah Wally. The young ass is twespassin' in the Head's garden, and Jameson and Gibson have gone with him."

"Better leave him alone—"

"Imposs, deah boy! I must look aftah him as an eldah bwothah, and command him to come out of the garden at once."

The Terrible Three chuckled.

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"Do you think he is likely to come out if you command him, Gussy?" inquired Tom Merry.

"I twust he will tweat my ordahs with the wespect due to the ordahs of an eldah bwothah."

"I rather think he won't."

"In that case, I shall have no wesource but to give him a feahful thwashin'."

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

"Weally, deah boys—"

"Better leave well alone—"

"Pway don't be obstinate, Tom Mewwy. You can come and give me a bunk ovah the wall if you like."

"Well, if you're determined to go—"

"I am quite wesolved."

"Then we'll give you a bunk up."

"Thank you vewy much, deah boys!"

And Arthur Augustus put his hands on the garden wall, and waited for the required "bunk."

CHAPTER 2.

Bunking Up!

TOM MERRY took the swell of St. Jim's by one leg, and Monty Lowther took him by the other. Manners laid a grasp upon the tail of his coat to steady him.

"Now, gently does it, deah boys," said Arthur Augustus, adjusting his monocle carefully. "Pway don't wumple my twousahs or ewumple my jacket. I want to get ovah the wall if poss without touchin' the bwicks with my knees. I wegard it as howwid to have anythin' wong with the knees of a chap's twousahs."

"Careful, Lowther!"

"Careful, Manners!"

"Careful, deah boys!"

"Up he goes! And do be careful!"

Up went Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, with a sudden bunk that shot him up beyond the level of the top of the wall.

But as Tom Merry & Co. were carefully standing three paces distant from the wall, the bunk up was not of much service to Arthur Augustus.

He swayed in the air, with his hands wildly clutching at vacancy.

"You asses!" he gasped.

"What's the matter?"

"I asked you to give me a bunk up."

"Well, we're giving you one, aren't we?" demanded Monty Lowther. "Do you want us to let you down again?"

"No, you ass! I want you to bwing me neawah the wall, so I can climb ovah it, you uttably stupid duffah!" said D'Arcy witheringly.

The Terrible Three swung the junior closer to the wall. D'Arcy had just time to clutch at it with his hands to save himself from being suddenly bumped on the bricks.

"You uttah asses!"

"What's the matter now?"

"You've nearly wubbed my clothes on the wall!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I wegard you as a set of asses, and I wefuse to be assisted by you any farthah," said D'Arcy, struggling to release himself. "Pway let me down!"

"But you asked for a bunk up," said Tom Merry. "Ow!"

The last remark was suddenly cut short as D'Arcy, struggling desperately, brought all three reeling to the ground, with himself on top.

Tom Merry sat down violently, Monty Lowther rolled over, and Manners sprawled across his legs, and D'Arcy sat on Manners.

"Ow!" gasped Manners.

"Yaroooh!" gasped Lowther.

"My hat!" ejaculated Tom Merry.

"Bai Jove!"

"Gerroff my legs!"

"I can't! There's a babbling idiot sitting on my back. Gerroff, D'Arcy, you champion chump!"

"Bai Jove!"

"Are you going to get off my back?"

"No hawwy, deah boy."

"I—I—I—"

"Pway don't get excited, Mannahs. I must west for a few moments. You have thwown me into quite a fluttah!"

"You frabjous ass! Get off!"

"I wefuse to be called a fwabjous ass. I—"

"Gerroff!" gurgled Lowther.

"Get off!"

"Weally, Mannahs—"

"Hallo! What on earth does this mean?" exclaimed Jack Blake of the Fourth Form at St. Jim's, coming on the scene with Herries and Digby. "My only hat!"

Herries was trying to hold in a savage-looking bulldog by the chain. Towser, the bulldog, showed a decided desire to sample the limbs belonging to the chums of the Shell that were scattered on the ground.

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"Hold that beast off!" exclaimed Tom Merry, jumping up in hot haste.

D'Arcy jammed his monocle into his eye, and glanced round.

"Pway keep that beast away, Hewwies!"

"Oh, Towser's all right!" said Herries, dragging at the chain. "He's only a little excited. He's a wonderful dog. He knew something was going on here, and he made us come round. Didn't he, Blake?"

"I thought he was just trying to get away, that's all," said Blake.

"Look here, Blake, you know jolly well—"

"Oh, of course! Towser's a wonderful dog, and he can track down a red herring any day of the week," said Blake resignedly. "Ask Towser to explain what these silly asses are spreading themselves over the ground for."

"Ass!"

"Well, Towser's so jolly clever he ought to be able to do a little thing like that. Is this a new game, Tom Merry?"

"No; it's an old one!" said Tom Merry. "It's Gussy playing the giddy ox again."

"Weally, Tom Mewwy—"

"Gr-r-r-r!"

D'Arcy jumped up.

"Keep that beast away, Hewwies!"

"I tell you he's all right. Towser's always all right so long as you don't look at him. Then he gets roused sometimes."

"I wefuse to wegard him as all wight. The beast has no wespect whatevah for a fellow's twousahs."

The Terrible Three rose, and looked at D'Arcy, and looked at the chums of the Fourth, and finally at Towser.

"If we had a thing like that in our study," said Monty Lowther, pointing with his forefinger at Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, "we'd drown it!"

"In hot water!" said Manners.

"And bury it in the back garden," added Tom Merry.

"Weally, deah boys!"

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

"I wefuse to do anythin' of the sort. I—"

"Rats!"

And the Terrible Three, feeling considerably limp and sore, walked away.

Arthur Augustus adjusted his monocle carefully, and stared after them.

"I wegard those three individuals as three boundahs," he remarked. "If I had not anothah important engagement at the pwesent moment, I should wegard it as impewative to give them a feahful thwashin'."

"But what was the trouble about?" asked Digby.

"I asked them to give me a bunk up, and they began to play the giddy ox," said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "Pway oblige me by givin' me a bunk ovah this wall, deah boys!"

"But you can't trespass in the Head's garden!" exclaimed Blake.

"It's an absolute necess, deah boy!"

"Looking for a licking?"

"I am looking for my minah. He has gone ovah into the Head's garden, and I wegard it as my duty to go and fetch him out before he gets into twouble."

"Most likely you'll get into trouble, too."

"I must wisk that. Pway wait heah for me."

Blake and his companions bunked D'Arcy up—without any practical jokes. They knew it was useless to argue with the swell of St. Jim's when he had made up his mind, and the sooner it was over the safer it would be.

D'Arcy reached the top of the wall, and put one leg over it.

"Pway don't make a wow heah, deah boys, and attwact attention—"

"Who's making a row?"

"Nobody at pwesent, Blake. I am warnin' you not to begin. I— Oh!"

Arthur Augustus' eyeglass slipped from his eye as the cord caught in a twig over the wall, and he made a clutch at it, lost his balance, and rolled into the garden. He dropped into a mass of shrubs, and gasped.

"Ow!"

There was a quick footstep in the garden, and a startled voice:

"What's that?"

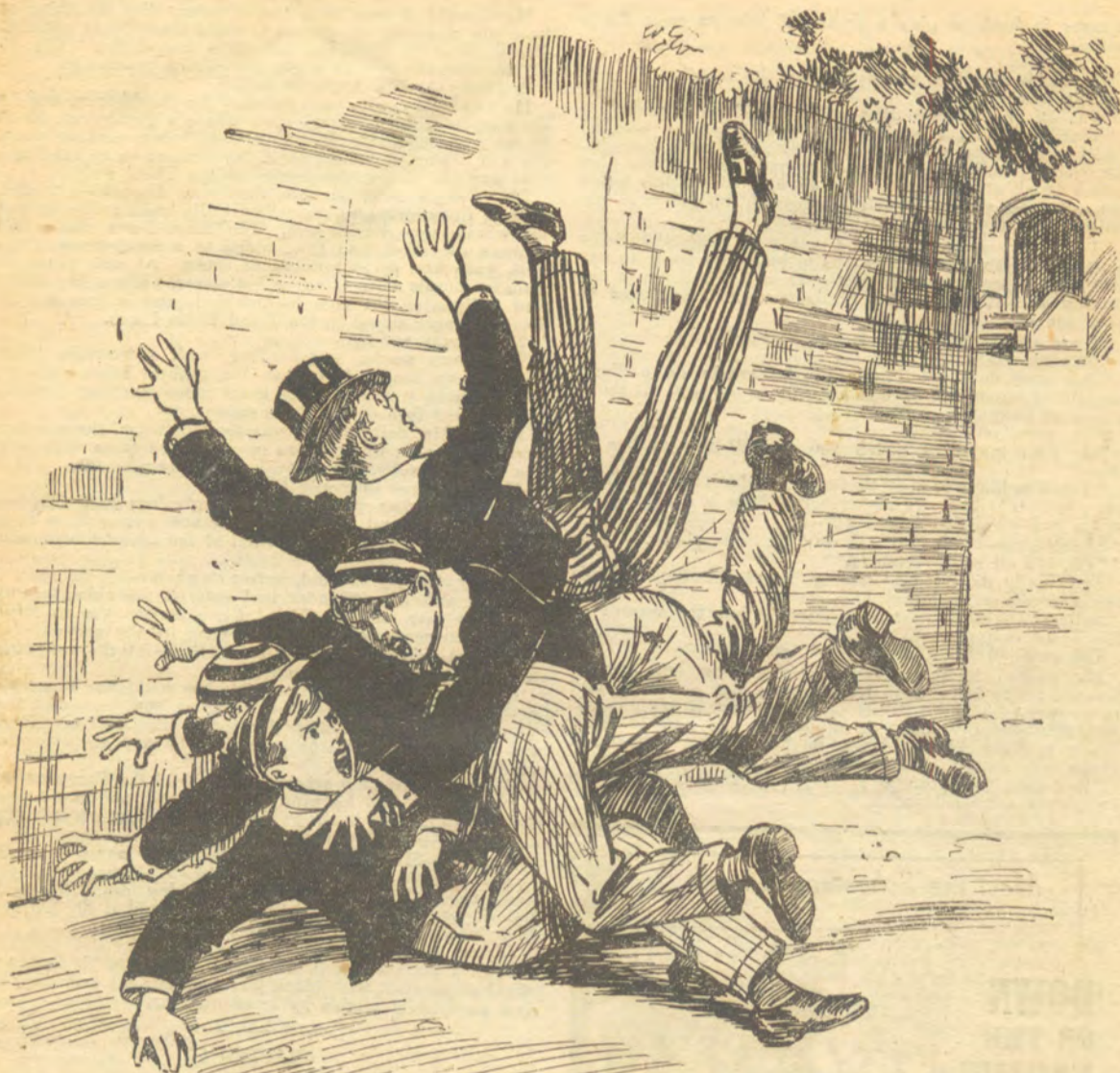
CHAPTER 3.

Tarring Mr. Selby!

D'ARCY scrambled to his feet. He was not hurt, but considerably shaken up, and what he would have described as "thwown into a fluttah."

He groped for his eyeglass, and jammed it into his eye.

Three youths were peering round the trees to discover what it was that had fallen from the wall into the garden.



"Pway let me down," said Gussy. "But you asked for a bunk up," began Tom Merry. "Ow!" His remark was suddenly cut short as D'Arcy, struggling desperately, brought Tom and his chums to the ground in a heap. "Ow! Yarcooh!" gasped Manners and Lowther.

They were D'Arcy minor, Jameson, and Gibson of the Third Form. Jameson had thick, tarry stains on his hands, and there was tar on Wally's shirt cuffs, and on Gibson's trousers. It was evident that the three scamps of the Third had had a close acquaintance with tar since entering the Head's garden.

Arthur Augustus gasped a little, and gave the Third-Formers a severe glance.

"It is I, Wally!"

"Hush!"

"I wefuse to hush! I—"

"Shut up, you ass! Selby will hear you!"

"Mr. Selby!"

"Yes; our Form master. He's in the garden, up at the other end, sitting in a garden chair and reading."

"Then the soonah you get out of the garden, the bettah, Wally!"

"Rats!"

"That is neithah a pwopah nor wespectful way to address your eldah bwothah, Wally!" said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy severely.

"Oh, don't you begin, Gus! What did you want to come poking into the garden at all for?" demanded Wally impatiently.

"Weally, Wally—"

"Buzz off!"

"What!"

"Buzz off! Here, I'll give you a hand over the wall. Get out!"

D'Arcy gave his minor a freezing glare.

"I wefuse to get out, Wally! I distinctly wefuse to leave this spot! I have come heah to make you young wascals get out of the Head's pwivate garden!"

"Rats!"

"If you say wats to me, Wally, I shall have no wesource, as your majah, but to administah a feahful thwashin'!"

"Oh, come off!"

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy pushed back his cuffs. He was the best-tempered fellow in the world; but there was a limit to his patience, and his cheerful younger brother had reached it.

"I am extwemely sowwy, Wally, but I shall have to intewwupt this discush by givin' you a feahful thwashin'!" he remarked.

Wally backed away a pace or two.

"Don't play the giddy goat, Gussy! Look here, if you make a row Selby will hear you, and he'll go for us. The beast is down on me already—got me licked by the Head for nothing at all!" Wally gritted his teeth. "I'm jolly well going to make him sit up for it, and Jimmy and Gibby are helping me."

"What do you mean, Wally?"

"We're going to jape the beast!" said Wally, with a grin. "He's in this garden, and so are we—and so is the bucket of tar Taggles has been using to tar the fence!"

D'Arcy looked considerably startled.

"You young duffah! Have you had the feahful cheek

to come in heah to play a pwactical joke on your Form mastah?"

"Yes, rather!"

"I cannot approve of anythin' of the sort!"

Wally snorted.

"Fat lot of difference that will make!" he remarked.

"Weally, Wally, I wegard that expvession as vulgah! And I cannot allow you to pwocceed with this wisky business. Mr. Selby is alweady angwy with you, and if you play such a twick on him he will nevah west till he has found you out, and then you will be flogged, or pewwaps expelled from the school!"

"I don't care, so long as I get even with the Selby beast!" said Wally recklessly. "I'm jolly well going to pay him out for sending me in to the Head! I tell you I did nothing at all; but he had indigestion as usual, and he went for me."

"I am afwaid Mr. Selby is sometimes unjust—"

"The beast always is!"

"But that does not justify playin' twicks on a Form mastah. I cannot approve of anythin' of the sort. It shows a lack of pwopah respect."

"Oh, come off!"

"As your majah, I ordah you to quit this garden at once!"

"Yes, I'm likely to obey that order—I don't think! Come on, you kids! If Gussy makes a row here he'll give us all away, and we shall all be flogged!"

"Look here—" began Jameson, in some alarm.

"Oh, it's all right—come on!"

And Wally disappeared among the shrubberies, and his two companions followed him.

Arthur Augustus started in pursuit, but the scamps of the Third disappeared.

The swell of St. Jim's stopped, irresolute.

He wanted to save Wally from getting into further trouble, not to bring fresh trouble upon him, and so he had to be very careful not to betray his presence in the garden. But this necessity made it impossible for him to force Wally to leave. He could not do that without a tussle, if Wally was determined to remain—as he evidently was.

"Bai Jove!" murmured D'Arcy. "I wegard this as an extwemely awkward posish."

Meet the Schoolboy Hikers . .

**"DOWN
ON THE
FARM!"**



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He thought it over for a few minutes. But one thing at least was clear—it was useless to stand there doing nothing. The swell of St. Jim's started again to look for Wally, to try to persuade him to leave the garden peaceably.

Suddenly Arthur Augustus halted.

He was following a path through the shrubberies, and he came upon a quiet, sunny spot, where a gentleman sat in an easy garden chair close by a small rustic summer-house. He was sitting in the shade of the summer-house reading.

It was Mr. Selby, the master of the Third Form.

Mr. Selby's thin, meagre face was discontented, and, indeed, ill-tempered in expression. His lunch evidently had not wholly agreed with him. The Third Form master had a weak digestion, and this, added to a carelessness of his diet, gave him great torment at times. At such times his unlucky pupils were often in hot water. When Mr. Selby had indigestion his nose became red—and it was a well-known danger signal in the Third Form Room.

It was very red now.

The Form master was reading, with a frowning brow. But D'Arcy hardly looked at Mr. Selby. What attracted his attention was something much more startling than the discontented face of the Form master.

Behind Mr. Selby's head was the window of the summer-house—and that window was open. Three faces were looking out of it—three faces flushed with excitement.

They belonged to Wally & Co.

On the window-sill the Third Form fags had lifted a bucket of tar, and they were even now titling it so as to swamp the contents over the head of the unconscious master of the Third.

D'Arcy stood spellbound, horror-stricken.

Wally and his comrades had entered the summer-house from the rear, and the Third Form master was evidently utterly unconscious of their presence in the garden.

Not the faintest notion had Mr. Selby of the vengeance that was about to fall upon him.

Arthur Augustus gave a gasp. He could not warn Mr. Selby of his danger without betraying the fags—and that would be a serious matter for them. But without calling out to Mr. Selby, it was impossible to stop the execution of Wally's design.

D'Arcy's faint gasp reached the ears of the Form master.

Mr. Selby raised his eyes from his book, and saw Arthur Augustus standing in the garden path, looking towards him.

"D'Arcy— Ah—ah—ah—oh!"

Even as Mr. Selby uttered D'Arcy's name, the tar swamped in a thick black flood over his head and ran down over his face, blinding and choking him. It was not hot—it was thick—and sticky and cold, and it flooded over Mr. Selby's head and face like treacle.

D'Arcy stood transfixed.

With a horrified gasp, Mr. Selby sprang to his feet, and stood staggering, with black tar streaming all over him, his face completely hidden by swamping tar.

CHAPTER 4.

Gussy Refuses to Sneak!

"GWEAT SCOTT!"

Arthur Augustus murmured these words feebly. He felt that it would be better for him to beat a retreat, but he could not move. The dreadful apparition fascinated him.

Mr. Selby stood before him, streaming with tar. The master's hair was matted with tar, his face was hidden, his eyes covered up, and tar was streaming over his clothes, down his neck, and into the corners of his mouth.

It was a terrifying sight.

The unfortunate master of the Third gasped and staggered, clutching out wildly for support, and D'Arcy stepped forward politely to help him, as soon as he had recovered from the first shocks of what he had seen.

He grasped the Third Form master by the arm, carefully selecting a spot where the tar was not streaming, and steadied him.

Meanwhile the three fags had disappeared from the summer-house by the door at the back, and were making good their escape.

There was nothing to connect them with the incident, and Wally & Co. congratulated themselves upon having revenged their wrongs upon the obnoxious master without the danger of being called to account for it.

Mr. Selby rubbed the tar from his eyes with his knuckles. "Wh-wh-what has happened?" he gasped.

"I'm afwaid you've had some tar spilt over you, sir."

"Tar! Yes, indeed, it is tar."

"Looks like it, sir."

"Did you do this, D'Arcy?"

Arthur Augustus started.

"I, sir? Certainly not. I twust you would not suspect

me of tweatin' a Form mastah in such an extwemely dis-
respectful way?"

"No; I recall now that you were standing in the path,
and the tar must have been thrown over me from behind.
You must have seen who did it."

Arthur Augustus was silent.

He realised that it was perfectly clear that, as he had
been standing at a short distance facing Mr. Selby, he must
have seen who tilted the tar over the Third Form master.

It dawned upon him that he would be called upon to give
information on the subject; and he heartily wished that he
had never crossed the wall into the Head's garden.

Mr. Selby glared at him through the tar.

"You saw who committed this unheard-of outrage,
D'Arcy?"

"I would wathah not say, sir."

"What! What!"

"I would wathah not say, if you don't mind, sir."

"D'Arcy! But I will not talk to you—the Head shall do
that. I—"

"What—what is that?"

There was the rustle of a gown, and Dr. Holmes came
down the path. He had been reading at his window, and
the wild exclamations in the garden had drawn him out to
see what was the matter.

He stared in blank astonishment at the Third Form
master, not recognising Mr. Selby in his coating of tar.

"Who—who are you?" he exclaimed heatedly. "How
dare you trespass in this garden?"

"Dr. Holmes!"

"Dear me! I seem to know that voice!"

"Dr. Holmes!"

"Is it Mr. Selby?"

"Yes, sir; certainly it is, sir."

"Bless my soul! How did you come into this dreadful
state, Mr. Selby? Have you upset a bucket of tar over
yourself?"

Mr. Selby almost danced with rage.

"No, sir, I have not. I have had this tar hurled over
me by a practical joker, sir!"

"Good heavens, D'Arcy! Surely you—"

"Weally, sir. I twust you know me bettah than to
suspect me of such an extwemely wude and diswepctful
action!"

"Who was it, Mr. Selby?"

"I do not know, sir. It was done from behind. D'Arcy
knows, however—he was standing directly before me, and
must have seen it done."

The Head turned a severe glance upon Arthur Augustus.

"Did you see this outrage, D'Arcy?"

"Yaas, sir," said D'Arcy reluctantly.

"You saw who perpetrated it?"

The swell of St. Jim's did not speak.

"D'Arcy! You must, as Mr. Selby says, have seen who
perpetrated this outrage, if you were standing facing him
at the time—you must have recognised the person."

"You see, sir—"

"Answer my question—"

"Wh-what question, sir?"

"Did you see who threw this tar over Mr. Selby?"

"Weally, sir—"

"I order you, as your headmaster, to reply at once!"
exclaimed Dr. Holmes, with a frowning brow.

"Yaas, sir; I saw him."

"You recognised him?"

"Yaas, sir."

"Who was it?"

D'Arcy's lips closed in a tight line.

Nothing would have induced him to give the name, even
if the fellow concerned had been his enemy—and he had
doubly a reason for keeping silent, as it was his own minor
who was concerned in the matter.

Dr. Holmes' brow darkened more and more.

"D'Arcy!"

"Yaas, sir."

"Did you hear my question?"

"Yaas, sir."

"Then answer it!"

"You see, sir—"

"Tell me at once the name of the boy who perpetrated
this outrage."

"Weally, Doctah Holmes—"

"I do not understand you, D'Arcy. Surely you cannot
have the astounding impertinence to refuse to reply to my
question?"

"As a mattah of fact, sir—"

"Answer me at once!" thundered the Head.

"I should be extwemely sorry, sir, to be regarded as
impertinent, especially by a gentleman I wespct so highly,"
said D'Arcy.

"Well, answer me, then, at once!"

"It would be sneakin', sir."

"What!"

"I feel that I cannot give the name of the sillay ass who
played this wotten twick on Mr. Selby, sir," said Arthur
Augustus. "I feel that it would be sneakin'. Upon wellec-
tion, sir, I am sure you will not pwess me to weply."

Dr. Holmes almost gasped.

To be thus read a lecture by a junior of the Fourth Form
was a new experience to him, and not exactly a pleasant one.

But the Head controlled his anger.

"Now, listen to me, D'Arcy," he said very quietly. "This
is not a matter in which a boy's natural scruples about
tale-telling can be allowed to weigh. A tale-bearer is an
odious creature, and I should always disapprove of any-
thing of the kind. But no boy has a right to disobey the
direct order of his headmaster. You understand that?"

"Ya-a-as, sir."

"Then tell me at once the name of the boy who per-
petrated this terrible outrage."

D'Arcy was silent.

"You hear me?"

"Yaas, sir!"

"Answer me at once, then."

"Weally, sir—"

"I am waiting for your reply, D'Arcy," said the Head, in
an ominous tone.

"Weally, sir, as one gentleman to anothah, I must say—"

"No impertinence, D'Arcy."

"Weally, sir—"

"Will you give me the name of the culprit at once,
D'Arcy?"

"Pway excuse me, sir—"

"You refuse?" exclaimed Dr. Holmes, greatly incensed.

"Oh, no, sir! Only—"

The Head waved his hand.

"Go to your study at once, D'Arcy, and stay there till
I send for you."

"Certainly, sir."

Arthur Augustus turned slowly to leave the garden. He
was feeling extremely disturbed, but his determination was
fixed not to give Wally away to the avenging powers.

Dr. Holmes turned to the unhappy master of the Third.

"I am sorry for this, Mr. Selby—very sorry indeed. I
need not assure you that the culprit shall be discovered,
and expelled from the school. Such an outrage has never
been heard of in the history of the school. The wrong-
doer shall not remain an hour after I have discovered
his identity."

Arthur Augustus' heart sank as he heard the words. His
face was very gloomy as he climbed the wall and dropped
into the quadrangle.

The Head's words were all that was needed—if anything
was needed—to confirm him in his determination.

If Wally was discovered he would be expelled!

D'Arcy's resolution was firmly fixed.

Whatever happened to himself, he would not say a word;
whatever might be the result, he would face the music
without flinching.

CHAPTER 5.

An Awkward Position!

"WHAT'S the row?"

Jack Blake asked the question as Arthur
Augustus dropped into the quad.

The chums of the Fourth had been waiting
there for their comrade, and they had heard indistinct
sounds from the garden which warned them that something
was toward. And Arthur Augustus' face as he rejoined
them was a sufficient intimation that something was
decidedly wrong.

"Anything wrong?" asked Digby.

"Yaas, wathah!"

"What is it?"

"There's goin' to be a wow."

Arthur Augustus walked off towards the School House,
and his chums accompanied him.

Blake gave him a dig in the ribs.

"What's it all about, Gussy?"

"Ow—"

"Well, enlighten us, then, you ass!"

"I wefuse to be called an ass!"

"Look here, what are you marching off for? What's the
row?"

"I've got to go to my study."

"What for?"

"To stay there."

"But why?" howled Blake.

"Because the Head has told me to. I'm to stay till
I'm sent for."

"Phew!"

"Curious thing how Gussy is always getting into trouble," Digby remarked. "If there's any bother knocking around, you can always rely on Gussy to go and put his head into it."

"Weally, Dig—"

"Well, tell us what happened in the garden," said Blake.

"Has your giddy minor been getting into fixes, as usual?" "Pewwaps I had bettah not tell you too much," said Arthur Augustus thoughtfully. "It will be safah for you not to know, as I'm afwaid there's goin' to be a feahful wow."

"But what has happened?" exclaimed Herries.

"Somebody upset a pail of tar ovah the head of Mr. Selby."

"Great Scott!"

"He was vewy angwy—"

"Ha, ha, ha! Naturally."

"Yaas, I suppose it was natural undah the cires. He will have a feahful lot of work gettin' the tar out of his hair, I should think; and I don't suppose he will show up in the Form-woom this aftahnoon."

"Probably not. Who did it?"

"That's the twouble."

"Your minor, of course—though really that was going a bit too far, even for Wally," said Blake gravely. "Look here, if he's found out he will be expelled. They will call it an assault upon a Form master."

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Was it Wally?"

"As a mattah of fact—"

"I suppose you saw who it was?" asked Digby.

"Yaas."

"Well, who was it?"

"That's the question the Head asked me, deah boys, and I declined to ansawah."

Blake stared.

"Declined to answer!" he murmured faintly. "Declined to answer the Head!"

"Yaas."

"My only hat!"

"I fail to see any cause for surpwise, deah boy. I was honah bound to keep dark the name of the culprit."

"Yes, but—"

"I was weally upon my honah, and I declined to weply. The Head seemed vewy angwy."

"How surprising!" said Digby sarcastically.

"Well, I put it to him as one gentleman to anothah, but he didn't seem to see it," said D'Arcy. "Howevah, I shall not say who it was that thwew the tar ovah Mr. Selby, and I won't tell you fellows, eithah. You'd bettah not know, in case any questions should be asked. If you don't know, you can say you don't know."

"We can jolly well guess."

"You are not bound to state your guesses if you are questioned, deah boy, but only what you know—and you know nothin' unless I tell you."

"A Daniel come to judgment," said Blake admiringly.

"You ought to be a blessed lawyer, Gussy."

"Yaas, I wathah think I would make a pwetty good lawyah," said D'Arcy. "A vewy keen and active bwain is wequiahed for that pwofession."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I fail to see any cause for laughtah. Hewwies, I twust you are not bwingin' that beast into the House."

"Why shouldn't Towser come in?" demanded Herries aggressively.

"It's against the wules, for one thing."

"Well, I like that! It's against the rules to cheek the Head, if you come to that," said Herries.

"Weally, Hewwies—"

"Better take the beast away," said Blake. "I shall vewy likely brain him with a bat if he gets under my feet, you know, and we don't want a dead bulldog lying about the study."

Herries glared, but he led Towser away to the kennels, and Blake and Digby entered the School House with D'Arcy. They went up to Study No. 6 in the Fourth Form passage. Arthur Augustus selected an ivory-backed brush, and proceeded to brush away the dust that had collected on his garments through climbing the garden wall.

Blake thrust his hands into his pockets and looked worried.

"This looks to me like a serious matter," he exclaimed. "Did you tell the Head that you jolly well wouldn't answer him, Gussy?"

"Well, I put it a little more politely, deah boy, but it amounts to the same thing. Is all the dust off my twousahs?"

"Blessed if I know. Now—"

"You might look, deah boy."

"Oh, blow your trousers!"

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"Weally, Blake, I expect to be called into the Head's study at any moment now, and I do not want to appeah there with dustay twousahs."

"You will vewy likely get them dusted there," said Digby, "if you don't answer up to the Head when you're questioned."

"Weally, Dig—"

"Here, give me the brush!" said Blake.

"Thank you vewy much, deah boy!"

Blake brushed his elegant chum down, and Arthur Augustus changed his collar, and donned a fresh necktie, tying it with great care before the glass. He seemed to think more of his appearance in the Head's study than of what would happen there.

Digby and Blake watched him in silence.

Though they generally found considerable amusement in chipping their elegant chum, they were really very much attached to him, and when he was in trouble they felt it as keenly as if the trouble had been their own.

And he certainly was in trouble now—more deeply in it than he seemed to realise himself.

It was no light matter to refuse to answer the Head.

A fallow might be expelled for such disrespect. It was not likely to come to that with D'Arcy, however. But if he persisted in his refusal, and the Head did not let the matter drop, there was little doubt that D'Arcy would be flogged.

He could expect nothing else.

The juniors knew their chum only too well to imagine for a moment that the prospect of being flogged—or of being cut to pieces, for that matter—would ever make him do anything that he regarded as dishonourable.

D'Arcy's lips were sealed.

But if the Head insisted—and he was absolutely certain to insist—what would happen then?

The thought of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, the elegant junior of St. Jim's, being flogged in public in the School Hall made the Fourth-Formers shudder.

But it was quite certain, if he did not speak; and it was equally certain that he would not speak.

D'Arcy, having finished the last touches to the improvement of his toilet, glanced at the serious faces of his chums.

"I am in a deuced awkward posish!" he remarked.

"You are," said Blake. "I don't know what's to be done."

"I twust that Dr. Holmes will see weason."

"Ass!"

"I wufuse to be called an ass! I—"

"Look here! The best thing you can do is to answer the Head plainly," said Blake abruptly. "The Head's opinion on the subject is better than yours; and if he thinks you ought to answer, you ought."

D'Arcy shook his head.

"Imposs, deah boy!"

"He will be awfully wrathy."

"Yaas, I'm afwaid so."

"You will be flogged."

D'Arcy started.

"I should uttably wufuse to be flogged."

"Ass! You wouldn't be asked."

"Weally, Blake—"

"Now, look here—"

"I should wufuse to be flogged, as I should wegard it as extwemely dewogatory to my personal dig."

"I tell you—"

Binks, the School House page, put his head in at the door.

"Please, the 'Ead wants to see Master D'Arcy in 'is study," he said.

"Vewy good, Binks!"

Binks gave the swell of St. Jim's a commiserating grin, and vanished.

Arthur Augustus turned towards the door.

"Cheer up, deah boys!" he said. "I dare say it will be all wight."

"What are you going to do, Gussy?"

"I am goin' to put it to the Head as one gentleman to anothah."

Blake groaned, and Arthur Augustus quitted the study, and made his way to the dreaded apartment where the Head of St. Jim's awaited him.

CHAPTER 6.

In the Punishment Cell!

D R. HOLMES sat at his writing-table with a quiet, grave expression upon his kindly face.

The Head was evidently troubled; and evidently determined. It was a question of upholding his authority as Head of St. Jim's, and he was not likely to give way.

Mr. Selby was there, too. He had washed and scrubbed

off as much of the tar as he could, but there were patches of it adhering to his face and his ears; and his face, flaming from recent scrubbing, was very ill-tempered.

The bell had gone for classes, and the boys were trooping into the Form-room as Arthur Augustus D'Arcy came to the Head's study. Mr. Selby was not taking the Third that afternoon. He did not feel equal to it, and the Third Form chuckled and rejoiced in his absence—especially the three young scamps who were responsible for it.

Dr. Holmes glanced quietly at D'Arcy as he entered. "I have sent for you, D'Arcy, to repeat my question to you," he said. "You have had time to reflect over the matter now."

"Yaas, sir."

"I trust you have decided to obey my order."

Arthur Augustus looked deeply troubled.

D'Arcy," said Dr. Holmes, with a heightened colour. "In any case, you are bound to do as you are ordered by your headmaster."

D'Arcy was silent and troubled.

"Well, D'Arcy?"

"I am sowwy, sir, but—"

"But what?"

"I cannot weply, sir."

Dr. Holmes rose to his feet; he was frowning, and there was a flush of anger in his face now.

Mr. Selby raised his eyebrows.

"Really, I have never heard of such insolence!" he exclaimed.

"Weally, Mr. Selbay, I do not think my wemarks ought to be chawactewised as insolent. There is nothin' I wegard with so much howwah as insolence to one's eldahs."



Arthur Augustus halted and stood spellbound at the sight that met his eyes. On the window-sill of the summer-house Wally & Co. had lifted a bucket of tar, and they were even now tilting it so as to swamp the contents over the head of Mr. Selby!

"If you please, sir—"

"A most unparalleled outrage has been perpetrated," said the Head. "It is an insult upon a Form master of a most outrageous description. The perpetrator, when discovered, will be flogged and expelled from the school. There is no alternative open to me. You know the name of the culprit."

"Yaas, sir."

"I shall, in any case, discover him," said the Head. "The inquiry will not cease till his identity is known."

"Vewy good, sir."

"You will save time and trouble by telling me what you know, D'Arcy."

"If you please, sir—"

"I insist upon you telling me," said the Head. "I command you to do so. You will refuse to obey me at your peril."

"It would be sneakin', sir."

"I am a better judge of that matter than you are,

"You refuse to answer me, D'Arcy?"

"It is imposs, sir."

"You understand the consequences, I suppose?"

The colour faded a little in D'Arcy's cheek, and his heart beat faster. The Head's tone was hard and grim. D'Arcy knew what he risked, but he did not falter.

"Yaas, sir."

"I shall give you time to reflect," said Dr. Holmes. "You have so good a record in the school, D'Arcy, that I should be sorry indeed to flog you in public. That, however, is the only possible course if you persist in this impertinence."

"Oh, sir!"

"Meanwhile, you shall have time to reflect. You will be looked up in the punishment-room for twenty-four hours, and will have only bread and water. If at the end of that time you decide to obey me, I will pardon you. If you

are still obstinate, you will be publicly flogged in the School Hall."

"Weally, sir—"

"Enough!"

Arthur Augustus was silent. The Head touched a bell, and it was answered by the school sergeant.

The Head made a gesture towards D'Arcy.

"You will take Master D'Arcy to the punishment-room, and lock him in, and see that no one is allowed to communicate with him. His diet will be bread and water, till I give you further instructions."

"Yes, sir."

"You will follow the sergeant, D'Arcy."

"Yaas, sir. I am sowwy—"

"That will do."

"I am vewy sowwy, sir—"

"You may go!"

"Yaas, sir. But you must allow me to express my wegwet for havin' made you waxy, sir," said the swell of St. Jim's earnestly. "It is vewy wotten for you to considah that I mean to be impertinent, and I am vewy sowwy you should look at it in that light, I—"

"Take Master D'Arcy away, sergeant!"

"Yes, sir."

The sergeant dropped his hand upon D'Arcy's shoulder, and the elegant junior was walked out of the room.

"Anything very bad, Master D'Arcy?" asked the sergeant respectfully enough.

"I am afwaid so, sergeant."

"I'm sorry, sir."

"Thank you vewy much. I suppose you will have to lock me up, as the Head gave the ordah, and I will excuse you."

The sergeant grinned.

"Thank you, sir."

He led the way to the punishment-room.

The sergeant was in a state of astonishment, and that state was likely to be shared by the rest of St. Jim's when they heard the news.

For the punishment-cell at St. Jim's was seldom, or rather, never used.

In the old days of the school, under the hard, grim rule of the headmasters of long ago, the cell had been used frequently enough. But of late years it had fallen into disuse, and, in fact, a boy was not confined in it once a year. Its very existence had almost been forgotten.

The sergeant led the way to the upper corridor, where the cell was situated, and opened the door.

The cell was about eight feet square, and had a barred window looking out upon a corner of the quadrangle.

Outside, the tall branches of a tree brushed against the glass.

The room was shadowy. The small grate had a bar across it, though the chimney was too narrow to admit any but the smallest fag at St. Jim's.

The room was furnished with a table, a chair, and a wash-stand—all of them covered with dust.

The sergeant looked round him with a shiver.

"I'll have a few things put in here, Master D'Arcy, if you like," he said.

"Thank you, sergeant."

"The House-dame will do it," said the sergeant. "It might be made a bit more comfortable. I shall have to lock you up, according to orders."

"Certainly, sergeant."

The sergeant retired, and the key grated in the rusty lock. Arthur Augustus sat down on the chair, and looked round him.

The room was dull and lonely. The swell of St. Jim's quaked. Twenty-four hours there, without a soul to speak to, on bread and water! His heart sank.

But he did not falter.

CHAPTER 7. Friends in Need!

ARTHUR AUGUSTUS paced the punishment-cell with uneasy strides.

He had been there several hours now, and it was no wonder that he was growing decidedly bored.

There was no book of any sort in the room, and the junior had nothing about him to read, except a letter from his Aunt Adelina, full of good advice, which he had been through dutifully once, and did not feel inclined to go through again.

"Bai Jove!" murmured D'Arcy, more than once. "I weally think I can't stand this, you know! It's absolutely beastlay!"

He tried the door, and he tried the window, and he looked up the chimney.

But there was no escape.

He was a prisoner.

Twenty-four hours!

And less than three of them had passed so far!

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The very thought of that dreary extent of time struck a chill to the heart of the swell of St. Jim's.

How was he to live through it?

He listened eagerly for the stroke of half-past four from the school clock, which was audible to him in the cell.

Surely his chums would find some means of communicating with him when they were released from classes, and learned wheré he was!

Half-past four!

The school clock chimed out, but his chums did not come. Were they looking for him? Arthur Augustus climbed on the chair, and looked out of the barred window.

He could see only a corner of the quad, and that was mostly obstructed by the branches of the big tree outside.

He stepped down without seeing a soul, and resumed his monotonous pacing of the cell.

Knock!

The sound at the door sent a thrill through the junior. He hurried towards the door at once.

"Who's there?"

"We're all here!" said Tom Merry's voice through the keyhole.

"Jolly glad to see you, deah boys—I mean, to heah you," said D'Arcy, with great relief. "If it hadn't been for heavin' the clock stwike, I should think that I had been here a feahfully long time."

"We've been looking for you, and only just learned from the sergeant where you were," said Jack Blake. "How long have you been here?"

"All the afternoon."

"Poor old Gussy!"

"Yaas, it is wathah hard cheese, and no mistake, deah boy! I have been bored almost to tears, you know."

"What are you here for?"

"Head's orders."

"Yes. But for how long—and why?"

"Twenty-four hours!"

"Great Scott!"

"And after that?" asked Monty Lowther.

"Then I am to be flogged, unless I make up my mind to give the name of the silly ass who tarred Mr. Selby!"

"Phew!"

"What are you going to do, Gussy?"

"I weally do not know. I would wathah be flogged than give away the chap who tarred the obnoxious person; but, of course, it is impos for me to submit to a floggin', as it would be a feahful outwage upon my personal dig."

"To say nothing of the fact that it hurts," said Digby.

"Oh, I should not mind the pain so much, deah boy; but a fellow is bound to considah his dig."

"Look here, Gussy! There's only one way out of it. We'll find the chap who did it, and make him own up!"

"Nothin' of the sort, Blake!"

"But—"

"You see, the Head has declared that the chap will be expelled as soon as found, and I would wathah be flogged than have him expelled."

"Yes. But—"

"I am quite decided upon that point, Blake. You must not take any such step, or I shall wefuse to wegard you as a fwend any longah."

"But how are you going to get out of the flogging?" demanded Tom Merry.

"If the worst comes to the worst, Tom Mewwy, I pwe-sume I shall have to bolt!"

"Bolt!"

"Yaas. Wun away fwom school, you know."

"You ass!"

"Weally, Tom Mewwy—"

"You shan't do anything of the sort. For one thing, you would be brought back and flogged, all the same."

"I should wefuse to be bwought back and flogged, all the same."

"Besides, you mightn't be allowed to return to St. Jim's at all."

"I should be vewy sowwy to leave St. Jim's; but anythin' would be pwefewable to an outwage on a fellow's dig."

"Oh, he's hopeless!" murmured Tom Merry. "I say, Gussy, what have you got to eat in there?"

"I am goin' to have bwead and watah."

"All the time?"

"Yaas, wathah!"

"You're jolly well not! We'll get you something better than that!"

"The door's locked, deah boys."

"Well, there's the window!"

"Bai Jove, yaas! I nevah thought of that. If you could send me up a file, I could get the bars filed away, and escape from the window."

"You couldn't. You'd break your neck!"

"Not at all, deah boy. You wemembah that when Tom-sonio's Circus was here, I did seweral acwobatic twicks with gweat success?"

"I remember you biffed into a Form master. I don't remember anything else."

"There was that clown chap, Joey Pye. I did several of his twicks, and was vewy successful," said D'Arcy. "As a mattah of fact, it has occurred to me that if I left St. Jim's, it would be a good wheeze for me to get a job in the circus as a widah."

"As a what?"

"As a circus widah."

"Oh, a circus rider! Well, of all the asses——"

"Weally, Tom Mewwy——"

"You can't get out of the window, but we'll send you up some grub by the window," said Tom Merry. "Have you a cord or anything you can let down for it?"

"I am sowwy—no!"

"Well, unpick some of your shirt, or necktie, or something, and make a string," said Tom Merry. "You can let that down from the window, and we'll tie a rope on it—see? And when you have pulled up the rope, you can use the rope to pull anything up with."

"Bai Jove! That is a weally wippin' ideah, Tom Mewwy, and it is vewy surpwisin' to me that you thought of it."

There was a sound of loud footsteps in the passage.

Tom Merry looked round.

"Hallo! Here comes the sergeant! Cave!"

"We're off, Gussy. See you again!"

"Wight-ho, deah boy!"

And the juniors scuttled along as the school sergeant came along the passage with loudly tramping feet, as if he wished to warn them of his approach, as doubtless he did.

The sergeant was carrying a tray, upon which reposed a loaf of bread and a jug of water.

Such was to be the diet of the swell of St. Jim's until his obstinacy was subdued, and he was brought to a better sense of discipline.

The sergeant looked neither to the left nor to the right. He did not see the feet disappearing round the next corner.

He unlocked the door of the punishment-cell, and carried in the tray.

He set it upon the little table, and glanced round the room. He had sent in several articles of furniture to make it more comfortable, but it was certainly a dull and dreary place.

Arthur Augustus glanced at the tray.

He was getting a little hungry, but he was not in the least inclined to tackle a diet of bread and water.

"Thank you, sergeant!" he said.

"I'm sorry it's nothing better, sir," said the sergeant.

"Anything I can get you, sir, that's not against orders?"

"Yaas, wathah! My toothbwush is the most important. But I want a comb and a bwush, too, and a change of linen, and my pyjamas, you know, as well as a lookin'-glass."

The sergeant grinned.

"Very well, sir!"

He retired, locking the door after him. He returned in ten minutes with the articles D'Arcy required. The diet on the tray had not been touched.

"I'd better leave it, sir," said the sergeant.

"Yaas, certainly!"

"No good going hungry, sir," said the sergeant.

Arthur Augustus smiled.

"Oh, that's all wight, sergeant! I am not thinkin' of twyin' the effect of a hungah stwike."

"Very well, sir!"

And the school sergeant went out and locked the door.

Arthur Augustus was left alone once more, with the bread and water, and his reflections, which were not of the happiest.

CHAPTER 8.

Major and Minor!

TAP!

Arthur Augustus gave a start.

Tap!

The swell of St. Jim's stepped quickly to the window.

He had been expecting his chums every moment there, and he had wondered at the delay, and the tap roused him from a glum reverie.

As he stepped to the window, he dimly made out a form outside the glass. But it was too dark to recognise it.

Tap!

Arthur Augustus pushed up the lower sash of the window. "Wait a minute, deah boy," he whispered; "I'll light the gas!"

"Don't, you ass!" came the reply. "If you have a light I shall show up to anybody who happens to be in the quad."

"Bai Jove! I nevah thought of that!"

"Lucky I did, then!"

(Continued on page 12.)



Do you know a good joke? If so, send it to "THE GEM JESTER," 5, Carmelite Street, London, E.C.4 (Comp.). Fine footballs are awarded every week for the two best jokes received, and a half-a-crown is paid for every other joke that appears in this column.

HIS FUTURE.

Son: "I don't know whether to be a barber or an author."

Father: "Toss for it—heads or tails!"

A football has been awarded to A. GOSLETT, 36, William Street, Woodstock, South Africa.

SAFETY FIRST!

Panting and perspiring, two Irishmen riding a tandem had reached the top of a steep hill.

"Begorra, Pat," gasped Mike, "that was a stiff climb!"

"Sure, Mike," puffed Pat, "if I hadn't kept the brake on we should have gone backwards!"

A football has been awarded to A. CARTER, 292, Sutton Road, Southend-on-Sea.

CORRECT.

Mother (teaching son arithmetic): "Take the Smith family—there is mother, father, and the baby. How many does that make?"

Son: "Two and one to carry!"

Half-a-crown has been awarded to D. McKEOUGH, 4, St. James' Place, Plumstead, London, S.E.18.

ADMITTED.

Jinks: "If I were you I'd have more sense."

Binks: "Exactly—you would!"

Half-a-crown has been awarded to Miss L. OGDEN, 237, Blyth Road, Hayes, Middlesex.

AND HOW?

Barber (about to part customer's hair): "Centre, sir?!"

Absent-minded Cricketer: "Middle and leg, please!"

Half-a-crown has been awarded to E. L. MEDCRAFT, 5, Sussex Road, Holloway, London, N.7.

HIS FAILING.

Father: "How was it you didn't win the spelling prize, Tommy?"

Tommy: "I put too many 'Z's' in scissors!"

Half-a-crown has been awarded to S. MAWER, 138, Cooper Road, Grimsby, Lincs.

PITY THE RECRUIT.

The drill sergeant was getting fed up with a particularly raw recruit.

"Didn't you hear 'about turn'?" he roared.

"No," answered the recruit. "What about 'im'?"

Half-a-crown has been awarded to A. READER, 39, Gordon Road, Ealing, London, W.5.

IRISH.

Shopkeeper: "Hey! What's the idea, throwing a brick through my window?"

Pat: "Begorra, an' how was I to know the wasp was on the inside?"

Half-a-crown has been awarded to E. CONWAY, 26, Walmer Street, Rusholme, Manchester.

BOWLED!

Slogger: "When I 'its the ball I 'its very 'ard, very 'igh——"

Captain: "And very seldom."

Half-a-crown has been awarded to J. LLOYD, Walmer, Park Road, Audenshaw.

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 1,333.

"Wally! How on earth did you get here?"
D'Arcy minor chuckled. Arthur Augustus had expected to see Tom Merry or Blake, and he jammed his eyeglass into his eye and stared at Wally in astonishment.

"Have you a ladder, Wally?" asked Arthur Augustus, looking in vain for a sign of one.

"No."

"Are you alone?"

"Of course!"

"How did you get here, then?"

"Along the ledge from Binks' window. I'm standing on the ledge now, and holding to these blessed bars."

D'Arcy shivered.

"It is feahfully wisky, Wally."

"Not if you've got a good nerve—and I have."

"Yaas, wathah—you have, Wally. What an uttah ass you were to play that twick on Mr. Selby this aftahnoon!"

Wally snorted.

"What an utter ass you were to be there to see it done," he retorted. "I warned you to get out of the garden. Why didn't you?"

"It was my dutay as your eldah bwother to loow aftah you."

"Rats!"

"If you say wats to me, Wally——"

"More rats!" said D'Arcy minor cheerfully. "But I didn't come here to jaw you, Gussy. You're in a fix."

"Yaas, wathah! I wegard it as a deuced awkward posish for any fellow."

"What are you going to do?"

"I weally do not know, Wally."

"You saw me shove the tar over Selby, I suppose?"

"Yaas."

"And they know you saw it?"

"Yaas, wathah!"

"And you've got to own up who did it?"

"Yaas."

"And you won't?"

"No."

"And if you don't you're going to be kept here for twenty-four hours, and then flogged?" said Wally moodily.

"So the Head says."

"Do you think he will change his mind?"

D'Arcy shook his head.

"I hardly think so, Wally. You see, it's a question of dig with him now, as well as with me, and he is hardly likely to give in."

"It's rotten!"

"Yaas, wathah! I wegard it as extremely wotten. But I suppose it cannot be helped, and it's no use makin' a fuss about it, you know."

"Look here," said Wally abruptly; "you're not going to be flogged. If it comes to that, I shall go to the Head and own up."

"Imposs, deah boy."

"Why?"

"Because the Head has said he will expel the chap that did it. It is bettah for one of us to be flogged than for the othah to be expelled."

"Yes; but——"

"You see, we must think of the people at home," said D'Arcy earnestly. "It would be an awful blow to the matah for you to be sacked."

Wally nodded gloomily.

"Yes, I suppose so."

"Besides, I shall not be flogged," said Arthur Augustus. "It would be so extremely dewogatory to my personal dig that I could not dweam of allowin' it."

"But how are you going to prevent it?"

"I shall wetiah fwom the scene before I am flogged."

"You don't mean run away from the school?" gasped Wally.

"Certainly not. I should wegard wunnin' away fwom school as an extremely undignified pwocedin'. I shall simply wetiah fwom St. Jim's for a time without informin' anybody of my whereabouts."

"You ass!"

"I wefuse to be called an ass!"

"What's the difference between running away from school and retiring from St. Jim's for a time without informing anybody of your whereabouts?" growled Wally.

"Is that a conundrum, deah boy?"

Wally snorted.

"Look here, Gus, it would be better for me to own up."

"Wats! You must not be expelled—it would wowwy the matah. I wefuse to allow you to own up, Wally!"

"That wouldn't make much difference if I decided to," growled D'Arcy minor.

"Weally, Wally——"

"But perhaps you're right. It's a serious thing to be sacked. It's better for you to be flogged, if it comes to that, from the point of view of the people at home," remarked D'Arcy minor thoughtfully.

"Yaas, wathah!"

"But if you did run away——"

"I shall not run away."

"Well, if you retired from St. Jim's, then, ass, if you prefer it that way—if you did that the Head would get his rag out, and you might not be allowed to come back."

"Of course, that would be wotten, but it is not certain. And, anyway, it would be bettah than one of us bein' expelled."

"Would you go home?"

"Oh, no! The governah would send me back, as sure as a gun!"

"Where would you go, then?"

"I am not suah; I have wawious wesources," said D'Arcy. "You wemembah how I wode the circus horse when Tomsonio's Circus was here? I have an ideah of findin' that circus again and offahwin' my services to Signor Tomsonio as a circus widah."

"Well, of all the asses——"

"Weally, Wally——"

"I won't allow any such rot! I——"

"I twust, Wally, that you will not forget our wespective positions as majah and minah," said Arthur Augustus, with dignity.

"Rats!"

"You are takin' an unfaih advantage, Wally, as it is imposs undah the circs for me to give you a feahful thwashin'."

"Look here, Gussy——"

Wally was suddenly interrupted.

Something came looming up in the darkness behind him, and gave him a violent push between the shoulders, and his head was driven in at the window, and he would have gone headforemost into the room had not the bars caught on his shoulders and stopped him.

Potts, the Office Boy!



CHAPTER 9.
A Feed for Gussy!

WALLY gave a gasp of surprise and wrath. Standing there on the stone ledge fifty feet above the ground, he had expected anything rather than an attack in the rear.

He clung to the bars and glared round him in amazement with a vague idea that a stray aeroplane had somehow wandered round the walls of St. Jim's and run into him. But it was not an aeroplane.

The end of a ladder loomed up in the darkness, and, having biffed Wally in the back, it settled down against the window-sill.

Wally stared at it in surprise. "Hallo!" he ejaculated. "Were you expecting visitors, Gussy?"

"Bai Jove!"
"There's a ladder here!"
"I pvesume it must be Tom Mewwy. He was goin' to send some things up on a wope, but appawntly he has obtained possession of Taggles' long ladder."

"Yes; and he's jolly well biffed me in the back with it!" growled Wally.

"Ha, ha, ha!"
"What are you cacklin' at?"
"I wegard it as funnay."

"Well, I don't," growled Wally, disengaging one hand and rubbing his shoulder. "Hallo! I can hear the silly ass coming up the ladder! Hallo, there!"

"Who on earth's that?" came back Tom Merry's voice, in tones of surprise. "Is that you, young Wally?"

"Yes, ass!"

"How did you get there, you young monkey?"
"I came along the ledge—less trouble than dragging a long ladder about," said D'Arcy minor disdainfully. "You chaps want to take lessons from the Third how to do things."

"You cheeky young duffer, you risked breaking your neck!"

"Then there's no reason why you couldn't risk yours. It's a jolly sight less valuable."

"Br-r-r-r!"
Tom Merry came steadily up the ladder. His chums were holding it at the foot. The hero of the Shell had a large bag in his hand, which was crammed with provisions. If Tom Merry had come along the ledge as Wally had done, it would have been difficult to get the bag along there. Wally stepped aside on the ledge and gave Tom a hand up with the bag.

D'Arcy looked out between the bars of the window.

"Bai Jove, I am glad to see you, Tom Mewwy!"
"And I'm glad to see your old chivvy again, Gussy. Here's the grub."

"I'm gettin' wathah peckish."

"Well, there's enough here to last even Fatty Wynn for twenty-four hours," said Tom, with a laugh. "Can you get the bag in, or shall I unpack it?"

"I think it will come in."

The packed bag was forced between the bars, and it just went through. D'Arcy lifted it down into the cell, and its weight was an assurance that there were plenty of provisions in it for the period of his confinement in the punishment-cell.

"Bai Jove! This is weally good of you, deah boy!"
"Not a bit of it! Do you remember the time I was

laid-up in the sanatorium and you brought me in grub?" chuckled Tom Merry. "One good turn deserves another."

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Hallo! What's that?"
Tom Merry glanced downward as the ladder creaked under a new weight.

The plump form and fat face of Fatty Wynn of the New House loomed up below him. The fat Fourth-Former gasped a little as he came up the ladder.

"I've got an idea, Merry."

"Go ahead!"
"Gussy must be feeling awfully lonely in there by himself. Suppose one of us squeeze in at the window and keep him company for a time?"

Tom Merry laughed.

"I suppose you'd be willing to do it, Fatty?"

"Well, I was thinking so, you know."

"What put the idea into your head—the feed we've just shoved in?"

"Oh, really——"

"How do you think you would get in between those bars, Fatty?" grinned Tom Merry.

Fatty Wynn looked at the bars of the window and gave a grunt, and slid down the ladder again. Even the feed within did not make him feel equal to the effort of attempting to squeeze through that narrow space.

Wally chuckled.

"It's not a bad idea, though," he remarked. "I'm the smallest chap here, and I think I might be able to squeeze in, and I could stay till the bed-time of the Third."

"I should be vewy glad of your company, Wally."

"I should think so."

"Weally——"

"Good egg!" said Tom Merry. "See if you can squeeze in, and when you come out you can get in by Binks' window as you came."

"Good!"

Wally took off his jacket to reduce himself to the slimmest possible dimensions, and put his head through the window. His shoulders caught on the bars, but he turned himself sideways and began to worm and squirm his way through.

"You give me a shove, Tom Merry."

"Right-ho!"

"You can help me from your side, Gus."

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Ow!"

"What's the mattah?"

"I didn't say twist my head off, you ass!"

"I was only twyin' to pull you in, and I wish it to be distinctly undahstood that I wefuse to be called an ass!"

"Ow!"

"What's the mattah now?"

"Tom Merry, don't shove me against the bars in that fatheaded way, you frabious duffer!"

"Oh, that's all right!"

"If you shove me again, I'll kick you!" grunted Wally.

"Weally, Wally——"

"Leggo my hair, you duffer!"

"What am I to catch hold of, then? Shall I twy pullin' you in by your yahs?"

"If you do, I'll dot you on the boko."

"Leggo my legs, Tom Merry!"

"I was helping you."

"Well, don't help me, then."

"Bai Jove! He's gettin' thwough."

OVERHEAD CHARGES!



"Ow!"

D'Arcy minor came through with a rush. He landed on his hands on the floor, and rolled over with a grunt.

"Bai Jove!"

"G-r-r-r! You might give a fellow a hand up."

"Certainly, deah boy!"

Arthur Augustus helped his minor to his feet.

Tom Merry peered in at the window.

"All serene?"

"Yaas, wathah!"

"I'm jolly well hurt!" growled D'Arcy minor. "Phew!"

"What's the matter, Wally?"

"There's somebody coming."

"Gweat Scott!"

There was a very audible sound of footsteps in the passage.

Somebody was certainly coming towards the punishment-cell.

Was it a chance passer, or someone paying a visit to the imprisoned junior? The two juniors stared at one another in dismay, and Tom Merry, at the window, was equally dismayed.

Tom Merry, however, seldom lost his presence of mind.

"Shove that bag out of sight," he muttered quickly.

"You nip under the bead, Wally. I'll bunk! Quick!"

"Right you are!"

Wally slid under the little camp-bed in the corner. There wasn't much room for Wally there, and he had to squeeze under. But he did it. Arthur Augustus threw the bag of provisions behind the head of the bed, where it could not be seen unless the visitor came up to that side of the room.

"Good!" muttered Tom Merry.

"Buzz off, deah boy!"

"Yes, rather!"

Tom Merry slid down the ladder at lightning speed.

There was a grunt at the foot of it as he biffed his feet on the chest of Monty Lowther, who was holding the ladder.

"Ow! You ass!"

"Never mind. I—I—"

"But I do mind!" howled Lowther. "I'm hurt! You ass! I—"

"Quick, get the ladder away! Cave!"

"Oh!"

The juniors gripped the ladder, and dragged it away from the wall. It came down with a rush, and they narrowly saved it from a resounding crash upon the ground. With a dozen hands grasping it, the ladder was rushed off into the gloom. Meanwhile, Arthur Augustus and Wally waited in suspense in the punishment-cell.

CHAPTER 10.

Wally in Close Quarters!

A KEY grated in the lock, and the door of the punishment-cell opened.

Mr. Railton, the master of the School House, came in.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy faced him with a palpitating heart.

He was painfully conscious of the fact that one of Wally's boots were showing from under the bed, D'Arcy's eyes being so used to the darkness that he could see quite plainly in the little room.

Mr. Railton, however, had come in from a lighted passage, and all was black to him.

"D'Arcy!"

"Yaas, sir."

"Why have you no light?"

"I—I have not lighted the gas, sir."

"Light it."

"Certainly, sir."

Arthur Augustus fumbled for matches. While he was doing so, he contrived to give Wally's too prominent boot a sly kick, and it was jerked into the cover of the bed.

A match scratched out, and D'Arcy lighted the gas.

Mr. Railton glanced at the junior as he stood blinking in the sudden light.

There was silence for some moments, and D'Arcy's heart beat hard. Did the Housemaster suspect something?

But there was no suspicion in Mr. Railton's face.

"I have come here to speak seriously to you, D'Arcy," he said, pushing the door shut.

"Yaas, sir."

Mr. Railton crossed to the bed, and sat down upon it.

Wally could hardly avoid a gasp of terror as the little bed creaked over him, and one of Mr. Railton's boots slightly knocked against his under the edge of the bed.

His heart stood still for a moment with the thought that Mr. Railton would look down to discover what it was his feet had knocked against.

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But the Housemaster did not notice it.

He looked earnestly at D'Arcy, who stood with a flushed and worried countenance.

"D'Arcy, you are in a serious position."

"Yaas, sir."

"So am I, by George!" murmured Wally, sotto voce.

"You have placed yourself in direct opposition to the headmaster," said Mr. Railton. "It is an impossible position, D'Arcy."

"I know it's a dooced awkward posish, sir."

"You have refused to obey your headmaster?"

"Not wefused, sir."

"What do you call it, then?" asked Mr. Railton sternly.



Gussy and Wally were sprawling on the floor after their room opened and Kildare looked in! "What's all this noise about?" "Get here?" The prefects

"Well, er—declined, sir."

"I do not see much difference."

"Oh, yaas, sir, it would be extremely disrespectful to wefuse, and I should be vewy sowwy to be guilty of diswespect towards a gentleman I wespect as much as Doctah Holmes."

The Housemaster smiled slightly.

"You take a curious method of showing your respect, D'Arcy. Now, I can understand your feelings in this matter, and enter into them to a great extent. You would consider it dishonourable to betray the foolish lad who played that trick upon Mr. Selby?"

"Yaas, sir."

"As a rule, Dr. Holmes would be the last man to require one boy to give information against another," said Mr. Railton. "But the present case is different. You saw the outrage—for it was certainly more an outrage than a joke—and you refused to answer when you were questioned. Now, you must not set your private judgment up against the opinion of your headmaster, D'Arcy. If Dr. Holmes considers it right for you to speak, it is your duty to speak."

Arthur Augustus looked very troubled.

"You understand me, D'Arcy."

"Yaas, sir."

"Then I hope my words will have the effect of changing your resolution," said Mr. Railton. "You have taken up



restling bout, when suddenly the door of the punishment-room about?" he asked. "Why—what—who—How did you stare blankly at Wally."

an impossible position. It is no longer a question of the discovery of the perpetrator of that foolish trick. As the matter now stands, you have been guilty of direct disobedience to your headmaster, and either you or Dr. Holmes must yield the point. It is inconceivable that Dr. Holmes, the Head of the school, should yield in such a contest. You see that?"

"I suppose so, sir."

"Then I hope you will do the sensible thing, D'Arcy, and speak out and end this decidedly unpleasant situation."

Arthur Augustus was silent.

"Come, D'Arcy, I am speaking as your friend, and not as your Housemaster," said Mr. Railton. "I take an

interest in you. I am deeply sorry to see you in trouble like this. Will you not be sensible and take my advice?"

The swell of St. Jim's was still silent.

He felt Mr. Railton's kindness, and was grateful for it; but his tongue was tied. It was not only that he would not "sneak"—there was the fact, which Mr. Railton did not, of course, suspect—that it was his brother who would suffer if he spoke. That made a difference.

"If you persist in this obstinacy," said the Housemaster, raising his voice a little, "you will suffer for it. You must understand that disobedience from a junior to the Head must be severely punished."

"Yaas, sir."

"You will remain in this cell for twenty-four hours, and then you will be flogged in public in the School Hall before the whole college," said Mr. Railton. "I should think that the prospect of such a painful and humiliating punishment would make you reflect."

"I am sowwy, sir, but—"

"Come, D'Arcy."

"I cannot speak, sir."

"This is mere folly, D'Arcy."

"I am sowwy you should think so, sir, but I feel that I ought to say nothing," said Arthur Augustus. "If I am flogged, I suppose I can stand it."

Mr. Railton rose.

His brow was very stern, and there was a troubled look in his eyes. It was evident that he was really concerned for the swell of St. Jim's.

"Very well, D'Arcy. I have no more to say."

"I trust you will not considah me diswespectful, sir."

"I believe you do not intend to be so, D'Arcy," said the Housemaster. "I think you are acting wrongly, however. But—Dear me, what is that?"

The Housemaster had suddenly caught sight of the bag crammed with provisions lying on the floor at the head of the bed.

Wally trembled; for the moment he thought that the Housemaster had discovered him. But his presence of mind did not fail him. He lay still, hardly breathing.

D'Arcy gave a start of dismay.

He put up his eyeglass, and stared at the bag at which the Housemaster was looking in great surprise.

In the haste of throwing it there, two or three tarts had burst out of a paper bag within, and rolled out on the floor—a sufficient indication of the contents of the crammed bag.

"Bai Jove!"

"What is that, D'Arcy?"

"It—it looks like a bag, sir."

"It certainly is a bag," said Mr. Railton, pushing it with his foot.

Several apples rolled out, and a couple of oranges.

The Housemaster smiled involuntarily.

"Bai Jove, sir!"

"How did this bag come here? I understood that you were on a diet of bread and water during your confinement in this room."

"So did I, sir."

"But this bag is here."

"Yaas, sir, it appeahs so."

The Housemaster looked at him curiously. It was pretty clear that he would get no information from D'Arcy as to how the bag came there. He glanced at the window, and saw that it was open, and guessed.

"Well, D'Arcy," he said, without making any further reference to the bag, "you have made up your mind?"

"I think so, sir."

"I hope you will change it by to-morrow," said Mr. Railton. "I will leave you now. I had hoped to do some good by coming here."

"I am sowwy, sir."

Mr. Railton opened the door. He glanced back once at D'Arcy, and did not appear to see the bag or the tell-tale apples on the floor and apparently had forgotten their existence.

"Good-night, D'Arcy!"

"Good-night, sir!"

Mr. Railton locked the door, and stepped out into the dusky corridor. He knocked against someone in the gloom, and uttered an exclamation.

"Who is that?"

"Me, sir!" was the prompt and ungrammatical reply.

"Oh, is it you, Binks?"

"Yes, sir."

Mr. Railton gave the School House page a glance, and passed on. It did not occur to him to ask what Binks was doing in the passage there.

The School House page looked after him till he disappeared, and muttered to himself:

"Ah, they little know!"

Then he tapped softly at D'Arcy's door.

(Continued on page 17.)

ANOTHER PAGE OF NEWS AND VIEWS FROM—



Address all letters : The Editor, The GEM, The Amalgamated Press, Ltd., Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

HALLO, chums! How do you like the St. Jim's story in this issue? Grand, isn't it? It's the type of yarn that you cannot put down until you've finished reading it. Well, you'll find that the same applies to next week's ripping yarn, which is the sequel to "Gussy's Sacrifice!" As you can gather from the title—

"THE CIRCUS SCHOOLBOY!"

—Gussy gets a job in Tomsonio's Circus, which visited St. Jim's a few weeks ago. But many exciting things happen to Arthur Augustus before he meets his circus friends. You'll enjoy every word of his adventures in this tip-top tale.

You'll enjoy, too, the next thrilling adventures of the St. Frank's chums in China. There's no doubt that

"ST. FRANK'S VERSUS FOO CHOW!"

will be one of the most popular serials we have had in the GEM, for every story by Mr. E. S. Brooks always gets a good welcome from readers. Don't miss next week's nerve-tingling chapters of this super serial.

Potts, our irrepressible office-boy, puts his foot in trouble again next Wednesday, and the GEM Jester gives you the pick of the jokes from readers, for which footballs and half-a-crowns are awarded. Lastly, your Editor will have many more interesting things to tell you.

THE HOLIDAY ANNUAL.

Better, brighter, and cheaper than ever, the 1934 "Greyfriars Holiday Annual" makes its welcome appearance on Friday, September 1st. This popular book, starring the adventures of our own schoolboy chums, Tom Merry & Co., and the jolly escapades of Harry Wharton & Co. of Greyfriars, and Jimmy Silver & Co. of Rookwood, has always led the field with the excellent quality and unrivalled quantity of its varied contents. Now this wonder annual has been reduced from 6s. to 5s.; so more than ever it provides an example of outstanding value.

The "H.A.'s" magnificent contents include stories of the Wild West, flying, motor-cycle racing, the sea, and old-time adventure, and a host of other good things. It's the best annual any boy could wish for!

ANOTHER POPULAR FAVOURITE.

On sale next Friday, too, is another grand book that has become a popular favourite with all adventure-loving boys—that is, "The

Popular Book of Boys' Stories. This year's splendid volume, price 2s. 6d., has been considerably increased, and it now has 192 pages of thrilling stories of adventure on land, at sea, and in the air.

WARM WORK!

Tom Erics, of Manchester, writes to ask me if I can tell him anything about working in the stokehold of a destroyer. Well, Tom, as it happens, I can. When a destroyer goes into action, the heat becomes so great in the engine-room that all the paint peels off the walls, and the noise is so terrific that it is impossible to hear anything anyone says, and the only means of communication is by tapping with a spanner on a pipe. All that matters to the engine-room watch when the destroyer goes into action, is to watch the dial which records the orders from the bridge. This shows the number of revolutions required, not the knots.

Now you might think that the men dislike going at full speed, owing to the heat, but, Tom, you would be wrong. When a destroyer is travelling at speed all the fans are running and a fair amount of draught is provided, with the result that the temperature is only about 98 degrees! I say only—personally that would be a lot too hot for me; but to the men who are used to it, it seems quite cool. But when the captain wants the ship to slow down to five knots, that's when the heat goes up.

The trouble is that if the speed were just slackened off, and the fans left running and all the ventilators open, the result would be a terrific belch of black smoke from the funnels, and in the Navy this is a crime. So when the order to slow down comes along, the fans are switched off, all air-holes are closed, and then the heat begins to rise, for all the heat from the boilers and engines has to be kept in the engine-room, so that only a haze comes from the funnels. When this happens the temperature of the engine-room rises to 150 or more! Well, Tom, are you thinking of taking the job on?

THE TRUTHFUL FISHERMAN!

I expect quite a lot of you fellows are, or have been, fishermen. Like me, you have no doubt sat for hours watching a float that never moves, and kidding yourself that you are sure to get something soon. And every few minutes someone comes along, looks at you in a pitying sort of way, and says, "Caught anything yet?" Of course you haven't, but you don't want to be reminded of the fact every few minutes. It is most annoying. However, one bright fellow has now solved the problem of just how to avoid this kind of annoyance. He sits by the river watching his float, but on his

back there hangs a card, and on it, in large letters, there are printed three words: "NO, NOT YET!"

ANOTHER FISH STORY.

Here is another little yarn about fish, but of a somewhat different kind. It happened at Victoria Falls, Rhodesia. It seems that a bird was feeling hungry one morning, and after thinking about things for a bit, decided that he would like some nice fish for breakfast. Now the bird is a much better angler than man. He doesn't have to wait about for the fish to bite—he just bites the fish! Anyway, this fellow collected a nice fat fish and set off home with it. He was passing over the power station at Victoria Falls, when something startled him and his breakfast slipped from his mouth. The fish fell on the insulators, and the entire electric supply broke down!

SOME LEMONS!

For years in Florida and California they have been experimenting on the possibilities of producing a really large-sized lemon. The sort of thing they wanted was a single lemon that would make nearly as much lemonade as Fatty Wynn could drink at a time. Now they have succeeded. The very latest thing in lemons weighs two pounds and contains as much juice as twelve of the ordinary variety. That certainly sounds like a pretty useful lemon—but Fatty Wynn says he will still want two or three at a sitting.

STRANGE SHEEP!

In the Shantung Province, in China, they have a very strange breed of sheep known as the Fat-tailed sheep. The name describes the sheep, for these strange animals have enormous tails which become as wide as their bodies. They are kept for their wool, which is very fine and very abundant, and also for the oil which is obtained from the enormous tails. This oil is regarded as a great delicacy by the Chinese. Now the bigger the tail is, the more valuable the sheep is, so that the great aim of the farmers is to get the tails as big as possible. That may be all very well for the farmer, but it is a bit tough on the sheep that has to drag an enormous tail round after it, especially when it gets so big that it trails on the ground. These Chinese farmers, however, fully realise this fact, and so, when a sheep's tail becomes too large, they fit it with a little two-wheeled trolley and it drags its tail behind it—just like Bo-peep's sheep in the nursery rhyme!

CHOCOLATES!

Don't forget this great offer when you are at the seaside this year, chums. Messrs. Cadbury Bros. have contributed a huge quantity of their famous Dairy Milk bars for the consumption of all readers who buy their GEM from beach sellers, kiosks, and such places at most of our well-known seaside resorts. In addition they have contributed pound boxes of their delicious assorted chocolates as prizes at our gala, cinema, and concert party competitions. Don't forget your chocolate—and your GEM—when you go to the sea!

HEARD THIS ONE?

The chap who was asked what was the meaning of a "narrow squeak" and said, after considerable thought, that he supposed it was a slang expression meaning a "thin mouse"!

YOUR EDITOR.

GUSSY'S SACRIFICE!

(Continued from page 15.)

CHAPTER 11. Binks Offers Aid!

TAP!

Wally was just dragging himself, with a great gasp of relief, from under the narrow bed, when the tap came at the door.

Wally popped back again in an instant, and gave a grunt as he knocked his head against the bedstead.

Arthur Augustus turned quickly to the door.

"Come in!" he called out, forgetting that the door was locked.

Tap!

"Come 'ere, Master D'Arcy!" said a hoarse voice at the door.

"Bai Jove! It's Binks!"

"The ass!" growled Wally, putting his head out again. "He's made me bump my napper, the silly ass! I'll punch his head!"

He crawled out, sat on the bed, and rubbed his head.

Arthur Augustus went to the door, and stooped to the keyhole.

"Is that you, Binks?"

"Yes, sir."

"What do you want?"

"Whisper, sir, in case they 'ear," said Binks, in a tragic voice. "'Ush! I think I 'ear footprints—I mean foot-steps!"

"Bai Jove!"

The swell of St. Jim's grinned a little. Binks, the boot-boy, lived in a constant state of tragic emphasis. His favourite literature was that turned out by the Press of New York, and imported into England for the delectation of British youth. He followed the adventures of Deadshot Bill and Slippery Sam, the Broncho Buster, with breathless interest, and yearned for the day when he would throw aside apron and knife-machine, and mount a coal-black steed and scour the plains of the Wild West.

Why the steed was to be necessarily of a coal-black hue was not clear, nor indeed what effective purpose would be served by scouring the plains of the Wild West. But such was Binks' ambition, and he lived for it and dreamed of it.

As in the daydreams of Maud Muller, when "sometimes her narrow kitchen walls stretched away into stately halls," so in the dreams of Binks, the boot-boy, he exchanged the uniform of many buttons for a suit of buckskin, the kitchen for the wild prairie, and instead of answering the bell, he would start up at the crack of a revolver.

The confinement of the swell of St. Jim's in the punishment-room had appealed strongly to Binks' imagination. In the first place, D'Arcy, being a gentleman to the finger-tips, had always treated the boot-boy with as much courtesy as he would have shown to a prince. In the second place, D'Arcy was kind and generous. And in the third place, Binks knew of lots of cases—in American fiction, at least—where school-boys, shut up by cruel headmasters, had escaped, and become the terrors of the Rocky Mountains, and had returned with a trusty band to burn the school to the ground.

Binks was at full concert pitch now, so to speak, and he had left the knife-machine to take care of itself while he came to the rescue of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

"Ush!" he breathed through the keyhole.

"All wight, deah boy!"

"What does the chump want?" growled Wally.

"I weally don't know."

"Well, you can jaw to him if you like; I'm going to feed."

"Certainly, deah boy!"

And Wally, who was hungry—for it was well past his usual tea-time—commenced operations on the contents of the famous bag.

A thrilling whisper came through the keyhole again.

"It's all right, Master D'Arcy; 'twas but the wind."

D'Arcy grinned. Binks was apparently unaware that such expressions, although quite in place in fiction, were not generally used in real life.

"Oh, 'twas but the wind, was it?" said Wally, with a grunt.

"Yaas, wathah!"

"At last we are alone!" went on Binks thrillingly. "Master D'Arcy, I 'ear you're goin' to be flogged to-morrow."

"Yaas, wathah!"

"I will 'elp you to escape."

"Escape, deah boy?"

"What-ho!" said Binks. "I'll get you a file for the bars at the window, and at midnight's dark hour I will await

thee under the window with two mustangs—ahem! I am afraid we shall 'ave to walk; but I'll 'elp you, Master D'Arcy, and come with you, if you like."

"Come with me?"

"I will!"

"But you'll get the sack, Binks."

"That's nothing! I scorn the position I have been placed in, and disdain the knife-machine. Together we will sail the Spanish Main."

"I am afraid the Spanish Main is wathah a long way off, deah boy, and the railway fare would be a sewious item."

"Oh, you can get there on a mustang or a Deadwood Coach!" said Wally, with a snort. "I never knew that even Binks was such a frabjous ass before."

"It's through weadin' those wotten Amewican howwibles," said D'Arcy. "I burnt all he had once, but I suppose he has got a fwesh supply, as he seems to have that feahful wot still on the bwain."

"We will go to the Rocky Mountains," said Binks, through the keyhole. "We can join the Redskins, and become known as the White Chiefs of the Prairie."

"Bai Jove!"

"Shall I get the files, Master D'Arcy? I could shove them in under the door."

"You're awfully good, Binks, but—"

"You could file through the bars of the winder in about four hours."

"I am afraid it would entail too much exertion, deah boy."

"But think of the life of freedom—think of scouring the prairie on a coal-black steed!"

"Yaas, that would be wathah wippin', if poss. But I am afraid that I shall have to think of somethin' else, Binks."

"I could get a key to fit this door, if you like, sir."

"Bai Jove! That's bettah!"

"Then you could easily scoot out of one of the winders, sir. But when Deadshot Dave, the Black-Browed Terror, escaped from school, he came down a rope from the winder."

"Perhaps there weren't any bars to that window, Binks." "Yes, there were—wooden bars, and Deadshot Dave gnawed them through with his teeth!"

"Bai Jove! He must have needed a dentist afterwards. I would wathah have a key to the door, Binks; and if you could bwing me one, I should be awfully obliged!"

"Then I'll get it, Master D'Arcy. Will you run away from school?"

"Certainly not!"

"But—"

"I shall wetiah fwom St. Jim's for a time if the Head persists in bein' so obstinate. Therefore, I shall be glad of the key. To-morrow will do, as I shall not think of leavin' the coll to-night."

"But it's ever so much better at dead of night, when the moon is peeping from behind dark masses of cloud, and—"

"But there's no moon to-night, Binks."

"Um! Well, I'll get the key, Master D'Arcy," said Binks, feeling very disappointed in Arthur Augustus. "I shall 'ave to look for it, but if you wanted to go to-night, I'll go and 'unt it up to-night."

"Not at all, deah boy."

"Then you will 'ook it to-morrow?"

"Sowwy: I don't quite undahstand."

"You will 'ook it to-morrow?"

"He means hook it—bunk!" explained Wally, between two huge bites at a big rosy apple.

"Thank you, Wally; but I am sowwy to see you so vewy well acquainted with slang."

"Oh rats!"

"Weally, Wally—"

"Shall I get you a 'orse, Master D'Arcy?"

"A horse!"

"Yes. I can 'ire one for you in Rylcombe; but, of course, it wouldn't be anything like that coal-black steed that Broncho Bill escaped upon."

D'Arcy grinned.

"No, thank you, Binks! I think I will twust to the railway."

Binks grunted. The railway was dreadfully unromantic, and he could not recall a single instance in which Deadshot Bill or Slippery Sam had condescended to make use of such a mode of travelling.

"Oh, orlright, sir!"

And Binks retired down the passage.

Arthur Augustus gave a little chuckle.

"Silly cuckoo!" said Wally, beginning on a new apple.

"Yaas, he is wathah a duffah, but his heart's in the wight place," said D'Arcy. "He's not a bad sort, only his head's full of silly wot. If he bwings me the key it will be awfully useful, you know."

"Tuck in!" said Wally.
 "Well, as a mattah of fact, I am wathah hungwy, and I think I will."

CHAPTER 12. Caught!

ARTHUR AUGUSTUS felt decidedly better after a square meal.

Wally made a considerable inroad into the supplies furnished by Tom Merry & Co., and when he could eat no more, he yawned.

"It will be jolly dull for you, stuck up here alone, Gus," he remarked.

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Haven't you anything to read?"

"Nothin'."

"I've got an old number of the 'Magnet' in my pocket," said Wally. "You can read that. I'll leave it with you."

"Thanks awfully!"

"What shall we do to pass the evening?" said Wally. "I wish I had thought of bringing some cards—we might have played patience."

"It's all wight. I will wecite you some of my poetry I have been witin' for 'Tom Mewwy's Weekly.'"

Wally glared.

"You jolly well won't!"

"Weally, Wally—"

"I can stand anything almost from a fellow who's in trouble, but there's a limit," said Wally. "I draw the line at amateur poetry!"

"You young ass!"

"You can recite 'Casabianca' or the 'Charge of the Light Brigade,' if you like," said Wally generously.



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"I wefuse to do anythin' of the sort!"

"Well, let's have a box."

"We have no gloves heah."

"I suppose you're not afraid of a knock or two?" said Wally disdainfully. "My only Aunt Jane! You'd be too soft for the Third Form!"

"I was thinkin' of you."

"Oh rats!"

"I am busy upon a vewy fine descriptivve poem for the 'Weekly,'" said D'Arcy, taking a crumpled paper out of his pocket. "What do you think of this?"

"Piffle!"

"But you haven't heard it yet."

"That makes no difference."

"Pway listen a moment!"

"Oh, all right!" said Wally resignedly, sitting on the bed. "You're in this fix partly on my account, so I suppose I ought to stand it."

"That is hardly a polite way of puttin' it, Wally."

"Oh, go ahead!"

"It's a descriptivve poem of the sea by moonlight."

"Bosh!"

"Listen!"

"Quick—get it over!"

Arthur Augustus gave Wally a doubtful look. His minor could not be called an enthusiastic listener. But, after all, at such a time in such a place, any listener was better than none.

Arthur Augustus went ahead:

"When I gaze upon the sea at dead of night,
 I feel—"

"You've jolly well never done anything of the sort!" said Wally.

Arthur Augustus coloured. There was certainly something in Wally's remark. He could not think of any immediate rejoinder, so he went on with the descriptive poem instead:

"When I gaze upon the sea at dead of night,
 I feel my heart yearn for the moonshine bright;
 For while the waves invisible I see,
 I wish—"

"How on earth do you see the waves if they're invisible?" demanded Wally.

"Of course that's a poetic figuah of speech."

"It seems like rot to me!"

"That's because you have a wotten, unpoetical, unromantic soul, Wally," said Arthur Augustus severely.

"Oh, is it?" grunted Wally. "Well, get on with the washing!"

"For while the waves invisible I see,
 I wish the moon them to reveal to me.
 I think that the fields of ether will soon light
 With the waptuwous glowious glowy of moonlight!"

"My only Aunt Jane!"

Wally rolled over on the bed with a sudden exclamation, as though he felt a sudden pain.

Arthur Augustus stopped his recitation, and stepped quickly towards him.

"What is the mattah, Wally?"

"I—I don't know. I feel faint. I think it must be the poetry!"

"Weally, Wally—"

"Is there much more?"

"Only about a hundwed lines."

"I—I think I'd rather read the rest when they come out in 'Tom Merry's Weekly,'" murmured Wally. "Really good poetry ought to be read, you know, and pondered over."

"But Tom Mewwy pwobably won't pwint the whole of it," said Arthur Augustus. "He has a wotten way of leavin' out whole verses when there isn't woom in the papah for the whole poem."

"Is he likely to leave out the whole poem, do you think?" asked Wally, with interest.

"It is quite poss."

"Then I'd rather wait and take my chance with the 'Weekly.'"

Arthur Augustus thrust his crumpled paper into his pocket, with a great deal of dignity.

"I wefuse to wead you anothah word, Wally."

Wally sat upright.

"Thanks, I feel better now."

"You are a beast, Wally!"

"Go hon!"

"You have absolutely no poetic soul!"

"No. Ripping, ain't it?" said Wally cheerfully. "Not that I don't like a moonlight night as well as you do."

"Ah, I am glad to see that you are not wholly lost to the beauties of Nature, Wally."

"No—a moonlight night is all right," said Wally. "It's ever so much better for going after the bunnies than pitchy darkness."

"You uttah young wapscaillon!"

"What's the matter now?"

"I wofuse to discuss poetie mattahs with you any furthah," said Arthur Augustus witheringly. "I think we had bettah box."

Wally jumped up with alacrity.

"Good!"

And the juniors removed their jackets and boxed.

Arthur Augustus was a good boxer, and he was, of course, bigger than his minor; so he put one hand behind him, and insisted upon boxing only with his right, to make matters more level.

This placed him, however, at a great disadvantage, and Wally walked all round him, dotting him here and there quite at his ease, and as often as he liked.

"Bring the other fin out, old chap," said Wally. "You can't box with one hand."

"Yaas, I can, deah boy."

"There's one for your boko!"

"Oh!"

"And another for your potato-trap!"

"Ow!"

"Now shove in the other fin."

"I wofuse to do anthin' of the sort."

"Oh, rats!" said Wally. "I shall puncture you all over. Let's chuck this, and have a wrestle, then. I'll fling you all over the room, you know."

"I should uttably wofuse to be flung all ovah the woom."

"Ready?"

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Then go it!"

And the two juniors wrestled. Wally was very strong and wiry, and as tough as nails. Arthur Augustus, in spite of his age and size, had no easy task with him.

Locked in a tight grip, they staggered to and fro.

Suddenly Wally went over, but he did not let go of his brother, and Arthur Augustus went down with him.

Bump!

It was a terrific bump on the floor. The trampling of the juniors' boots on the bare boards had made a considerable noise, but nothing to this. The sound could have been heard over half the School House.

"Bai Jove!" gasped D'Arcy.

"Ow!"

"I twust I have not hurt you, Wally!"

"I don't see how you could sprawl over a chap and squash him on the floor without hurting him!" grunted Wally.

"Weally, I— Oh!"

The door of the punishment-room opened, and Kildare, the captain of St. Jim's, looked in, with surprise in his face. The trampling and bumping had reached his ears.

"D'Arcy! What on earth are you making all this noise about? Why—what—who— How did you get here?"

And he stared blankly at the hero of the Third.

CHAPTER 13.

A Night in the Cell!

WALLY staggered to his feet. He gasped for breath, but he looked at the captain of St. Jim's quite unabashed.

"Hallo, Kildare!"

Kildare simply stared.

"I thought D'Arcy was alone here!" he exclaimed. "Have you permission to come here, D'Arcy minor?"

"Well, I forgot to ask."

"How did you get here?"

"By the window."

"And what did you come for?"

"Keep Gussy company."

The captain of St. Jim's eyed the fag dubiously.

"I twust you will not weport Wally for this, Kildare," said Arthur Augustus earnestly. "He was weally actuated by the best of motives, you know."

"The young rascal!"

"Weally, Kildare—"

"How did you get through the window, D'Arcy minor?"

"Ledge outside," said D'Arcy minor, with admirable brevity.

"You might have broken your neck."

"Yes. But I didn't, somehow."

"You cheeky young rascal!"

"Pway, Kildare—"

Kildare held the door wide open.

"Get out, D'Arcy minor!"

"All right," said Wally, keeping a wary eye upon the captain of St. Jim's. "But, I say—"

"Get out!"

"Good-night, Gus!"

"Good-night, Wally deah boy!"

The scamp of the Third edged towards the door. Kildare's face was very grim, and Wally more than half-expected a powerful cuff as he passed the captain of the school.

But Kildare did not move.

Wally got safely past, and scuttled away down the passage.

Kildare gave D'Arcy major a severe look.

"You had better make up your mind to obey the Head's orders, D'Arcy," he said. "If you say you will, I'll see about it, and you needn't stay here for the night."

D'Arcy shook his head.

"I'm sowwy, Kildare, but I can't."

"You are a young ass!"

"Pewwaps so, but I shall have to stick it out, you know. I twust the Head will not pwove vewy obstinate."

Kildare smiled grimly.

"You'd better know at once what you have to expect," he said. "The Head will send for you in the morning, and question you at once. If you refuse to obey orders, you will be called up after morning school and flogged in public."

D'Arcy shivered.

"That will be vewy wuff, Kildare."

"It's your own choice."

"It's a case of honah, deah boy—honah bwight, you know. I can't give in."

"Well, I'm sorry for you."

And Kildare went out and locked the door.

Arthur Augustus was alone.

His intercourse with Wally had not been exactly amiable, but he missed the cheeky scamp of the Third very much.

The room was in a deserted part of the House, and no sound of life or motion reached it from without.

Arthur Augustus walked up and down with his hands in his pockets, feeling decidedly glum.

The school clock struck the hours, and the sound boomed in deeply at the window of the punishment-cell.

Nine o'clock—ten o'clock!

Nothing more had D'Arcy seen or heard of his chums. Doubtless, since Wally had been discovered in the room, measures had been taken to keep them from visiting the prisoner doomed to solitary confinement.

The Shell and the Fourth Form would all be in bed now—most of St. Jim's would be in bed, or going to bed.

Eleven o'clock!

Arthur Augustus did not feel sleepy.

For once in a way he could go to bed at what hour he chose, but while there was nothing to stay up for, on the other hand, it was useless to go to bed when he felt that he would not sleep.

He ate a supper from the contents of the bag, and then paced the room again.

Half-past eleven!

He undressed at last and went to bed.

It was a long time before he slept.

The thought of the interview with the Head in the morning, and the flogging that was to follow, weighed upon the junior's mind.

D'Arcy did justice to the Head. He admitted to himself that Dr. Holmes could hardly give way now the matter had gone so far.

On the other hand, D'Arcy himself was as determined as ever not to give in.

The flogging was inevitable, if he stayed at St. Jim's. There was only one way of escaping it—by leaving St. Jim's!

And that was a terribly serious step to take.

Where should he go?

To go home was useless, as, of course, he would be immediately sent back to St. Jim's. But where else?

Upon this point Arthur Augustus had only one clear idea. If he could find Tomsonio's Circus, they would take him in and give him a refuge.

D'Arcy's riding had attracted the notice and admiration of the circus company when Signor Tomsonio's Circus was at St. Jim's, and he had made friends, too, with Jack Talbot and Clotilde, the Queen of the Ring.

The signor, in his jolly way, had told D'Arcy that if he were ever in need of a "job," he had only to apply at the circus; and those careless words, carelessly spoken, were in the junior's mind now.

He would take the signor at his word.

Only a short time before the circus had been in the neighbourhood of the school, and D'Arcy knew the direction in which it had gone.

Once clear of St. Jim's, it ought not to be difficult for him to catch up with the circus, and find a safe refuge there.

As to what would follow, he had no idea.

He could let his people know that he was safe, without telling them where he was, and the rest he could leave to fortune.

Anything was better than either betraying his brother, or staying at St. Jim's to submit to the humiliation and disgrace of a public flogging.

Arthur Augustus thought over the matter, till it grew dimmer and dimmer in his mind, and at last he fell asleep.

He slept soundly, and dreamed of floggings and expulsion, and of bucking horses and jumping through paper hoops in the ring of Tomsonio's Circus.

He was deep in a dream in which he was riding a dashing circus horse, and jumping over banners held by Joey Pye, the clown, with Dr. Holmes after him with a birch in his hand, when he was awakened by the sound of the rising-bell.

Clang, clang, clang!

It was the old familiar sound so often heard in the Fourth Form dormitory, calling the boys up to a new day's work and play.

But under what different circumstances the swell of St. Jim's heard it now.

The thought that this might be his last day at the old school struck him with a kind of chill.

He rose and dressed himself, performing his toilet in the punishment-cell with quite as much care as usual.

Then he waited.

About nine o'clock the door opened, and the sergeant appeared, carrying a tray upon which were bacon and eggs and a steaming teapot. It was quite probable that the good old soldier was exceeding his orders in providing a good breakfast for the prisoner of the School House.

"Good-morning, sir!"

"Good-mornin', sergeant! Thank you vewy much!"

"I'm to take you to the Head after breakfast, sir."

"Vewy good, sergeant!"

Arthur Augustus ate his breakfast, with a fair appetite. If he was to run away that day, he would need a good meal to start on, he knew. The sergeant waited, with a compassionate expression upon his bronzed face. He knew nothing, of course, of D'Arcy's secret plans, and he only thought that the junior was doomed to a flogging, and he was sorry for him.

Arthur Augustus finished his breakfast at last.

"I'm weady, sergeant!"

"Very good, sir!"

And the sergeant led the way from the punishment-cell, and Arthur Augustus followed him, his heart beating faster as he took his way to the Head's study.

CHAPTER 14.

The Last Word!

THE boys of St. Jim's were in their class-rooms, and the passages were deserted as Arthur Augustus D'Arcy followed the burly sergeant to the Head's study.

He caught sight of no one but Binks, and Binks made him a mysterious gesture, to signify that he had obtained a key to fit the door of the punishment-cell.

Arthur Augustus gave a slight nod in return.

The sergeant arrived at the door of the dreaded apartment and tapped, and the Head's deep voice bade him enter.

D'Arcy followed him in.

Dr. Holmes was alone in the room.

He turned his penetrating glance upon the swell of St. Jim's, and made the sergeant a sign to retire.

The sergeant left the study and closed the door.

There was a moment's silence.

Arthur Augustus stood before the Head, his eyes on the floor.

Dr. Holmes spoke at last.

"D'Arcy!"

"Yaas, sir?"

"I have sent for you to give you one last chance."

"Thank you, sir!"

"You have deliberately refused to obey my orders!" said the Head, raising his voice a little. "You fully understand, of course, that this cannot be allowed to pass?"

"I—I suppose not, sir."

"It is no longer a question of discovering who was the foolish lad who played that trick upon Mr. Selby. The question now is whether you or I shall yield in a dispute."

"I am sowwy, sir."

"You must see that it is your duty to obey me, D'Arcy."

said the Head, his voice softening a little. "I can respect your scruples, but you must not carry them to the length of obstinacy."

D'Arcy was silent.

"Come, D'Arcy, have you decided what to do?"

"I—I am sowwy, sir."

The Head's brow darkened.

"You still refuse to reply?"

"I feel in honah bound to do so, sir."

"You have reflected?"

"Yaas, sir."

"Very well; you know the consequences."

The Head touched a bell, and the sergeant re-entered.

"Sergeant, take Master D'Arcy back to the punishment-room!"

"Yes, sir."

"At half-past twelve precisely you will bring him into the School Hall, where all the school will then be assembled. You will be prepared to assist in a flogging."

"Yes, sir."

"That is all, sergeant."

The sergeant left the room, and D'Arcy followed; but he paused in the doorway to look back. All was settled now—St. Jim's was closed to him, but he would not leave the Head without a word.

"I am awfully sowwy for this, sir," he said. "I only twust that what I have done, and what I may do, will not be wegardad as disrespectful."

"You may go, D'Arcy."

"Vewy well, sir."

And Arthur Augustus followed the sergeant.

As they passed the Fourth Form Room Mr. Lathom, the Form master, came out. He had evidently been waiting for them.

The little gentleman's face was very much distressed, and his short-sighted eyes were blinking at a great rate behind his spectacles.

"D'Arcy! Ah, it is you! Wait a moment, sergeant!"

"Yes, sir."

"I wish to speak to you, D'Arcy. You are in a most serious position," said Mr. Lathom, his whole manner and tone showing how deeply and distressed he was at the unlucky position of one of his favourite pupils.

"Yaas, sir, I am perfectly awah that it is a dooced awkward posish, sir."

"I trust you have decided to yield to the Head's authority, D'Arcy."

"I am sowwy, sir."

"Then you have refused."

"I have been compelled to decline, sir."

"This is very wrong, D'Arcy," said little Mr. Lathom, very much agitated. "It will be a real blow to me if you are flogged. It will be a disgrace to the Fourth Form. And think of your people, too."

"I know it is vewy howwid, sir."

"Think over it again, my boy, and—and, in short, make up your mind to do the sensible thing," urged the Form master.

"I wish I could please you, sir, but I wegard it as my bounden duty to keep silent on this mattah, sir. It is a case of honah bwight, sir."

Mr. Lathom sighed.

"I am sorry to see you thus obstinate, D'Arcy."

"I am vewy sowwy, too, sir, but I have no othah wescource. I only twust that you and Dr. Holmes will not wegard my conduct as impertinent."

Mr. Lathom retired into the class-room, shaking his head sadly, and D'Arcy passed on with the sergeant. They reached the punishment-cell, and the sergeant, with a look of commiseration, locked the junior in.

Arthur Augustus was alone once more.

He paced to and fro uneasily in the cell.

He had fully made up his mind now. He would not be flogged. The disgrace would be too much; and, besides, he had a secret conviction that at the last moment Wally would own up to save him, and that his minor would be expelled. That, at any cost, must be prevented.

There was only one thing to do—to leave St. Jim's.

All depended upon Binks now.

D'Arcy waited anxiously for a sign from the School House page. How long would it be before his rescuer came? He had until half-past twelve to make good his escape. Then the sergeant would come for him, to take him to the School Hall to be flogged in public.

There would be no difficulty in leaving the School House if he could escape from the cell during morning lessons.

Boys and masters would be in the class-rooms, and there would be no one to see him or to interfere with him.

Arthur Augustus started at the sound of a cautious footstep in the passage without. He stepped quickly towards the door.

A key grated in the lock.

The door opened, and Binks appeared, with a flush of

excitement in his face, and his eyes gleaming as brightly as the buttons on his uniform.

"I'm 'ere, Master D'Arcy," he said, in a hoarse whisper. "Ere's the key. Come hon."

He took the key from Binks, and locked the door on the outside, and then handed the key back to the page.

"Jolly good," he remarked. "No one will know until half-past twelve that I am not theah. Thank you vewy much, Binks."

"The coast's clear, sir," said Binks, in a stage whisper. "I wish I could have got you a coal-black steed like Dêadshot, ay!"

D'Arcy smiled. His heart was beating fast with suppressed excitement, but his head was perfectly cool.

"That's all wight, Binks. I pwefer a railway."

"They'll telegraph, sir, when they find out you're gone."

"I shall be out of weach by that time."

"What are you going to do, sir?" asked Binks anxiously.

"Go to America, I suppose, and become a road-agent?"

"A—a what? Do you mean a house agent?" asked D'Arcy.

"No, sir, a road-agent."

"I am hardly old enough to go into business, Binks, especially as a dealah in land."

"A road-agent is a highwayman, Master D'Arcy."

"Bai Jove! What a curious term. Upon the whole, I shall not become a highwayman, or anythin' of that sort, my deah boy. If you had not come to the wescue in the way you have, I should call you an ass, Binks."

"You might 'ook it to Horstria, sir, and become a bush-ranger," suggested Binks, who seemed to be quite anxious that the swell of St. Jim's should become a robber of some sort.

"Wats!"

"Ark! I 'ear footsteps," muttered Binks.

D'Arcy listened intently.

But the footsteps did not approach, and probably they existed only in the lively imagination of the School House page, who was determined to be mysterious.

"I wathah think I had bettah be goin'," D'Arcy remarked.

"Yes, sir! Shall I lower you from the window with a rope?"

"Oh, no, thank you, Binks."

"You could climb down the drain-pipe from the passage window."

"I am afwaid that would soil my hands, Binks, and pewwaps wuin my clothes. I think the stairs will be all wight."

Binks looked disappointed. Stairs were an extremely unromantic way of descending to the ground; D'Arcy seemed determined to be untragic.

The coast was clear, as Binks had said. D'Arcy descended the first staircase, and reached the Fourth Form dormitory. He paused there.

"Come hon, sir," muttered Binks. "The alarm may be given any minute, sir, and you may be attacked by fearful hods. As Broncho Bill was when he was escaping from the Black Ranch."

"I am afwaid I could not go without a hat, Binks."

"I'll get you a cap."

"Yaas, but I must have a silk hat, in case of necessity, you know. I might find myself in a posish where a silk hat would be absolutely necessary."

A bell tinkled downstairs. Binks started.

"That's for me, sir. I shall 'ave to go, or somebody will come lookin' for me, and then all the fat would be in the fire."

"Vewy well, Binks. I shall be all wight now. Thank you vewy much for what you have done. I shall not forget it."

And Arthur Augustus held out his hand, and gave Binks a hearty grip.

The page-boy's eyes were moistened a little as he hurried away.

Arthur Augustus entered the dormitory and went to his box. He selected things he thought he might need, with great care.

Having formed a pile of them on his bed, he selected a travelling-bag, and packed them in, with his usual neatness and precision.

Then he selected a silk hat, and donned it with great satisfaction, after giving it a careful brushing with a velvet pad.

"That's about all, I think," murmured the swell of St. Jim's. "I have a change of linen, and a couple of extwa neckties, half a dozen collahs, and a spare eyeglass. I shall be able to take only one hat, unfortunately. It would be practically imposs to wun away frowm school and cawvy a hat-box. It would be bound to get in the way, especially if I have to do any wunnin' and dodgin'. Fortunately, I have plenty of cash just now."

He took up the travelling-bag, and descended to the Fourth Form passage and entered Study No. 6.

There he took a banknote and some loose change from his desk.

The swell of St. Jim's, usually pretty well provided with cash, had recently received a tip from his "governah," and another from his Aunt Adelina.

D'Arcy took a last glance round the study before he left it.

He felt something like a lump in his throat.

He had spent a good deal of time there, and it had been upon the whole a very happy time. He felt a dimness come for a moment over his eyes as he glanced at the cracked glass over the mantelpiece, the battered clock, a pair of boxing gloves, belonging to Blake, lying on the table, beside a half-written imposition in the handwriting of Herries.

Would he ever enter that study again?

He sighed as he turned to the door and went quietly down the passage, leaving Study No. 6 behind him.

The House seemed deserted; from some of the classrooms came a faint hum of voices, and that was all.

There was no one to question the junior's movements.

He left the School House, and crossed the quad quietly and quickly to the gates.

From the porter's lodge he could hear the voice of Taggles in argument with Mrs. Taggles, and he quickened his pace a little.

He passed the gates and stood in the road.

There he paused.

He took a long, backward look at the school—at the old, ivy-clad School House, which had been his dwelling place for so long—at the New House, the home of his old rivals and friendly enemies, Figgins & Co. After all, what times he had had at St. Jim's. Would he ever know the like again?

Then, with a sigh, the swell of St. Jim's turned his face towards Rylcombe, and strode away.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy had shaken the dust of St. Jim's from his feet.

CHAPTER 15.

No Flogging!

MORNING school was over at St. Jim's. But the boys did not, as usual, pour out of the Form-room in high spirits, to disperse in happy, shouting crowds in the quadrangle.

The order had gone forth that the school was to be assembled in Hall for a public flogging.

All knew, of course, who the victim was to be. It was Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, the swell of St. Jim's, the most popular fellow in the school, in spite of his many curious manners and customs.

The boys marched into the great Hall with glum faces. Blake, Herries, and Digby were looking about as miserable as it was possible to look.

The Terrible Three were almost as gloomy. Tom Merry's usually sunny face was darkly clouded, and Manners and Lowther looked sympathetically glum.

All the boys were very grave and quiet.

The Forms assembled in their places, and Tom Merry exchanged looks of dismay and discomfort with Blake and his chums.

"It's all up with Gussy now!" muttered Tom.

"I suppose so," said Blake gloomily. "It's rotten!"

"Beastly!"

"Poor old Gussy!" said Kangaroo of the Shell. "I really wish it were myself instead—I could stand it better."

Wally was looking the picture of misery.

In spite of the fact that he seldom met his major without chipping him, and that the two were constantly on terms of wordy warfare, few brothers had really a deeper regard for each other than the two D'Arcys.

And Wally, too, felt that he was the cause of this terrible scrape for his major.

But for the clear wish of Arthur Augustus on the subject

(Continued on page 28.)



SHOW FATHER

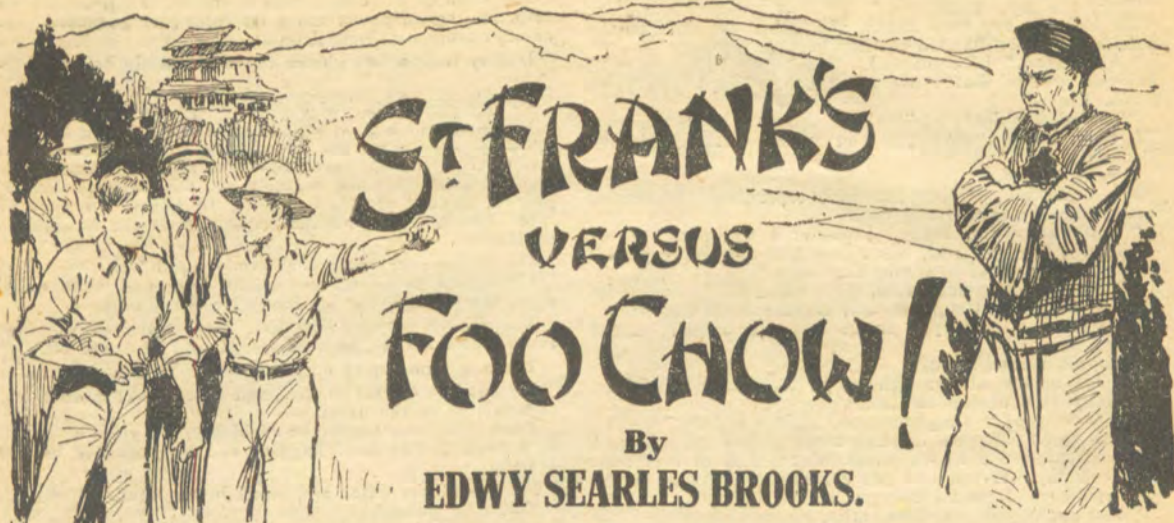
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THERE ARE THRILLS GALORE IN THESE CHAPTERS OF—



Yung Ching, of the St. Frank's Remore, has been kidnapped by Dr. Foo Chow, an all-powerful mandarin of Inner China, who covets the province of Hu Kiang, ruled over by Yung Ching's father. A holiday party from St. Frank's set sail to rescue him, but they are captured by Foo Chow and imprisoned in his island stronghold. Edward Oswald Handforth and his chums, however, succeed in escaping and make for Yang Fu, where Yung Ching is a prisoner. Meantime, the St. Frank's party think that Handforth & Co. were killed. Willy, Handy's brother, decides to find out for sure, and he hides in Foo Chow's car, which carries him away towards Yang Fu.

Willy Acts Wisely.

THE leader of the St. Frank's Third was perfectly calm as he lay flat on the floor of the car, concealed by the rugs. He was so small that a casual glance into the car, even in strong daylight, would have revealed nothing. It merely looked as though the rugs had fallen down in a heap.

But Willy was prepared for instantaneous action. He was ready to pit his nimble muscles and sinews against the strength of his Chinese enemies. In the event of discovery, he was ready to make a swift bid for liberty.

In the meantime, he was still safe, and he was being taken straight to the spot where Yung Ching was held a prisoner! That was a thrilling thought, and perhaps he would get to know something about his major, too. Edward Oswald was far more in his mind than Yung Ching. Never for a moment did Willy accept the statement that his brother was dead. It was far more likely that he was a prisoner in the hands of the Chinese, awaiting torture.

The car continued its rapid dash through the darkness, travelling at something like sixty miles an hour for a great deal of the way. On that broad, concrete highway such speed was purely nominal.

And a distance of ten miles was covered in a very little over ten minutes. Yang Fu was reached almost before Willy could realise it. He could tell that some change had occurred by the greatly decreased speed of the car, and presently, too, there were many bumps as the Rolls-Royce travelled over the uneven streets of the city. Foo Chow had made no change within the gates of his capital. That concrete highway only commenced after the gates had been passed. Within the city the roads were narrow and tortuous.

Willy could tell the change by other signs, too. Voices came to him—shrill, clamorous Chinese accents. Foo Chow, no doubt, was being acclaimed as he progressed through the densely populated city. Those who failed to pay him homage were liable to pay dearly!

"My hat, I'd give quids to take a peep out!" murmured Willy. "I'd like to see exactly where we are, and what route we're taking. It might be important. But it's too risky. I expect they've got lights in the streets, and I should be spotted."

There was a vast difference between the two Handforth brothers. Where Edward Oswald was reckless, Willy was correspondingly cautious. Where Edward Oswald went blindly into danger, Willy used his wits, and tried to prepare a possible retreat.

Edward Oswald was generally excited and headstrong. But Willy kept cool under all circumstances. At the present time he was more icily calm than usual, because he knew, possibly, that his position was fraught with peril.

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At last the car came to a bumpy standstill, and Willy heard the clatter of swords. Voices sounded, too—a regular pandemonium of unearthly sounds. To Willy, the Chinese language seemed a mere gibberish. He couldn't understand how these yellow beggars could comprehend one another. They couldn't be such fools if they could get the hang of that extraordinary lingo!

After the first babble of tongues there came a silence. "Foo Chow has gone in," decided Willy. "The car's left outside, waiting till he comes out again. Gone in, this? Yung Ching's prison, for a cert. Willy, old son, this is where we've got to do something. No good sticking here, under these stuffy rugs!"

With excessive caution, he moved the rugs so that his face emerged. One glance told him that there were lamps, for there was no darkness. Above the edge of the car—viewed from Willy's position on the floor—a kind of yellowy radiance was visible.

Inch by inch, the fag raised himself. There was nobody actually near him—nobody in the front seats. At any second he might be spotted and pounced upon, but he felt that he would have to do something. It would be mere idiosyncrasy to remain concealed for an indefinite period. Besides, what was the good of the venture unless he took advantage of his opportunity?

"My hat!" he breathed at length.

He was able to look over the edge of the car now, and he saw that his position was not desperate yet. A group of soldiers were standing in front of a typically Chinese building, which Willy took to be the Yamen, or Courthouse—perhaps the prison. These soldiers were clearly visible in the yellow light from two lamps projecting from the wall, one on either side of the doorway.

It was a building which could not be mistaken. Great dragons and other monstrosities were crudely painted upon the walls. The roof was more than usually curled at the eaves, and it was, moreover, a building which stood apart from its fellows.

Gazing in the other direction, Willy found that the place was a kind of courtyard—a sort of cul-de-sac, with only one exit. This was a narrow street, where crowds of natives could be seen, where signs hung down from the buildings, and where lights glimmered dimly in the windows.

In the courtyard itself there were no people except the soldiers, proving that this was a forbidden place to the general public.

"Well, I can't forget a show like this, anyhow," murmured Willy. "If only I can get to know something definite, though," he added, with a frown. "Ching's in this building for an absolute cert, but what about Ted? What have they done with Ted?"

He could supply himself with no satisfactory answer, but he had at least come to one certain conclusion. Single-handed, he could do nothing. It would be sheer madness to

make any attempt to get into that building and rescue Yung Ching.

Unlike Edward Oswald, Willy knew his limitations, and he decided, then and there, that there was only one sensible thing for him to do—escape from the car, and make his way out of the city in the darkness, trusting to Providence to be spared from capture. In this way he could memorise his route, and take information of the greatest importance to Nelson Lee and Lord Dormore.

Willy was wise, and, without hesitating any further, he softly opened the off-side door of the car and slid out.

Within the Gates of Yang Fu!

TWO of the Chinese guards had a dim suspicion that a shadow had moved on the other side of the courtyard, but a second glance proved that they had been mistaken. There was nothing there.

This was quite true, for by the time the Chinese took their second glance, Willy had reached the narrow street. In less than a second he had merged with the throng of natives, and now his heart was in his mouth indeed. There were no soldiers here, it was true, but there were plenty of ugly-looking customers. Coolies were hanging about, apparently idle, and children swarmed in droves. Willy was rather surprised, for he had expected to find the town asleep. He hardly realised that the hour was by no means late.

He had been prepared to fight, to wriggle like an eel out of the clutches of would-be captors, to dodge down alleys, and to engage in a breathless run for liberty.

Instead of that, not a soul molested him.

The Chinese regarded him with open curiosity, crowding round and even following him, child-like in their surprise. Willy was probably the first white boy they had ever seen, and his white flannels, too, were unfamiliar. So he was an object of general attention.

But nobody touched him, and he soon discovered that there was no hostility in the crowd. These people were just curious. He moved along with greater confidence, and soon began to take an active interest in the quaint sights which were all around him.

"Responsibility again!" murmured Willy. "That's about the truth of it. Rummy crowd, these Chinks! Now then, make way, my sons!" he added firmly. "Can't you give a chap some room?"

He pushed his way on boldly, more and more confident. And his assumption regarding "responsibility" was the actual truth. Willy had read quite a lot about the Chinese, and knew their peculiar ways. And responsibility is one of the keynotes of Chinese everyday life.

Everybody is responsible for something or other. If there is a murder committed, the head-man of that particular district is responsible—and gets very severely punished, although the crime was not his fault in the slightest degree. But was he not responsible for the district? And so the head-man finds himself on the carpet.

But there was nobody responsible for Willy!

Not one of these curious natives had to answer for his liberty or his capture. Therefore, why should they trouble to hold him? It wasn't their business! A characteristic example of Chinese logic. Willy was free to go where he chose, simply because nobody even dreamed of retaining him. The very idea that he should be captured simply because he was a stranger never occurred to anybody. Why should they do somebody else's work?

And thus the St. Frank's fag was at liberty to go where he pleased. The soldiers, perhaps, might have acted differently, but there were no soldiers here. And although Willy was filled with the keenest anxiety concerning his major, he found time to take an interest in the narrow, quaint streets, and their unfamiliar shops.

Most of the streets were like tunnels. For they were not only narrow, but there were awnings of mats all the way along, stretched from roof to roof. And the shops were ridiculously small. Very few of them displayed their wares, but all had wooden boards hanging down, with Chinese characters upon them, in letters of gold or red.

"Funny way of doing things," murmured Willy, as he passed along.

The merchants could be seen squatting in their den-like establishments, the majority of them looking fat and prosperous, and mostly clothed in silk. The prosperous merchants could be easily distinguished from the struggling ones, since the former were fat, and the latter normal.

To be rich in China is to be fat. Rather to Willy's surprise, he found that every shop he passed sold shoes—nothing but shoes. And presently he was in a street where crude jewellery was made and sold. And here, again, every shop was of the same sort.

The explanation was simple. In most of the Chinese native cities each class of business has its own particular street—in very much the same way as the London theatres are grouped together in one little section.

Not only the shops, but the people interested Willy. Some of them were well dressed, and others were ragged to the point of sheer disgust. There were six or seven human wrecks coming along in succession, all of them diseased and ghastly to look upon. They were beggars—a recognised class, whom nobody thought of driving from the city. Indeed, these Chinese beggars have such power that they are interfered with by nobody.

At one corner there was a sweet stall, with the vendor sitting in state, and surrounded by a small army of eager children. At another street corner a man was frying cakes, and the smell of the fat caused Willy to hurry past at no lagging speed. It seemed to him that most of the tradesmen transacted their business in the open street, on stalls in front of their establishments. The majority of these were now being cleared away, in readiness for the night.

But although Willy was interested in these native sights, he was far more interested in something else. He was following a definite route.

Ever since he had left that courtyard he had seen the tracks of Dr. Foo Chow's Rolls-Royce, embedded deeply in the soft surface of these trodden streets. In spite of the crowds, the tracks were still visible.

And Willy was intent upon reaching the city gates.

By this time he had ceased to be alarmed. He felt that he was safe now, that he would be able to get out into the open country without any trouble. And he was looking at every building, at every characteristic point, and storing these sights in his memory, so that they would be familiar.

Apparently, he had commenced his walk in the very heart of the business section, for after a while he found the crowds much thinner, and here there were no shops. But the houses were still as tightly packed as ever, the streets still narrow. And the smells were every bit as overwhelming—indeed, it seemed to Willy that the chief characteristic of Yang Fu was its appalling "niff." The whole town reeked.

"It's a wonder to me they don't all die of fever!" muttered Willy, with disgust. "No wonder they have outbreaks of plague and other horrible diseases! I don't believe there's a bit of sanitation in the whole giddy city! They simply chuck all their refuse in the open streets, and allow it to be trampled in the dust. Phew!"

He wondered how many more epidemics would sweep such cities as this, were it not for the fact that the Chinese invariably boil their water before drinking it. And tea, again, is the main drink—a drink which wards off many a terrible scourge.

"I don't blame old Foo Chow for living out on that island," Willy told himself as he hurried along. "At least, he's got everything up to date there, and he couldn't have that palace of his in the city—or, if he did, he'd still have the niffs!"

His eyes gleamed as he saw the high battlements of the city wall looming close. He knew that he had reached the outer wall by the very height of those towering structures. The houses were all of one story—all flimsy, uniform places of the same style. But the city wall was high and imposing.

The great gates were flung wide, and the darkness beyond was a welcome prospect. Willy could even see a glimpse of the concrete highway, which commenced just beyond the city gates. But he paused. There were soldiers here—not a mere half a dozen, but scores of them, both inside and outside the gateway.

"H'm! What's to be done?" he murmured. "It's no good trying to rush this lot. And that wall is a bit too stiff for me to climb, too. By jingo, the beggars have spotted me already!"

It was necessary to act at once.

And Willy promptly decided to march boldly forward, and to pass through the gateway as though he were an ordinary citizen. Perhaps these soldiers would take no more interest in him than the other Chinese. After all, they were city soldiers, not men of the palace contingent. So there was a distinct chance that he could spoof them by his very coolness.

Without the slightest indication of haste, he continued his walk, and succeeded in getting past the first group of soldiers without trouble. But they shouted to another group farther on; and Willy's heart thumped as he found himself faced by half a dozen men with fixed bayonets.

"Chuck it!" he protested curtly. "What's the idea?"

The soldiers spoke among themselves, and two of them lowered their weapons and made a grab at the fag. It was evident that these men had received instructions to seize any white boy. Undoubtedly they mistook Willy for one of the three who were supposed to be drowned.

With a quick, eel-like movement he dodged aside, flung himself down, and wormed his way through the human barrier. The next second he shot through the gateway, and believed that he had won his freedom. But another crowd of these swarming soldiers barred his path, and the next moment he was in the midst of them.

"You—you rotters!" panted Willy desperately.

His capture was now certain. Rough hands grasped his shoulders, other hands held his arms. And although he struggled and wriggled, he could do nothing against this excited mob.

On the very point of escape he had fallen into the enemy's hands!

Do or Die!

M R. NELSON LEE threw his cigarette-end away.

"Bed?" he suggested.

"No," muttered Lord Dorrimore.

They were both sitting on one of the ornamental seats in the palace grounds. Above them gleamed an electric arc, and in full view was the main entrance of the marble mansion. The air was tranquil, and there was a feeling of peace in the very atmosphere.

But it was a false sense. Dorrie's very being was afire with helpless impotence.

"No," he repeated. "Bed for me? Don't talk about it, Lee!"

"But you're surely not going to stay here all night, Dorrie?" asked Nelson Lee gently. "Where's the sense of that? Barry Stokes feels very much the same as you do, but he's gone to bed—"

"Barry Stokes has got his wife to think of—and it's his duty to be by her side, in case of emergency," interrupted his lordship. "But we're different. Why in the name of thunder can't we start something, Lee?"

"Because it's impossible—"

"Old man, I'm disappointed," said Dorrie, staring. "I didn't think that word 'impossible' had a place in your dictionary. Man alive, can't you see that it's impossible for us to remain idle?"

"You're using the word yourself now, Dorrie," said Lee, with a faint smile.

"Yes, but in another sense."

"Very likely," agreed Lee. "At the same time, the sooner we realise our complete helplessness, the better. Nothing good will come of this fever to 'start something', as you put it. What can we start?"

"Anythin'," retorted Dorrie promptly.

"That's rather vague—"

"Well, how about makin' an attempt to get over the drawbridge?" asked his lordship. "We can have a scrap with those guards, an' get over. Then we'll have a shot at the Wanderer—try to get on board, an' recapture her. How's that for a brilliant idea?"

But Lee shook his head.

"It's wild, Dorrie—and you know it's wild," he replied quietly. "Even if we got across the drawbridge by some miracle, do you really suppose that we should ever set foot on the yacht?"

His lordship uttered a growl.

"What does that matter?" he demanded. "You don't seem to realise what I'm drivin' at. Honestly, I don't care a hang whether we succeed or whether we fail. But it'll be somethin' to do, somethin' to exercise our muscles, and give us a thrill. I'm fed up with this inactivity, Lee. Fed up to the neck! I tell you I must do somethin' to-night!"

"Even if it means death?"

"By the Lord Harry, yes!" vowed Dorrie grimly. "If it means death I've just got to have a scrap with somebody! You can't appreciate it, Lee—you're not built like I am. You've got a calmer nature, an' you can stand these infernal affairs."

"But I've always taken you to be a lazy sort of beggar," smiled Nelson Lee, attempting to cool his companion by his own sangfroid. "All you need is plenty of comfort, and plenty of people to wait on you, and you're happy. And you've surely got everything here?"

Lord Dorrimore glared.

"If you think you can calm me down by that sort of nonsense, you've made a mistake!" he retorted, bending forward and placing his elbows on his knees. "No, Lee, I may be a lazy beggar, but I'm an active sort of chap, too. Too much of this idleness stagnates me. And I've just got to the stage when I'm at the limit of my endurance. It's no good you tellin' me to wait until to-morrow, or to sleep it off. I've made up my mind to do somethin' to-night."

"In that case, I suppose I'd better help you," smiled Lee. "I shall certainly not allow you to enter this hare-brained adventure single-handed."

His lordship turned and stared into the bushes.

"Umlosi!" he said sharply.

"N'Kose!" came a prompt rumble.

The African chief appeared noiselessly from the bushes. Never once did he allow his beloved master to leave his sight. It was Umlosi's intention to guard Lord Dorrimore's life with his own.

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"Good old coal-box!" said Dorrie approvingly. "I knew you'd be somewhere close at hand. What do you say to a fight?"

"Thou art jesting, O my father," said Umlosi.

"No, honestly."

"A fight!" rumbled the great black. "Wau! Thou art making the blood course rapidly through my veins, N'Kose! These yellow mongrels have taken my faithful spear from me, but with my hands I can crush them to dust. Speak thou the word, my father, and we will commence this glorious battle!"

"As bloodthirsty as ever," said Nelson Lee, with a sigh. "I'm hanged if you're not as bad as Umlosi, Dorrie! A precious pair, I must say!"

Lord Dorrimore grinned.

"A precious trio, you mean," he said. "You can't fool me, Lee! You're just as keen on this thing as I am. So don't try to deny it!"

"I do deny it—"

"If you could only see somethin' definite in view, you'd need steel cables to hold you back!"

"Well, I'll admit that I should enter into the affair with enthusiasm under those circumstances," said Nelson Lee. "You've placed your finger on the vital point, Dorrie. You suggest a random fight—a battle without an objective. That's what I jib against. What on earth is the use of starting a lot of trouble when we have absolutely nothing to aim for?"

"It'll act as a safety-valve, anyhow," retorted Dorrie.

"That's the long and short of it," said Nelson Lee ruefully. "Can't I dissuade you from this insane project, Dorrie? Wait until there's something really definite in view. You won't find me hanging back then. But to blunder headlong into a mere brawl will do far more harm than good. If we're killed—as we probably shall be—these boys and girls will only have Barry to rely upon. He's a good man, no doubt, but three of us—"

"Three of us are no better," interrupted Dorrie. "If Foo Chow means to torture everybody, he'll do it—whether we like it or not. My argument is that we shall never get anywhere unless we make a move. So let's finish with this hesitation an' get busy!"

Nelson Lee realised that there was a good deal of common sense behind Lord Dorrimore's apparent madness. He was essentially a man of action, and this enforced idleness was a sheer torture to him. And Nelson Lee himself had precisely the same emotions. But he was better able to control himself.

"I'm infernally sorry I didn't smash Foo Chow when he was here an hour ago," went on Dorrie gruffly. "That was your fault, Lee. I ought to have—have— Gad, talk of the devil and he appears!"

He stared with excited eyes. And Umlosi instinctively lurched his shoulders and adopted a crouching attitude. A faint purr had made itself heard, and a moment later a big automobile came gliding up to the palace. It contained a single figure.

"That's not Foo Chow's car, Dorrie," murmured Lee.

"Eh?"

"The car is an Armstrong-Siddeley, and the man at the wheel is one of Foo Chow's officers," continued Lee. "If it will give you any satisfaction to disfigure his face, it might be a good idea to start in. Perhaps the exercise will put you into a more sensible frame of mind."

Dorrie stood there without replying. His eyes were blazing with a new excitement, and he watched the officer enter the palace. He made no attempt to adopt Nelson Lee's suggestion.

"The engine's still runnin'," he muttered. "That means that the brute has only gone in for a minute or two. It means that the drawbridge is still down—an' the road is clear. Good glory! Why not, Lee?"

"You mean—"

"Absolutely!" hissed Dorrie. "Let's grab that car, an' make a roarin' dash to Yang Fu! I've only got to feel my hands on that steerin'-wheel, and my foot on the accelerator-pedal, an'—"

"But what's the use? Why should we—"

Nelson Lee broke off. He simply couldn't continue his protest; for he was beginning to feel the same wild desire for action that obsessed Lord Dorrimore. The sporting peer had at last broken down the great detective's iron reserve. And although Lee knew that the whole affair was without rhyme or reason, he abandoned himself to it.

Until now he had fought against any activity which promised no definite result. For years Lee had acted upon this principle—he had been a man of grim determination when he had something to aim at, but a man of caution when he was uncertain. For once in his life he let himself go.

"Dorrie!" he said tensely. "We'll do it!"

"Good man!" yelled his lordship. "Let's start!"



"Away, mongrels!" roared Umlosi. He disdained the bayonets which menaced him, and hurled the first Chinese soldier at his companions. The man smashed into them as though he had been hit by a battering-ram, and squealing with terror the soldiers collapsed.

The Dash for Yang Fu!

THERE was every reason for this apparently reckless decision.

These prisoners of Dr. Foo Chow's were in such a helpless position that it seemed only remotely possible that their liberty would ever be restored to them. Indeed, Nelson Lee had a shrewd idea at the back of his mind that this Chinese potentate was only holding them unharmed until his plans were mature. If they failed he would probably allow his prisoners to go. But if they succeeded, his power would be utter and supreme—and then he might indulge in a little amusement, in which torture would play a leading part.

Lee had been in many tight corners in his time. So had Dorrie. Together, they had been in all manner of queer fixes. But always there had been a sporting element of escape. In practically every case there had been a forlorn chance of winning through.

But what chance was there here?

Not only were they guarded by Foo Chow's soldiers, but it was necessary to travel hundreds of miles in any given direction to reach a zone of safety. They were Dr. Foo Chow's playthings, to do as he liked with. The very nature of their treatment only added to the mental torture.

So this swift decision to go into action was only logical.

In all probability they would do no good by their seizure of the motor-car. They would be stopped, and brought back to the island stronghold. But, as Dorrie had pointed out, they would at least have a brief interval of excitement. And this would serve them for the time being. It would restore some of their normal tranquillity and avert madness. Dorrie honestly believed that another day of inactivity would send him off his head.

"You heard that, Umlosi?" he ejaculated, turning to the black giant. "Umtagati is with us! We're going to make a dash!"

"Umtagati is a man of wisdom and much courage," rumbled Umlosi, his eyes gleaming. "Now, indeed, shall I enter this battle with enthusiasm. For is not Umtagati a wizard? Is he not—"

"He's going to whiz this time, anyhow!" grinned his lordship.

"The whole thing's a piece of madness, Umlosi, but we might as well let off a little steam," said Nelson Lee grimly. "The first thing is to get that car, and then we'll see what can be done. Perhaps we might even avert Yung Ching's torture. The main point is to reach the city."

"Good gad!" gasped Dorrie suddenly. "We're too late!" The Chinese officer had reappeared, and was climbing into the car. A dozen soldiers were on the spot, too. The palace was closely guarded at every hour of the day and night.

"Wau!" thundered Umlosi. "Sayest thou that we are

too late, N'Kose? Let me deal with this rainbow-clothed dog!"

"Good man!" shouted Dorrie. "Go ahead!"

He ran forward while speaking, and Nelson Lee was by his side. But Umlosi was the first, for he had darted forward with the speed of a hare, in spite of his bulk. The Chinese officer seemed to guess that something was coming, for he snapped out some orders. Four men threw themselves in Umlosi's path.

"Away, mongrels!" roared the African.

He disdained the fixed bayonets which menaced him. With a single sweeping motion, he hurled the first aside, and received no scratch in the process. The Chinese soldier smashed into his companions as though he had been hit by a battering-ram. Squealing with terror, they collapsed. There was something in Umlosi's very mien which struck terror into their hearts.

"And thou," shouted the black giant, "as for thou, filth of the gutter, methinks thou art in need of a wash! Hence, thou pig!"

"Good gad!" gasped Lord Dorrimore.

Umlosi was fairly revelling in this sudden fight. He leapt upon the footboard of the car, and seized the frightened officer. With one Herculean movement, he raised the screaming man above his head. And then, with a strength which amazed even Lee and Dorrie, he flung the officer aside.

The unfortunate wretch was tossed into the air like a shuttlecock, and he went soaring across the terrace to the neighbouring fountain. And with a tremendous splash he descended into the limpid pool.

But Lee and Dorrie only caught a mere glimpse of this. They were otherwise engaged! Lord Dorrimore was grappling with one of the Chinese soldiers. A swift movement, and the man's rifle was torn away.

Crash!

"How does that taste?" snapped his lordship viciously.

He had delivered a right-hander which laid the man low. Then he sailed into the next soldier. Nelson Lee was similarly engaged, and other members of Dr. Foo Chow's Household Guards were running up.

"By the Lord Harry! This was just what I was pinin' for!" shouted Dorrie exultantly. "Come on! The more the merrier! Gad! Look at Umlosi! It was worth everythin' for this!"

Umlosi was certainly enjoying himself, too. Single-handed, he was smashing into a dozen of the Chinese soldiers. Curiously enough, there was no attempt to fire a single shot, and Lee suspected that they had received definite instructions not to use their firearms. Otherwise they would never have withheld their bullets.

"Into the car, Dorrie!" shouted Lee. "We can't stay

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here to fight this out! They'll close the drawbridge—and then we shall have had all this scrap for nothing. We've got to get away!"

"You're right!" agreed Dorrie. "In with you, Umlosi!"

"N'Kose, I come!" thundered the African.

Half a dozen men were littered about him, and the other soldiers were falling away, their superstitions getting the better of them. This black giant was no human being, but one of the demons of the earth in human guise!

Dorrie was already behind the wheel, and as Nelson Lee and Umlosi flung themselves on board the car, he raced the engine. What a glorious feeling! He fairly yelled with happiness as he depressed the clutch-pedal.

"Look out!" he bellowed.

Snapping in the low gear, he allowed the clutch to fall in with a jerk. He did this deliberately, and the car simply leapt forward like a thing of life. Lee and Umlosi were nearly pitched off—but they had been expecting something of the sort, and managed to hold on.

"Now for it!" said Dorrie gleefully. "Watch our dust!"

He had changed gear already, and in another second he was in top. With the accelerator depressed, and with the engine singing triumphantly in response, the big car shot down the driveway.

The drawbridge was still down!

"We'll do it, Dorrie!" shouted Lee, as thrilled as any schoolboy. "Unless they raise the bridge at once, we'll do it! Faster—faster! We don't want to share the same fate as young Handforth!"

"Perhaps we'll be able to find out what happened to those three youngsters!" muttered Dorrie, as he pressed his foot down harder than ever. "Look out! Be ready for bumps!"

He said this because a swarm of soldiers, alarmed by the shouts from the palace, were crowding and blocking the great gateway which marked the beginning of the bridge. Dorrie was expecting a fearful collision with this crowd.

But the Chinese cling to life as much as any other race; and this particular swarm of soldiers made headlong dives for safety as the car hurtled upon them. Shouting with fear, they scattered. Two of them were just caught as the car thundered by, but their injuries were not severe.

At something like sixty miles an hour the powerful Armstrong-Siddeley leapt across the drawbridge. A second after they had reached the concrete highway beyond, the bridge began to lift! Too late the Chinese engineers had attempted to stop this flight. The car was already speeding away into the blackness of the night.

"We've done it!" gurgled Dorrie triumphantly.

"Yes, by Jove, and the bridge is going up now!" ejaculated Lee. "We were only in the nick of time, Dorrie! And if they're trying to give chase, they'll be delayed, too!"

His lordship grinned.

"Let them give chase!" he retorted. "This car is a corker! We're doin' somethin' like seventy!"

There was no occasion for this headlong speed, but Lord Dorrimore couldn't help himself. An expert racing motorist, his very veins were throbbing at the feel of the controls beneath his hands and feet. All he wanted was speed—speed—and more speed! The sensation of liberty was so glorious that he gave the car her head.

"That fight wasn't so bad, was it?" he shouted, above the droning of the wheels on the concrete road. "Pity we couldn't keep it up a bit longer, but we were only just in time as it was."

"And what now?" asked Nelson Lee soberly.

"To Yang Fu!" retorted Dorrie. "We'll be there in five minutes!"

"And then?"

"Who cares?" said his lordship. "Another fight! I can tell you, Lee, I'm revellin' in this affair."

Nelson Lee made no comment for a moment. His own excitement had died as rapidly as it had sprung into being. Now that they had won free from the island stronghold, he knew that their whole project was indefinite. They would probably reach Yang Fu—nothing was likely to stop them now. But how would it be possible for them to locate Yung Ching's prison within the streets of that great city? It all seemed too futile. Little did Lee guess that they were being guided by an unseen star of Providence!

The Reward of Daring!

UMLOSI touched Lee's arm and the detective, turning, could see a faint gleam of fear in the black giant's eyes. They were fairly rolling. The reflected light of the headlamps showed up his face.

"Wau! I like not this devil's chariot!" he exclaimed tremblingly. "I like not this thing of wheels and roaring demons within! Speak thou to N'Kose, and urge him to give us peace!"

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Lee smiled.

"Motor-cars always scared you, didn't they?" he asked. "Cheer up, Umlosi, we shall soon find our feet on solid ground again."

Umlosi grunted, and gazed fearfully over the edge of the car.

"Methinks, my father, that we are more like to meet the ground with our heads!" he muttered. "I am a warrior, a fighter! Death will be pleasant for such men as thou and I if we meet it in battle. But death by means of this speeding fire-wagon would be an insult to our manhood, indeed!"

Lord Dorrimore turned his head.

"Goin' a bit too fast for you, old friend?" he grinned. "All right, we'll settle down to a crawlin' sixty. But we've got to get to Yang Fu as soon as we can, you know. Old Foo Chow is a cunnin' beggar, an' he's probably got a telephone line between the palace and the city."

"I've been thinking the same thing," said Nelson Lee. "In that case, Dorrie, we shall find a hot reception awaiting us."

"The hotter the better," said the sporting peer with relish. "I'm just in that mood when I don't care if it snows! As man to man, Lee, I don't care a brass ha'penny if it rains hobnails! I've enjoyed a few things in my life, but this is about the most glorious night on record! Be a pal, and keep your wise counsels in check!"

Nelson Lee laughed outright.

"Dorrie, you're incorrigible!" he said dryly. "All right, go ahead! In for a penny, in for a pound! We might just as well have our fling while we're about it."

"Be thou of care, N'Kose!" said Umlosi quickly. "An obstruction bars the road! The enemy is already afoot to hinder us!"

"My hat!" ejaculated Dorrie. "This man's got eyes like gimlets!"

He stared keenly ahead, and felt thankful for the powerful nature of the great lights. There was certainly something looming upon the highway—some obstacle which had been placed in the road with deliberate intention. Umlosi had seen this before the others, however.

"Shall we chance it?" asked Dorrie grimly.

"Better not," replied Nelson Lee. "We don't want to deliberately forfeit our lives, do we? There wouldn't be much hope for us if we overturned at this speed, old man. Better pull up, and make a fight for it."

"By glory, yes!" agreed Dorrie. "Another scrap, eh? That'll suit me all right. I'll bet Umlosi's itchin' for another set-to as well!"

"A fight is more befitting to warriors than this monster of speed," said Umlosi. "Wau! I am ready, my father!"

Lee at once suspected that the telephone had been busy already, and that means were being adopted to bring this sudden flight to an end.

Dorrie had reduced the car's speed to a sedate pace by this time, and the glaring headlamps revealed the obstruction as a mere sapling. A tree of small size, and mainly consisting of foliage, had been placed on the highway. From a distance it had looked formidable, but now it was obviously of no account.

"Confound it!" snapped Lord Dorrimore. "I'm not goin' to pull up for this bush! Hold tight, you fellows! We'll go slap over it!"

"It'll be the better way," agreed Nelson Lee, nodding.

He was watching keenly—expecting to see some movement from the dark bushes which bordered the road. But there was no sign of any human presence. And Lee was inwardly alarmed.

"An ambush!" he told himself. "I'm afraid this is the end!"

He expected to hear a shattering fusillade of shots at any moment—to feel a dozen bullets searing their red-hot way into his flesh. And instinctively he prepared himself to duck. And Dorrie accelerated at the same moment.

And then three figures appeared, dashing out from the roadside. Evidently they were aware of the fact that Dorrie was about to charge the obstruction.

"Stop!" roared a familiar voice. "Surrender you rotters! Give us that car, you Chinese!"

"Handforth!" shouted Nelson Lee thickly.

"Praise from the heavens and the stars!" rumbled Umlosi. "Tis my young masters, N'Kose! Alive and well! Wau! Was it not worth our fighting to discover this? Is not our daring rewarded?"

"Dorrie—Dorrie!" shouted Lee. "Stop, man! It's the boys!"

"By the ghost of Oliver Cromwell, so it is!" roared Lord Dorrimore, flushed with excitement and joy. "Thank Heaven they're alive!"

He jerked the car to a standstill right in the middle of the sapling's foliage. But owing to the roar of the engine,

Handforth & Co. had heard nothing of the conversation in the car, and the glare from the headlights prevented them seeing anything.

It had been Edward Oswald's idea to place this obstruction on the road. He had told Church and McClure that another car was bound to come along. And he meant to capture it. It seemed as though his plan had succeeded.

"Come on, Church! Come on, Mac!" he panted. "Now for it!"

He made a run at the car, brandishing a huge bamboo stick. There was something distinctly alarming in Handforth's attitude. With a rush he leapt upon the footboard and struck blindly.

"Surrender, you beastly Chinks!" he thundered. "We want this car!"

"Steady, Handforth! Steady, young 'un!"

The voice came to Handforth like something in a dream. The bamboo stick fell from his grasp, and he stood there, gazing amazedly at the face of Nelson Lee. Church and McClure had halted, too, but were too utterly flabbergasted to say a word. They had all expected to enter upon a grim, hopeless battle. And here they were looking at Nelson Lee and Dorrie and Umlosi!

"My only aunt!" gurgled Handforth. "Mr. Lee! We—we thought— We were going to grab this car, sir, so that we could make a dash into Yang Fu!"

Nelson Lee was grasping him, and Dorrie was wrenching at his hand.

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ORDER IN ADVANCE!

"Never mind about Yang Fu, Handforth," said Lee huskily. "We all thought you were dead. And here you are, not only alive but as warlike as ever! And your companions are well, too!"

Handforth was beginning to recover.

"Well?" he repeated, with a grin. "I should say we are, sir! Great Scott! Did you think we'd pegged out or something?"

"You young boulder, we all thought you were drowned!" retorted Dorrie. "Good luck to you, Handy—and to you other chaps, too! Gad, you've got as many lives as a batch of cats!"

"It's glorious to see you, sir!" panted Church, jumping up. "But what's happened?"

"Is there something big on, sir?" asked McClure excitedly. "You mustn't take any notice of these chaps, sir," said Handforth. "I've had an awful time with 'em. They didn't want me to stop this car, but I made 'em help me."

"My boy, never mind that for the moment," said Nelson Lee quietly. "It seems incredible that you can be alive. Let us get accustomed to this glorious fact. How did you manage to escape death?"

"Well, it's a rummy affair, sir," admitted Handforth. "I thought we should have been dead long ago after that rat stew and the slug and cockroach mince! We're probably poisoned as it is!"

"What's the young ass talking about?" asked Dorrie, in surprise. "Rat stew? He doesn't even mention the river!"

"Oh, that?" said Handforth carelessly. "There's nothing

to tell, really. We just floated down on the current and got ashore among the rocks, dried ourselves in the sun, and there you are!"

"Upon my word, Handforth, what an extraordinary boy you are!" said Nelson Lee. "You treat these things as though they were trifles! How in the world does it come about that you are here—on this road?"

"Handy had a fight with a tiger, sir, and saved a little Chinese boy from being killed," explained Church. "The kid's father was grateful, and took us in and gave us a feast."

"Oh, indeed!" exclaimed Lee. "Anything else?"

"Good glory! Isn't that enough?" asked his lordship.

"Of course, I'm not a bit surprised," he added. "A fellow like Handforth wouldn't dream of fightin' anythin' less formidable than a tiger. He probably wrestles with a couple of elephants before breakfast every morning!"

"It was nothing, sir," growled Handforth. "It was a whacking great tiger, and the brute was mauling that kid to death. So I pulled its rotten tail and biffed it in the eye! Naturally, it bunked!"

"Any self-respectin' tiger would bunk after bein' biffed in the eye," agreed Dorrie. "Lee, old man, do you believe this wild and woolly yarn? Personally, I think it's the real goods. Handy's capable of anythin'!"

"It is certainly an extraordinary story," said Nelson Lee.

"Not that we can stop to analyse it now. Let us hope the tiger was only an old one, or a harmless brute——"

"Harmless!" echoed Church. "Don't you believe it, sir! It was a man-eater! Mac and I thought that Handforth was going to be killed, but he went for that tiger as though it were only a weasel. And the awful beast was so surprised that it bolted. It was just Handy's dare-devilry, sir."

"I believe it," said Nelson Lee, nodding. "Not content with getting nearly drowned he invited death at the hands of a tiger! And I understand that you have made friends with a Chinaman?"

"Ah Fong, sir," said Handforth. "He can speak pidgin English, too—quite a decent old bird. He made us stop to dinner, and we didn't know what we'd been eating until afterwards. Dog meat, you know—rats and slugs and things! Thank goodness we got rid of it all!" he added fervently.

"We won't press for the sordid details," said Dorrie gently. "Well, Lee, what about it now? Wasn't it worth dashin' out on the spree? We've found these youngsters, an' everything in the garden is lovely! Now it's full speed ahead for Yang Fu—an' Yung Ching's prison!"

"Hurrah!" shouted Handforth. "That's the idea, sir! That's just what we were planning ourselves!"

"Is it O.K., Lee?" asked his lordship.

"My dear man, you can go straight ahead," replied Nelson Lee resignedly. "Whatever happens now will leave me perfectly cold. I'm past the stage of being surprised!"

(Don't miss reading of the thrilling attempt to rescue Yung Ching. See next week's chapters.)

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GUSSY'S SACRIFICE!

(Continued from page 21.)

Wally would have owned up before this—at any cost to himself.

But now Wally was determined upon one thing—if it really came to a flogging for his brother he meant to step out and frankly admit that he was the fellow who had thrown the tar over Mr. Selby.

The Head would understand then D'Arcy's powerful reasons for keeping silent, and would hardly proceed with the flogging.

And there was no doubt now that the Head meant business. Wally nerved himself for the coming ordeal.

The school was assembled, and as the clock struck half-past twelve the Head entered.

His face was very grave, and there were signs of distress in it that were visible to the duller glances.

The Head felt the situation as keenly as anyone else.

Public floggings were very rare at St. Jim's, and very unpleasant to the Head as well as to the recipient thereof.

But the Head felt that he had no alternative in this case. He glanced over the assembly.

"Boys," he said in his deep voice, "you have been called together on a very painful and disagreeable occasion. It is necessary for a severe punishment to be inflicted upon a junior of the Fourth Form for direct disobedience to my orders. The junior in question is D'Arcy of the Fourth. He is about to be flogged in public!"

There was a faint hum in the Hall. The crowded boys waited expectantly.

The Head glanced in surprise at the clock. He had directed the sergeant to bring D'Arcy there at precisely half-past twelve. It was five minutes past that time now, and the sergeant had not appeared. The old soldier was generally punctuality itself.

Dr. Holmes was about to send for him when the sergeant entered the Hall. He came alone.

His face expressed surprise, dismay, and great disquietude. He came up the Hall towards the Head, and there was a buzz of voices as he passed. A gesture of the Head restored silence.

"Sergeant!"

"Yes, sir? I—"

"Where is Master D'Arcy?"

"I—I don't know, sir!"

"What?"

"I—I don't know where he is, sir," faltered the sergeant. "I directed you to bring him here at half-past twelve."

said the Head, frowning. "Why have you not done so?"

"I—I went to the room for him, sir," said the sergeant, "but he wasn't there."

"What!"

Again a buzz in the Hall, silenced by a frown from the Head.

"The room was empty, sir," said the sergeant. "The door was locked, just as I left it, sir, and the bars on the

window were just the same. He couldn't have got out that way! He couldn't have gone up the chimney, sir! But he's gone!"

"You mean to say that Master D'Arcy had left the punishment-cell?"

"Yes, sir."

"Then he must have had a key to the door?"

"I—I suppose so, sir."

"This is very annoying. But I suppose he must be in the school somewhere? Have you looked for him?"

"Yes, sir. He can't be found!"

"He must be found!" said the Head, frowning. "Go and look again! Kildare, you and some of the prefects had better go and look, too!"

The boys stood in silence while the sergeant and the prefects left the Hall. They waited in breathless suspense.

Tom Merry & Co. guessed what had happened. They remembered D'Arcy's determination to leave St. Jim's rather than submit to a flogging. It was pretty clear that the swell of St. Jim's had carried out his resolution—that he was gone!

For ten long minutes the whole school waited in silence, or with hushed whispers.

The searchers returned at last.

They came without D'Arcy. The Head fixed an inquiring glance upon Kildare.

"GEM" FOOTBALLS FOR JOKES

Have you sent in your joke yet? There are plenty of footballs and half-a-crowns waiting to be won!

"Well?"

"He can't be found, sir."

"Do you mean that he is no longer in the school?"

"Yes, sir. He has taken his hat, and a travelling-bag belonging to him is gone, and his box in the Fourth Form dormitory shows signs of having been ransacked. He has taken some of his things with him."

The Head bit his lip.

"Then he has run away from school?"

"I think so, sir."

"Very well." The Head's brows were deeply contracted.

"The school is dismissed!"

And he left the Hall.

The assembly broke up. The boys poured out into the quadrangle, discussing the startling happening with bated breath. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy had run away from school!

Would St. Jim's ever see him again?

That was an anxious question for Tom Merry & Co. to answer. Their chum had gone out into the wide world alone. Where was he? And what would happen to him?

Only the future could tell!

THE END.

(Read what happens to Gussy next Wednesday. His exciting adventures in "THE CIRCUS SCHOOLBOY!" will thrill you from first line to last. Watch out for this grand yarn.)

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Printed and published every Wednesday by the Proprietors, The Amalgamated Press, Ltd., The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4. Advertisement offices: The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4. Registered for transmission by Canadian Magazine Post. Subscription rates: Inland and abroad, 11s. per annum; 5s. 6d. for six months. Sole Agents for Australia and New Zealand: Messrs. Gordon & Gotch, Ltd., and for South Africa: Central News Agency, Ltd.—Saturday, September 2nd, 1933.