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WITHIN!

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STIRRING NEW ST. FRANK'S STORY STARTS WITHIN!

The MILLIONAIRE



When fortune favours Henry Binks with a fat inheritance the Chums of St. Jim's can barely believe it. But what a surprise they get when Binks returns to the school in all the glory of his new-found wealth—with the intention of becoming a scholar!

CHAPTER 1. Too Surprising!

"MILLIONAIRE!"

"Rats!"

Tom Merry sniffed.

"Well, you'll soon see!" he said disdainfully.

Monty Lowther and Manners of the Shell Form at St. Jim's stared at their chum. Tom Merry looked as if he were speaking seriously, but—

"Now, look here," said Lowther, "did you say millionaire?"

"Yes, I said millionaire."

"Binks?"

"Yes, Binks!" said Tom Merry warmly. "After all, what is there so wonderful in it?"

"Well, it's not a common occurrence for the boot-boy in a place to blossom forth suddenly into a millionaire," said Lowther sarcastically. "Such things don't happen more than two or three times a week."

"Well, this has happened."

"I'm going to see Binks in all his glory before I believe it," said Lowther. "He's been pulling your respected leg, Thomas, my son."

"You saw the letter he had from home before he got the Head's leave to go home to see about it," said Tom Merry. Lowther yawned.

"Yes, something about an uncle in Australia, or Greenland, wasn't it?"

"In Australia," said Tom Merry. "Binks was his favourite nephew—named Henry after him. The uncle was

a tough old specimen, and died a millionaire and left all his tin to Binks. You saw the letter."

"But I thought it was a little fancy of Mrs. Binks," said Lowther. "I thought the millions would turn out to be about twenty pounds in the Post Office Savings Bank."

"Exactly!" said Manners. "My idea, too."

"Well, I suspected something of the sort," Tom Merry admitted; "but I've had this letter from Binks, and it's all serene."

"Stuff!"

"Oh, read out the letter!" said Manners. "After all, if there's anything in it, we want to look after Binks. He will be a valuable acquaintance."

Tom Merry read out the letter. It was written in a terrible hand, on dirty paper, and the spelling was of an original turn. But the meaning of the letter was plain enough.

"Dear Master Merry,—I inklose the pound you so kindly lent me. Please find inklosed a postal order fore the same. The noos is quite true. My Unkle Enery as dide in Australia, and as lef me orl is muny. It is more than a million pounds, so the loryer sez. I am kumin back to St. Jim's to see the Ead. I ope I shall see you.

"Yores affeckshunately,

"HENRY BINKS."

"There!" said Tom Merry triumphantly.

Lowther grinned.

"The lawyer's pulling our friend Binks' leg," he remarked.

"Oh, rats!"

—TO THE BOOT-BOY OF ST. JIM'S IN THIS RIPPING YARN!

BOOT-BOY!

By
MARTIN CLIFFORD.

"He's rotting," said Manners. "I suppose there are some pickings, and the lawyer chap is on to them, and he's stuffing the Binkses."

Tom Merry enorted.

"Look here, it's not so very extraordinary for a chap to have an uncle die in Australia and leave him some tin," he said.

"Spoof!"

"You ass!"

"Rats!"

"Well, you'll see soon," said Tom Merry. "I expect Binks will be here to-day."

And he stamped out of the study. He was just a little exasperated by the refusal of his chums to believe the startling news. Startling the news certainly was.

For Binks, the page and boot-boy at St. Jim's, to become a millionaire was amazing enough.

Such a thing was not impossible, of course. But it was unusual.

Lowther and Manners might be forgiven for doubting until the evidence was beyond question. But Tom Merry fully believed it.

He knew that Binks would not lie, and he felt that he would not be foolish enough to believe a cock-and-bull story of some unscrupulous lawyer when he got on the spot at home and could look into it.

Binks was a millionaire!

What he was coming back to St. Jim's for Tom Merry did not quite know. Certainly, as a millionaire, Binks would not continue in his old job of boot-boy and page.

Perhaps he simply wanted to be congratulated upon his good fortune, or perhaps to seek advice of the Head.

Dr. Holmes had had some information of the great news, and if it turned out to be correct, there was no doubt that Binks would stand greatly in need of sage advice, and the Head was just the kind-hearted gentleman to stand by him and help him in his new and curious position.

For a chap like Binks, who had a heart of gold, but had been very sketchily educated, to become a millionaire, might lead to some curious results.

"The silly asses!" exclaimed Tom Merry, as he went down the passage.

He was thinking of his unbelieving chums; but the words fell upon the ears of a group of fellows standing in the doorway of Study No. 6 in the Fourth Form passage, and one of them put up an eyeglass and stared at Tom Merry.

"Weally, Tom Mewwy—" he remarked.

"Hallo, Gussy!"

"I wegard your wemark as uttably wude, Tom Mewwy," said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

Tom Merry stared at him.

"Eh?" he said.

"I appeal to Blake if it was not uttably wude," said D'Arcy, turning to his chums of Study No. 6.

Jack Blake grinned.

"Horribly!" he said.

"I appeal to you, Dig."

"Ghastly rude," said Digby.

"What is your opinion, Hewwies, old man?"

"It was simply rotten," said Herries solemnly. "I wouldn't talk like that to my dog Towser. I wouldn't, really."

D'Arcy turned his eyeglass upon Tom Merry again.

"There!" he said.

"Well," said Tom Merry, "what are you babbling about, Gussy? Explain what's the matter with you."

"You made a most opprobrious wemark. You alluded to us as silly asses. Of course, the wemark had some justice as applied to Blake and Hewwies and Dig, but I uttably wefuse, myself, to be chawacterised as an ass."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Weally, Tom Merry—"

"But I was not speaking to you," said Tom Merry; "I was speaking of Manners and Lowther. I've just been having an argument with them. I didn't see you till you spoke."

D'Arcy's face was a study.

Blake & Co. shrieked with laughter.

"Bai Jove!" ejaculated Arthur Augustus.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Blake.

"Weally, Blake—"

Arthur Augustus regarded his chums with a glance of annoyance. They were yelling.

"Weally, you fellows, you might have told me that I was in ewwah, and that Tom Mewwy was not alludin' to us!" he exclaimed.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Blake. "I thought it was ripping, so I let you rip!"

"You uttah ass! I weally think a chap's chums might point out when a chap's makin' an ass of himself."

"My hat! We should be pointing all day."

"Weally, Blake—"

"But what have you been rowing with Manners and Lowther about, Tommy?" asked Blake.

Tom Merry laughed.

"We haven't been rowing," he said; "but they won't believe the news about Binks!"

"Binks?"

"Bai Jove! Have you heard ffrom Binks?"

"I've had a letter."

"Is his uncle weally dead?"

"It seems so."

"And was he awfully wich, aftah all?"

"Yes."

"And he's left all his tin to Binks?"

"All, or most of it."

"Bai Jove!"

"Binks is a millionaire," said Tom Merry.

"Gweat Scott!"

"Rats!" said Blake and Herries and Digby, with great unanimity.

Tom Merry glared.

"I'll read you the letter!" he exclaimed.

"Oh, go ahead, but we shan't believe it!"

Tom Merry read out the letter. The chums of the Fourth Form at St. Jim's listened to it with great attention. Then they laughed. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy was the only one who took it seriously.

"Gweat Scott!" he ejaculated.

"Spoof!" said Blake.

"Bosh!" said Digby.

"Rats!" said Herries.

"I believe it's true," said Tom Merry. "Binks wouldn't cram, and he's not such a fool as to be taken in, now he's there to see. I believe it's all right, and that Binks is a giddy millionaire."

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Rot!" said Blake tersely. "If he's a millionaire, what is he coming back for? I suppose he's not going to roll in wealth on the kitchen stairs?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I suppose he wants to see the Head," said Tom Merry. "Perhaps he wants to see me. Anyway, he's coming; and he's a millionaire."

"There's a catch in it!"

Tom Merry snorted.

"Well, wait and see!" he exclaimed. And he walked on down the passage, leaving the Fourth Formers laughing loudly.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy hurried after the Shell fellow.

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"Bai Jove, 'Tom Mewwy, this is vewy wemarkable if true!" he exclaimed.

"Yes, rather!" said Tom Merry. "I believe it."

"So do I, deah boy. I say, you know," went on Arthur Augustus, "this will be a gweat change for Binks."

"Jolly big change, from boot-boy to millionaire," said Tom Merry, laughing.

"I mean, a chap ought to stand by him a little. Lots of the fellows—like Gore, for instance—will start chippin' him, as sure as a gun," said D'Arcy. "You see, some of them will be jealous, and some of them are wank wottahs. I wathah think it would be the wight and decent thing to do, you know, to stand by Binks."

Tom Merry gave the swell of St. Jim's a smack on the back.

"That's just like you, Gussy! We'll stand by him—rather!"

"When is he coming?"

"To-day, I think. Hark!"

It was a shout from the quadrangle. There had been a buzz of a car-engine, and the shout followed.

"Bai Jove, what is that?" exclaimed D'Arcy. "Somebody's awwived!"

"Binks, for a ducat!" gasped Tom Merry. "Binks, in a motor-car!"

"Bai Jove!"

They dashed down the stairs and out of the door of the School House.

Outside there was a crowd of fellows of all Forms. They swarmed round a taxicab that had stopped in front of the School House steps.

The chauffeur of that cab was grinning under the peak of his cap. The taximeter registered over three pounds.

From the door of the taxi a figure was stepping. It was Binks!

CHAPTER 2.

Binks in His Glory!

HENRY BINKS, the School House page, had never been what one would call handsome. His figure was not a model of grace. In his page's uniform he was not a thing of beauty. Nobody had ever supposed so. But Binks, in the new garb he had adopted as a millionaire, was amazing!

An artist would have preferred Binks in his old clothes.

Tom Merry looked and gasped. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy looked and nearly fainted.

Binks was dressed fashionably, or, rather, in an absurd exaggeration of fashion—which showed that a country tailor had been given his head regardless of expense.

His clothes were of a loud check, a chessboard aspect. Indeed, as soon as Manners saw him, he murmured: "Pawu to king's fourth!" involuntarily.

The jacket was meant to be a lounge jacket. It was tight at the waist; so tight that Binks had some difficulty in breathing, which rendered his face redder than was his wont, though it was generally red in parts, as if polished.

The trousers were very loose, and the boots were three sizes too small for Binks, and must have called for considerable powers of physical endurance on Binks' part.

The collar was higher than D'Arcy's, and seemed on the point of cutting off its wearer's ears at every movement. Binks' ears stood out straight from his head, so that over his high collar they were striking.

His necktie was green, with red-and-blue bars and yellow spots, and was gathered up quite imposingly and fastened with an enormous gold pin, which seemed to cry out that it was made of rolled gold.

He wore a silk hat.

The hat was cocked a little rakishly on one side, to indicate to the general public that Binks was "all there," and that he had been accustomed to wearing silk toppers all his life.

The vision of splendour descended from the taxicab. With a flourish, Binks handed the driver some notes and the taxi drove away.

"Welcome home, Binks!"

"Three cheers for Binks, the millionaire!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Binks raised his hat gracefully and bowed to the crowd. He was flushed with pleasure.

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Tom Merry neither laughed nor cheered. He was more inclined to weep. It was quite natural that a lad like Binks, uneducated, and never in possession of more than a few shillings at a time, should play the giddy ox in this way as soon as he had an unlimited command of money.

It was very evident that the youthful millionaire required some good friends to stand by him in his good fortune.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy held on to Tom Merry's arm.

"Look—look at the waistcoat!" he murmured.

"Beats you hollow, Gussy."

"Weally, Tom Mewwy—"

"Bravo, Binks!"

"And the tie!" muttered D'Arcy wildly. "The—the tie! Did you evah see such awful colours, deah boy?"

"Never!"

"Poor old Binks!" murmured Tom Merry. "He's been had awfully with those clothes. It would be a mercy to yank them off him and shove him into his old uniform."

"He certainly looked bettah dvested then."

"Well, this is a sight for the gods and men and little fishes!" said Jack Blake. "What do you think, Dig?"

"I don't think!" said Digby.

Kerruish of the Fourth, who was the proud possessor of a mouth-organ, started "See, the Conquering Hero Comes" in discordant strains.

Binks grinned amiably at the crowd.

He was delighted with his reception.

He had feared that there might be some envy and jealousy among the fellows at the idea of a page and boot-boy blossoming forth into a millionaire.

But there was no sign of it.

Mellish was the only one who was sneering, and the cad of the Fourth was out of sight behind the crowd of juniors.

Most of the fellows were laughing, true, but they were cheering as well, and Binks was willing to set it all down in hearty exuberance.

Binks, as he raised his topper and bowed to the ovation, was a sight worthy of reproduction on the films.

He imitated, as well as he could remember it, the graceful action of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, but he could not be said to succeed exactly.

"It's hawfully good of you fellows to meet me like this," said Binks.

"Hear, hear!"

"Bravo, Binks, the millionaire!"

"Us fellows!" said Mellish. "My word! He'll start calling us old chaps next, the cheeky bounder!"

Tom Merry gave the cad of the Fourth a glance of contempt.

"He won't start calling you old chap," he said. "No decent fellow would be likely to do that."

Mellish bit his lip.

"Decent fellow!" he sneered. "Our old boot-boy—chap we used to give tanners to when he was useful! Oh, awfully decent, I must say!"

D'Arcy turned his eyeglass upon Mellish.

"Mellish, deah boy, I wegarad you as a wank wottah," he said. "I admit that it was not vewy delicate of Binks to accept tips, but you must wemembah that a chap in his posish is brought up to do so, and he knew no bettah. You would certainly have done so in his place, Mellish; and, as a mattah of fact, you have waised money in worse ways, and have been vewy nearly expelled for it."

At which Mellish thought it better to say no more.

Binks came up the steps.

He grinned hugely at the sight of Tom Merry in the doorway.

"Ere I am again, Master Merry!" he exclaimed. "The noos was quite true."

Tom Merry smiled.

"And you're a millionaire, Binks?"

"Yes, Master Merry."

"What do you say now, Blake?" demanded Tom Merry.

"Oh, I say—my hat!" said Blake.

"What do you say, Manners?"

Manners grinned.

"Same as Blake," he said.

"I'm jolly glad of your good luck, Binks!" Tom Merry

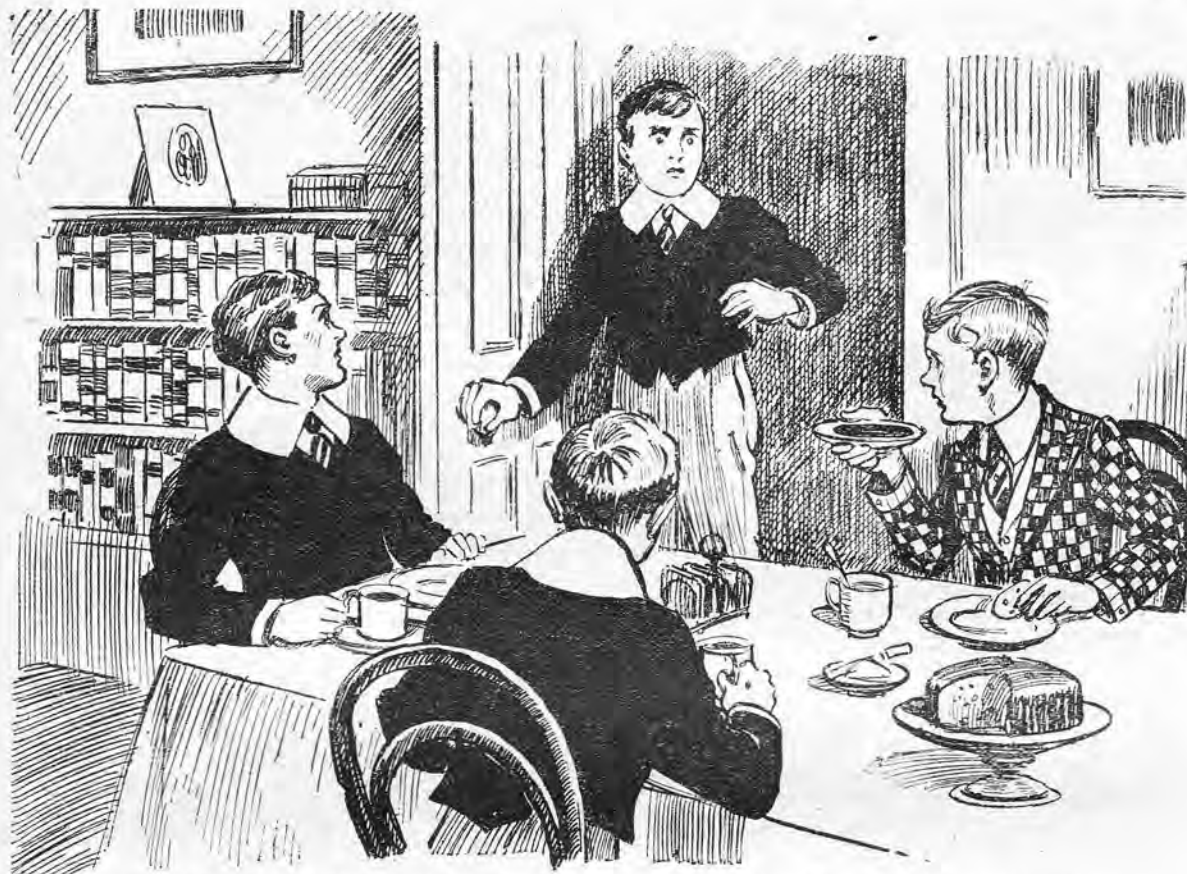
exclaimed. "Give us your fist, old man!"

And he held out his hand.

Binks coloured with pleasure. He had not dared to offer his hand to Tom Merry, millionaire as he was, and the Shell fellow's hearty action went straight to his heart.

He grasped Tom Merry's fingers with a hand that was very hard and knuckly from the work it had done for many years—hard and honest work.

Gore grinned, and Mellish cackled. The other fellows looked on, most of them astonished. Binks was a millionaire, but he had been the School House boot-boy, and very few of the fellows there would have shaken hands with him. As Crooke of the Shell said, it was necessary to keep up some distinction, you know.



Binks was seated at tea with Manners and Lowther when Gore looked into the study. The newcomer gave a jump and stared in amazement as he saw the one-time boot-boy drinking tea from his saucer. "My hat!" he exclaimed. "Your millionaire is lacking in manners." "Get out, you cad!" said Lowther.

Crooke was the son of a man who had made an immense fortune on the Stock Exchange by a speculation which had ruined some hundreds of his fellow-countrymen. So Crooke was really quite an authority upon what a decent fellow could do. Crooke sometimes lent money at interest among his school-fellows, and would take bats and books and such things in payment when the money was not forthcoming, and in this way he had become the possessor of many things that did not belong to him; but Crooke would have shuddered at shaking hands with Binks. Tom Merry had no such scruples.

"I'm jolly glad, Binks, old man!" he exclaimed again.

"Thank you, Master Merry. I've come down to see the 'Ead," said Binks. "I should like to see you after, if I may."

"Of course you may! Come to my study."

"Thank you, Master Merry."

Binks went into the House.

"Jolly useful friend for some people to have, boot-boy or not," remarked Mellish, with his habitual curl of the lip, which made fellows often want to shake him. "Blessed if I wouldn't have shaken hands with him myself if I had thought of it!"

The fellows laughed.

Tom Merry's eyes blazed.

Mellish was turning away as he spoke, and he suddenly felt a heavy grasp upon his shoulder, and he was swung quickly back, to find himself looking into the flashing eyes of Tom Merry.

"Now then!" said Tom between his teeth.

Mellish recovered his coolness in a moment.

"Well?" he said.

"I'll trouble you to repeat what you just said!" exclaimed Tom Merry.

Mellish wrinkled his brows reflectively.

"What did I say?" he remarked. "Oh, I remarked that Binks would be a useful friend to have?"

"And something more."

"Oh, yes! I would have shaken hands if I had thought of it," said Mellish. "But I didn't."

Tom Merry's lips curled.

"If you are trying to crawl out of what you said, you're welcome to do it," he said.

The cad of the Fourth turned a little pale.

"I can't see that I'm crawling out of anything," he said.

"You hinted that I was sucking up to Binks because of his money."

"My dear fellow—"

"You meant to imply that I was shaking hands with him because he was rich now!" said Tom Merry fiercely.

Mellish shrugged his shoulders.

"Well, Mellish has a right to his opinion," said Crooke of the Shell.

Tom Merry looked at him.

"I'll talk it out with you, Crooke, if you like," he said.

"Nobody shall hint that I'm making up to a fellow for his money so long as I've a fist to knock a cad down with. If you meant that, Mellish, you'd better say so in plain English!"

"I never said I meant it."

"Did you mean it?"

"If the cap fits you, you can wear it," said Mellish.

Some of the fellows laughed.

Tom Merry's eyes flashed.

"That's not good enough!" he exclaimed. "You'll say out in plain language whether you meant that I was making up to Binks for his money, or whether you didn't. And if you did mean it, you'll take it back!"

Mellish gave a quick glance round.

The cad of the Fourth had to speak; the eyes of all were upon him, and there was no escape. His sneer had cost him dear this time. He was a dealer in innuendoes, in remarks that carried a hidden sting in them, but he was usually too keen to risk being called to account this way.

But Tom Merry was too straightforward for a fellow like Mellish to deal with successfully. Mellish's way was to snipe, as it were, from behind cover, while Tom Merry would come right out into the open and have things out. A most uncomfortable sort of fellow for the cad of the Fourth to deal with.

"Well, I don't know that I meant anything of the sort," said Mellish at last. "I was only joking, anyway."

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Tom Merry laughed scornfully. "That's enough!" he said. "But I advise you to be a little more careful in your jokes in the future."

"Oh, rats!"

"Mind what I say, that's all. You're a cad, Mellish, and if you don't care to stand up to a fellow you slander, you'd better hold your tongue."

Mellish bit his lips hard.

There were few fellows who would have taken that "lying down"; but Mellish did not want to stand up to the champion athlete of the Shell.

He was no match for Tom Merry, and he knew it. He should have remembered that, as a matter of fact, before he provoked Tom Merry.

Tom Merry turned away from him, and looked at Crooke, who was Mellish's crony.

"Have you anything to say on the subject, Crooke?" Tom Merry asked.

Crooke shrugged his shoulders.

"No," he said.

"Very good!"

The crowd of juniors dispersed. They had rather expected a fight; but, on second thoughts, they realised that they were not likely to get much fighting from either Mellish or Crooke.

The Terrible Three were left standing alone. Tom Merry was still looking a little red.

"That chap's a cad," Lowther remarked. "But don't be too warlike, Tommy, my son. You never used to fly out in this way."

Tom Merry flushed again.

"I can't stand that chap!" he exclaimed. "He's always got something to say with a beastly sting in it—he lets nobody off. He'd make out that the whole human race is rotten to the core, I believe. I'm sick of it!"

Herries of the Fourth looked round as he was moving off. "Quite right, Tommy!" he exclaimed. "That's Mellish all over. You know how my bulldog Towser always takes a dislike to him. You can always trust Towser. What about Towser now—eh?"

Tom Merry laughed. But he was very much inclined to agree with Towser's view of Percy Mellish.

CHAPTER 3.

A Startling Proposition!

BINKS tapped at the door of the Head's study. Binks, gorgeous as he was, and feeling himself gorgeous, was a little nervous at the same time.

Binks, unfortunately, did not know how utterly absurd his gorgeousness was. He did not know that he would have looked every bit as respectable in a quiet suit of clothes, or even in his old buttons, and that he looked insufferably vulgar in his new finery. Naturally, such a thought as that did not occur to Henry Binks.

He had always been poor—poorer even than most boys in his situation, because it was necessary for him to contribute the greater part of his wages to the support of a crowd of little Binkses at home. That duty Binks had always done, without repining, and without ostentation. Few knew it; and those who knew it had learned it by accident.

Binks had regarded it as a matter of course. Binks' only luxury had been the bloodthirsty literature he used to read, detailing the adventures of Deadwood Bill and Bloodstained Sam, and other persons who appeared to spend a remarkable existence committing daily murders in mining camps. Binks' chief desire had been to become a highwayman; he had never thought of becoming a millionaire.

Now that he was rolling in money, he had not the faintest idea how to spend it; but he was, of course, surrounded by harpies who were willing to show him many ways. Binks' ambition now was to be a gentleman; and his idea of being a gentleman was to wear expensive clothes, ride in motor-cars, and spend money extravagantly. The one-time page-boy of St. Jim's had much to learn.

But Binks had a sterling good heart, and the probability was that he would learn his lesson in time. It was equally probable that he would go through some queer adventures first.

In spite of his finery, which the unfortunate fellow fancied placed him on a level with the fellows of St. Jim's, Binks felt a tremor as he knocked at the Head's door.

"Come in!" said the well-known voice in its deep tones.

Binks shivered.

Often enough he had gone into the study with messages, or a tray of tea-things. But never as a millionaire—never as an equal.

An equal! Binks had a sort of thrill at the thought that he was the Head's equal now. He had twenty times as much money, perhaps fifty times as much. He could have offered to buy St. Jim's, and turn it into a garage for his

motors. The Head had to work for his living, and Binks hadn't—now! As a matter of fact, Binks could not help recognising that he was the superior. Poor Binks!

Yet, considering the hard toil and penury of Binks' youth, who shall blame him for fancying that to be a gentleman was not to work?

Binks did not know that a man who does not work is very far from a gentleman—is merely a useless encumberer of the earth, a drone in the busy hive, an unhappiness to himself and others.

Binks opened the door, and he drew a deep breath as he did so.

Dr. Holmes looked up.

"Dear me!" he ejaculated.

He looked at Binks. Then he put his glasses on and looked at him again. He seemed puzzled.

He did not recognise Binks in his new clothes, but he knew that the clothes must be those of an utter bouncer.

"Bless my soul!" said Dr. Holmes. "Who is it? How did you get in here, my good fellow?"

Binks felt a tremor.

Dr. Holmes evidently did not recognise him, and yet he called him "my good fellow." Why did he not take him for a gentleman?

Binks wondered.

"What is it?" asked the Head.

"If—if you please, sir—" faltered the one-time page of St. Jim's.

Dr. Holmes almost dropped his glasses in his astonishment.

"Bless my soul!" he exclaimed. Binks!

"Yes, sir."

"Binks!"

"It's me, sir!"

"Dear me!"

Binks came a little farther into the study. He wondered whether Dr. Holmes would shake hands with him. The Head made no motion to do so. He simply stared at the egregious Binks.

"Bless my soul!" he repeated.

"I—I told you I was coming to see you, sir," said Binks.

"Yes. But—but what does this absurd attire mean, Binks?" asked the astonished headmaster of St. Jim's.

Dr. Holmes might have caned Binks without startling him so much.

"This what, sir?" gasped Binks.

"Those absurd clothes."

"Oh, sir!"

"I trust, Binks, that you have not done this as a joke?" said Dr. Holmes sternly.

"Oh, sir!" said poor Binks, hanging down his head.

His look showed how far he was from joking.

Dr. Holmes gazed at him seriously.

"Is it possible, Binks, that you thought it the proper thing to dress in that manner?" he asked.

Binks was crimson and silent. What was the matter with his clothes? He didn't know himself; but he felt that the Head must know.

"I'm sorry, sir!" he stammered at last. "I thought I ought to be decent to come and see you, sir."

Dr. Holmes smiled slightly.

"Oh, very well, Binks! Really, I beg your pardon for mentioning the matter, as it is really no concern of mine. Of course, you do not desire to keep your position here?"

"Well, sir, it wouldn't do for a millionaire to be a boot-boy, would it?"

The Head laughed.

"Hardly, Binks."

"But I 'ope, sir, that you don't think there's hany swank about me because I'm rich now," said Binks earnestly. "I 'ope I shall be sensible, sir."

"A very correct sentiment, Binks."

"My Uncle 'Enery, sir, expressed a wish in 'is will, which I want to tell you about, sir," said Binks.

"Please sit down, Binks."

"Thank you, sir!"

Binks deposited his silk hat carefully upon the Head's table, and sat down in a chair—on the extreme edge of it.

"Now, Binks?"

"Uncle 'Enery, sir, 'as left me all his money, which is more than a million pounds," said Binks. "'E leaves it to me to pervide for the others, which, of course, I am going to do."

"Quite right, Binks. I'm sure you will do your duty to your family."

"As for me, sir, Uncle 'Enery thought—"

Binks paused.

"Ahem!" said the Head.

"'E—e thought, sir—"

"Yes?"

"That you, sir—"

"I?"

(Continued on page 8.)

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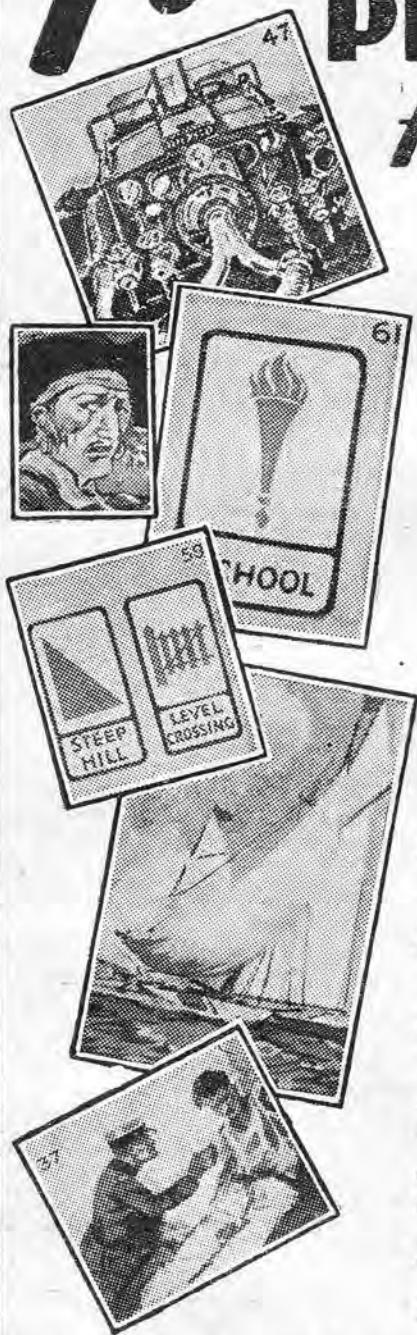
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"Yes, sir, you—" said the Head, with a smile. "You must explain yourself a little further, Binks."

"M-my Uncle 'Enery thought, sir, that you might be kind enough to take me in 'and," said Binks.

"Oh!"

"He thought, sir, that as my employer, sir, you would consider yourself responsible in a way, sir."

The Head stared.

Dr. Holmes was a conscientious man, and realised to the full the duties of an employer. But surely taking the new millionaire in hand was a little beyond the duty of the most conscientious employer.

"Ahem!" said the Head.

"I—I want to do the right thing, sir," said Binks. "I want to be eddicated, sir. I know I ain't what I ought to be, sir."

"I am sure, Binks," said the Head, after a pause, "that I shall be very pleased to do anything in my power to help you."

"Then—then you wouldn't object, sir—"

"Object—to what?"

"To my coming to St. Jim's, sir—as a pupil."



"What?"

The Head gasped.

It was out now, and Binks sat before the Head, with his eyes on the carpet, looking a great deal like a criminal awaiting sentence.

CHAPTER 4. Binks' Ambition!

DR. HOLMES was silent for several whole minutes. He did not know what to say.

The Head was a kind and good man, and the last person in the world to have any snobbish prejudices. He knew perfectly well, of course, that a boot-boy was as good as any other boy, so long as he behaved himself decently. He knew also that Binks himself was a much better fellow than many of the juniors in the school—than Mellish of the Fourth, or Gore of the Shell, for instance. And yet—

Yet facts were facts.

It was said of old that facts are stubborn things. With the best intentions in the world Binks was not fitted to take his place among the boys of St. Jim's.

The Head realised that.

There were boys of all classes there—some rich, some poor, and the better-off boys were not always the best. That did not follow by any means. But a certain station was considered essential. Not that the Head cared himself whether a fellow's father was a duke or a dustman. He knew that that was of no real consequence, excepting to the snobbish; all really depended upon what the fellow was like himself.

But a fellow who had started life like Binks was likely to have a rough time of it among fellows who had excusable prejudices on the subject. Binks' ambition to become educated and fitted to take a station in the world was good. But he would fare far better among a new set of people who had known nothing of his origin.

That was clear enough to the Head.

But he could understand, too, how Binks naturally wanted to stick to the only place he knew, and the familiar faces. Millionaire as he was, he would feel lost and deserted at going out into the big world alone.

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 1,544.

Binks watched the Head's face anxiously.

"You'll let me come, sir?"

The Head coughed.

"Do you think it would be for your happiness, Binks?" he asked.

"Oh, yes, sir! Master Merry and D'Arcy would 'elp me, too," said Binks eagerly. "They are real gentlemen, sir—not like Master Mellish or Gore."

The Head smiled a little. Binks certainly had observation, at all events; he could see things. He knew that a gentleman was naturally kind and considerate to those below him in station.

"But, my dear boy," said the Head kindly, "I think that if I granted this wish of yours it would hardly make you happy."

"I—I don't want to be happy so much, sir, as to get on and improve myself, and—and become like Tom Merry, sir," said Binks.

The Head could not help smiling.

"You are a good boy, Binks," he said. "You do not see the difficulties in the way. But if you have well thought this out—"

"I have, sir, and my people have, too," said Binks earnestly. "My father thinks it ought to be done, sir. My father is a very superior man, sir, and he never would work, even when we hadn't any money, sir."

"Ahem!" said the Head, apparently not much impressed by that proof of the superiority of Binks senior. "Well, I will think over it and consult with the other masters, Binks. Meanwhile, if you are prepared to stay at the school for a few days—"

"Oh, yes, sir!"

"Then you shall stay a few days and think it over, and consult with the boys whom you think are favourably disposed towards you," said the Head. "If at the end of, say, three days, you come to me again and ask my decision I will give it to you. If you are convinced by a short experience that you will be happier away from St. Jim's, then the matter will naturally drop."

"I shall want to stay, sir."

"We shall see. I will ask the School House dame to provide you with a room, and if you care to attempt Form work, I am sure one of the boys will help you to some idea of it. Suppose you go now and send Tom Merry to me, Binks."

"Thank you, sir."

Binks left the study.

Dr. Holmes leaned his head upon his hands, and his brow was wrinkled in thought.

"Poor lad!" he murmured. "A most laudable ambition, certainly; but—but—ah, there are many buts! His clothes—oh dear! Those clothes! But details of that kind can be seen to. It is matters that go deeper that will cause the trouble."

Binks, quite unaware of what the Head was thinking, made his way in a state of high glee to Tom Merry's study. He took what Dr. Holmes had said as a virtual promise, and almost regarded himself as a St. Jim's boy already.

The Terrible Three were in their study, chatting, when Binks knocked.

"Come in!" sang out Tom Merry.

Binks entered.

Lowther turned his head away. The desire to laugh when he saw Binks' clothes was too strong. Manners set his teeth firmly to keep back a chuckle.

"Hallo, Binks!" said Tom Merry. "You've seen the Head?"

"Yes, Master Merry. I think it will be all right."

"What will be all right?"

"I think the 'Ead will let me come 'ere."

"Come here!"

"What?"

"I want to henter the school as a pupil," Binks explained. "That's really wot I came down to see the 'Ead about."

The Terrible Three stared at one another blankly.

"My hat!" murmured Monty Lowther.

"I think it will be orl right," said Binks. "The 'Ead wishes to see you, Master Merry. 'E wants to speak to you about it!"

"I'll go," said Tom Merry.

The junior captain of St. Jim's left the study, leaving Binks with Manners and Lowther. The two Shell fellows looked uncomfortably at one another.

What on earth were they to do with Binks?

Binks was standing rather sheepishly with his silk hat in his hand. In spite of his topper and his expensive clothes, Binks could not help feeling like the old Binks, who had just brought a message to Tom Merry from the Head.

Lowther broke the silence.

"Sit down, Binks," he said, hooking a chair towards the one-time boot-boy with his foot.

Binks blushed.

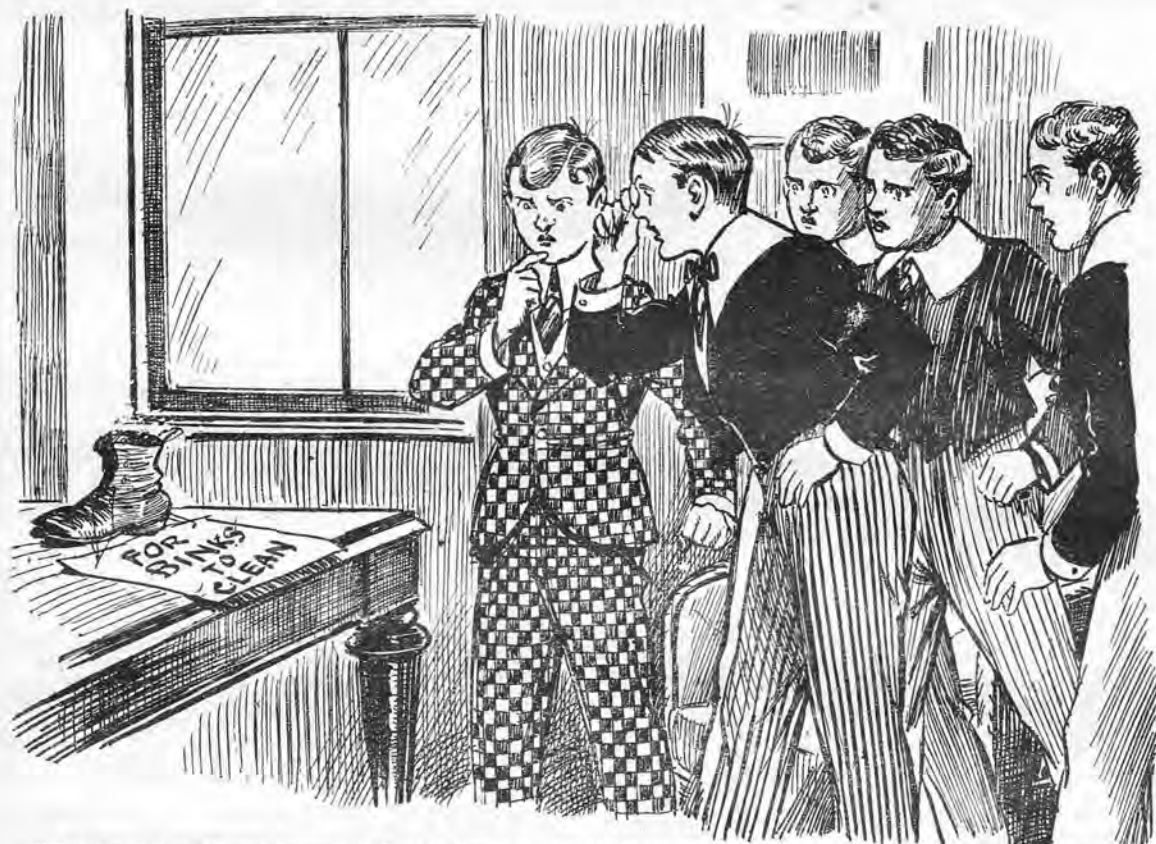
"You're very kind!" he said.
 "Oh, rats!" said Lowther. "You're not a giddy boots now; you're a giddy millionaire, and miles above us now, ain't he, Manners?"
 "Miles!" said Manners solemnly.
 "Oh, don't say that, young gents," said Binks uncomfortably. "I know I've got 'eaps and 'eaps of money. I could carry about a thousand quid in notes in me waistcoat pocket if I liked. But I know my place. I ain't thinking I'm just as good as you are because I've got rich!"
 "You're a good sort, Binks," said Lowther, "and a jolly sight better than some chaps we've got in the Shell!"
 "I hope I shall get hon, and tone down a bit," said Binks ruefully. "Of course, it will be a long time before I'm fit to speak to Tom Merry."
 "Hard work!" Manners suggested.
 "Oh, I don't mind 'ard work," said Binks. "I've worked 'ard. You young gents thinks that your Latin and things is hard sometimes; but wait till you 'ave to work through a 'undred pairs of boots before breakfast."
 The Shell fellows shuddered.
 "That'll be 'ard, if you like!" said Binks.

"My hat! Your millionaire is lacking in manners!"
 "Is that any business of yours?" asked Lowther unpleasantly. "Get out!"
 And Gore went laughing along the passage. Binks turned very red, and put down the saucer out of which he was drinking tea.
 "P'r'aps I oughtn't to be sitting at your table, young gents," he said.
 "Rats!" said Lowther. "Who cares for a cad like Gore? Take no notice of him. You're worth fifty of Gore any day!"
 And Binks, thus comforted, attacked the cake again.

CHAPTER 5.

Gore Gets It!

TOM MERRY reached the Head's study.
 Dr. Holmes was sitting with his chin in his hand, looking very thoughtful, when the hero of the Shell came in. He gave Tom Merry a cordial nod.
 "Binks said you wanted to see me, sir," said Tom Merry.



"Bai Jove!" exclaimed Gussy. "What is that?" On the table stood a ragged old boot, with a card bearing the words: "FOR BINKS TO CLEAN!" "I—I say," said Binks, "that's mean, ain't it?" "It's some cad's idea of a joke!" said Tom Merry. "But we are not standing that in the School House!"

"It's rotten," said Lowther. "There ought to be some invention made, or something, so that nobody would have to work. What's the good of living in a giddy age of invention if you can't invent something simple like that? Have some tea, Binks—we've only just made it, and you can have Tom Merry's cup. We'll make him some more when he comes back!"
 "Do you mean it, Master Lowther?"
 "Of course, ass."
 "I 'ope somebody will be as kind to you some day, Master Lowther, as you are to me," said Binks, as he sat down.
 And Lowther, sarcastic fellow as he was, and inclined to cynicism, could not help feeling touched.
 "You're all right, Binks," he said. "There are chaps swanking about St. Jim's who are not half so decent. Here you are, try this cake."
 Bink's accession had not spoiled his appetite. He drank tea—from his saucer—and ate cake with great gusto. While he was so engaged, Gore looked into the study.
 He gave a jump and stared in amazement.

"Yes, Merry, and it is about Binks. I believe you have shown the boy kindness at various times?"
 "I've tried to treat him decently, sir!"
 "I am sure of it. He seems very grateful and attached to you. Has Binks informed you of his desire to become a pupil at St. Jim's?"
 "Yes, sir!"
 "Whether it can possibly be done, Merry, I do not know yet, nor can I decide whether it would be for Binks' benefit. But he is to stay at the school a few days while the matter is settled. Can I depend upon you, Merry, to devote some little time to him, and to give him some assistance?"
 "Certainly sir!"
 "The poor lad's education has been much neglected, of course," said Dr. Holmes. "In his case the necessity of earning money for the family needs led to the lad being taken away from school at too early an age. Big boy as he is, I am in great doubt whether he is fitted to take his place even in the Second or Third Form among boys."
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of nine or ten. Will you, Merry, do what you can with him, and give him some idea of what he would have to do as a pupil here?"

"I shall be very pleased, sir!"

"Also," said the Head, "you might give him some hints as to suitable—er—clothing."

Tom Merry could not help smiling.

"I will do so, sir!"

"Thank you very much, Merry!"

Tom Merry moved to the door. Then he turned back.

"If—if I may say a word, sir—"

"Go on, Merry!"

"Well, sir, if you decided to let Binks come into the school, he'd have some friends in this House, sir!" said Tom Merry diffidently. "I'd stand by him like a shot, sir, and I know my friends would!"

"That is very like you, Merry, and just what I expected of you," said the Head. "Whether Binks stays or not is uncertain; but if he does, I am sure you will do your best to help him on."

And Tom Merry left the study.

There was a group of juniors on the lower stairs as Tom Merry came up.

Gore was talking and laughing.

"I tell you I saw him!" said Gore.

"Oh, draw it mild!" said Kerruish.

"But I saw him," said Gore. "He was sitting at the

Tom Merry's knuckles came upon Gore's nose, and he put his fists up. He had no choice but to defend himself.

"Go it!" said Kerruish, putting his hands in his pockets and standing back to watch. "Two to one on Tom Merry!"

"Go it, Gore!" said Mellish.

But his was the only voice that backed up Gore. No one had taken Gore's sneers at Tom Merry seriously. The St. Jim's juniors knew perfectly well that Tom Merry would not touch any of Binks' money. Such a suspicion would only have occurred to a mind like Mellish's or Gore's.

Gore had not Tom Merry's pluck; but he had a certain amount of dogged courage, and he fought hard now that he had to fight.

But he did not make much impression upon Tom Merry. Tom Merry, red with indignation, punched his adversary hard, hitting him right and left, till Gore fell upon the landing with a crash.

He showed no desire to get up again.

Tom Merry looked at him with blazing eyes.

"Have you had enough?" he asked.

Gore looked up at him sullenly.

"Yes," he grunted.

"Take care you don't talk like that when I can hear you again, that's all!" said Tom Merry.

And he went on up the stairs.

The juniors grinned and left Gore to himself. No one felt any sympathy for the bully of the Shell. He had brought it on himself.



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CHAPTER 6.

Thrown Out!

BINKS gave Tom Merry a quick, anxious look as he came back into the study. Tom Merry was looking a little flushed from his encounter with Gore, and there was a mark on his cheek where Gore's knuckles had come home once.

"Seen the 'Ead'?" said Binks at once.

"Yes, kid."

"And—"

"It seems that you're staying at the school a few days," said Tom Merry, sitting down, and beginning on the toast which Manners had kept warm on the fender for him. "The Head thinks it would be a good idea for me to look after you a bit. Of course, I shall be jolly glad to do it."

Binks' eyes moistened.

"Will you really, Master Merry?"

"Of course."

"It's awful good of you," said Binks.

"Rats!"

"May I get you another cup of tea?" asked Binks eagerly.

Tom Merry laughed.

"No; you're a giddy guest in this study, Binks. We're waiting on you. Manners, old man, give me another cup of tea, and give Binks one."

"Right-ho!" said Manners.

"You shan't wait on me," said Binks. "It's only too good of you to let me sit down in your study. If all young gentlemen was like you young gents, it wouldn't be so bad to be a boot-boy. But Master Mellish always thought as I was dirt under his feet."

"That's because Mellish is a hopeless cad!" said Tom Merry. "Don't mind him. And sit down. You're here to be waited on. Goodness knows you've waited on us chaps long enough."

"Oh, Master Merry!"

Manners poured out the tea for Binks, and Monty Lowther helped him to more toast, and Tom Merry cut the cake for him.

Binks was almost overcome.

He made a substantial tea, but he seemed to be gulping down emotion along with the cake all the time.

"I—I say, Master Merry," said Binks, after a short silence, during which he had been pondering—"I say, you know I'm a millionaire now?"

"Yes, rather, Binky!"

"I can't touch all my money till I'm twenty-one; but I am to have as much as I like—thousands of pounds, if I like."

"Lucky bargee!"

"Look here, Master Merry, I—I would like—"

"Go ahead! What would you like?"

"I'd like you to have some of the money, Master Merry, and Master Manners and Lowther, too!" blurted out Binks, turning very red.

Tom Merry's face grew stern for a moment.

"Chuck that, Binks!" he exclaimed.

"But—"

table with Manners and Lowther, drinking tea out of a saucer!"

"Rats!"

"It's a fact!"

"Stuff!"

"Why should Tom Merry & Co. stand Binks?" said Hancock.

Gore sneered.

"Well, I don't see that it takes a lot of guessing why they do it," he said. "Binks is a millionaire, of course!"

"Oh, bosh!" said Kerruish. "Tom Merry doesn't care for his money, and he wouldn't touch it, anyway!"

"That's all you know!"

Tom Merry came up the stairs three at a time.

"Thank you, Kerruish," he said.

The juniors swung round, and Gore looked alarmed.

"Hallo!" he said feebly.

"So you are imitating Mellish!" said Tom Merry, with flashing eyes. "Only you have spoken out a little more plainly, Gore!"

"I—I—"

"Will you come up on the landing, Gore?"

Gore shifted uneasily.

"What for?"

"Because you may get hurt if I hit you here on the stairs!"

"Look here—"

"Will you come?"

"No, I won't!"

"Very well!"

Tom Merry grasped Gore by the shoulders and swung him down to the lower landing. There he flung him against the wall.

"Now put up your fists!" he said grimly.

"Look here—" began Gore.

"Unless you choose to eat your words, like Mellish!" said Tom Merry scornfully.

"Hanged if I will!"

"Then put up your fists!"

"Hang you!"

Tap!

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"But you surely don't think we would touch any of your money—any of us? Are you off your rocker?"

Binks stammered.

"I—I don't mean to offend you, Master Merry. If—if you think my money isn't good enough for you young gents—"

Tom Merry burst into a laugh.

"It isn't that, Binks, old man. Nothing of the sort. Your money is as good as anybody else's. But, don't you see, we couldn't take any money. It's kind of you to think of it, but anything of that sort is impossible. We don't want to sponge on you, Binks old man."

"I—I beg your pardon, Master Merry; but I—I thought—"

He broke off.

"That's all right, Binks," said Tom Merry. "We're going to be great friends, and I'd just as soon borrow a bob of you as of anyone else; but nothing more than that, you know. Friends can't give each other money. Anything else, but not money. But I don't want to be preaching to you. Have some more cake?"

And Binks had some more cake, and the subject dropped.

When tea was finished in Tom Merry's study, Binks went to see the House dame, and to install himself in his room.

When Binks was gone the Terrible Three looked at one another.

"Well, here's a go!"

That was Monty Lowther's opinion.

"A jolly go!" agreed Manners. "I don't know whether it would be any good the chap coming to St. Jim's," said Tom Merry; "but I know this—if he does come, I'm going to stand by him."

"Good old Tommy!"

"Well, a fellow must be decent, you know. There are lots of chaps here who will be caddish enough about it."

"No doubt about that."

"Gore, and Mellish, and Crooke, and fellows of that sort, will make Binks' life a burden, if they can," said Tom Merry. "He's a decent chap. I don't care a rap about his blessed 'H's.' After all, what chance has he had of learning to speak properly? The thing is, is he a decent chap? He's decent enough. Well, then, everything else is simply on the surface. If his heart's in the right place, it's all serene. That's my view."

"All serene!" said Manners, with a chuckle.

Tom Merry rose.

"We'd better let Blake know about it," he said. "Come on! And this evening we'll put Binks through his first lessons."

"Good!" chuckled Lowther.

"Tom Merry, schoolmaster!" grinned Manners. "Private pupils taken, and coached for entrance exams into public schools. Backward pupils a speciality."

"Testimonials on application," added Lowther.

"Fees no object," pursued Manners.

Tom Merry laughed.

"Oh, cheese it!" he said. "I'm going to help Binks, and that settles it."

"Hear, hear!"

The chums of the Shell left the study and went down the Fourth Form passage. They were near the door of Study No. 6 when they heard a sound of disturbance from that famous apartment.

It was a gasping, a shuffling, a trampling, and amid the noise could be heard the aristocratic tones of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

"Wag him, dear boys, wag him!"

The Terrible Three grinned.

Somebody was evidently being ragged in Blake's study.

"Yow! Leggo!"

"Hallo!" said Tom Merry. "That's Crooke's voice!"

"Wag him, dear boys!"

The Terrible Three ran on, much interested. The door of the study was open, and just as they reached it a body came whirling out.

It was Crooke's.

He came whirling and spinning into the passage, and crashed into the Terrible Three as they reached the study door.

Crash!

Manners went crashing against the opposite wall, and Lowther was knocked along the passage, while Tom Merry was floored, and Crooke bumped down heavily upon him.

There was a shout of wrath from the Terrible Three.

"Oh!" gasped Crooke.

"Gerroff my chest!" gasped Tom Merry. "Gerroff, you ass!"

"Oh! Ow!"

Tom Merry rolled Crooke off and staggered up.

"You dangerous asses!" he roared. "What are you up to?"

(Continued on next page.)



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.

WHY WORRY?

Tired Tim: "Hallo, Willie, you look fed-up! Is anything the matter?"

Weary Willie: "I'm worrying."

Tired Tim: "Tut, tut! You should be like me and pay a man to do your worrying."

Weary Willie: "Where do you get the money from?"

Tired Tim: "That's his first worry!"

A football has been awarded to H. Simpson, 11, Sarah Street, East Ardsley, near Wakefield.

SAFETY FIRST!

Passenger in Taxi: "There's only one thing I worry about in a car—that's the brakes."

Irish Driver: "Begorra, then ye've nothing to worry about, sorr—this car ain't got any!"

A football has been awarded to F. Fletcher, Hyde Lea, near Stafford.

FLAG DAY IN ABERDEEN.

It was flag day in Aberdeen when Jock called for his pal Sandy.

"I canna come oot, t'-day, Jock," said Sandy.

"Why not?" asked Jock.

"Ma brother's oot and he has t' flag wi' him!"

Half-a-crown has been awarded to A. Lancaster, 11, Chandos Street, Bedford.

IN PAINFUL TOUCH.

Lady: "Oh, so you have been in touch with royalty, have you?"

Tramp: "Yes, mum. I was once stung by a queen bee!"

Half-a-crown has been awarded to J. Lane, 26, Skeffington Road, East Ham, London, E.6.

ALARMING!

"Can anyone tell me," shouted the orator, "who did the most in the nineteenth century to raise the working classes?"

"Yes, guv'nor," replied a voice from the audience, "the inventor of the alarm clock!"

Half-a-crown has been awarded to E. Brain, 43, Dove Street, Kingsdown, Bristol, 2.

A BIG ADVANTAGE.

Mistress: "These banisters are always dusty. Next time you are at the Smiths you just notice how highly polished their banisters are."

Maid: "Yes, ma'am; but they have three small boys!"

Half-a-crown has been awarded to P. Johnson, 30, Middleway, Hampstead Garden Suburb, London, N.W.11.

WHERE OLD CARRIAGES GO.

Bill: "Someone has been writing asking what becomes of old railway carriages."

Bert: "Hasn't the fellow ever been to the seaside by an excursion train?"

Half-a-crown has been awarded to D. Horner, 93, Mount Pleasant Lane, Clapton, London, E.5.

MISCONSTRUED.

Jones: "Lend me a bob for a week, old man."

Bones: "Who's the weak old man?"

Half-a-crown has been awarded to K. Tullest, 74, Salisbury Street, Hull, E. Yorks.

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Four merry faces looked out of Study No. 6, and there was a roar of laughter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You duffers—"

"Bai Jove! I'm awfully—ha, ha, ha!—sowwy, deah boys! We didn't see you. Ha, ha, ha! I wegard it as vewy funnay!"

"You fearful chump—"

"Weally, Tom Mewavy—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You frabjous ass—"

"Oh, we're sorry!" grinned Blake. "We didn't see you. What were you sticking just outside the door for?"

"Ass! We came to see you!"

"Well, come in," said Blake hospitably. "Never mind what has happened; we overlook that entirely."

"Yaas, wathah! Ha, ha, ha!"

The Terrible Three entered the study, uncertain whether to make a friendly visit or to rush the Fourth Formers and wreck the study.

CHAPTER 7.

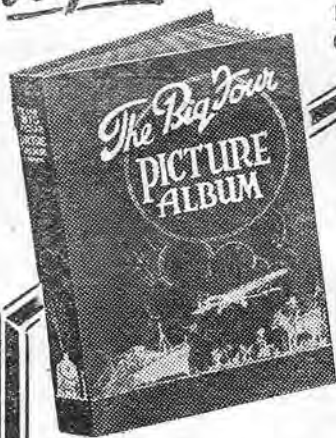
A Caddish Jape!

CROOKE had picked himself up and slunk away down the passage. Whatever had been his quarrel with the Fourth Form fellows, he was evidently inclined to pursue it no further.

The Shell fellows were glaring wrathfully as they came into Study No. 6, and Blake & Co. tried not to smile, but did not succeed.

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"We are weally sowwy, deah boys," said Arthur Augustus, with a graceful bow, but with an irresistible smile dimpling his aristocratic face. "It was quite an accident. Of course, we had no idea that you were near. Othahwise we should have given Cwooke anothah bump instead of thowin' him out."

"Certainly!" said Digby.

"What had he done?" asked Tom Merry.

Jack Blake gave a snort.

"Oh, he came here with some of his usual caddishness. He's picked up a yarn from somewhere—listening at a door, perhaps—that Binks is coming to the school as a pupil, and he was proposing that the whole Fourth Form should rag him, as a protest against having boot-boys in the Form."

"And you—"

"Well, we ragged Crooke instead," chuckled Blake. "You see, he said that a low cad ought to be ragged, and so we ragged him. That wasn't exactly what he meant, you know; but we were only acting on what he said."

"Yaas, wathah!"

Tom Merry laughed.

"Well, in that case I forgive you for making silly asses of yourselves!" he exclaimed. "Only look out into the passage the next time before you throw your blessed visitors about. Look here, it's about Binks that we've come to speak to you."

"Pway sit down, deah boys. Can I give you a bwush down?"

"Oh, that's all right. Look here, the Head's thinking of letting Binks come as a pupil, and he's to stay a few days here, anyway. It will be all over the school soon, and I think the decent chaps ought to stand together to see that Binks isn't ragged by the cads."

"Yaas, wathah!"

"That's my idea," said Tom Merry.

"Quite right," said Blake. "I don't know whether it'll be a good thing for Binks or for anybody else if he comes here, but there's not going to be any snobbish rot while I can stop it."

"Wathah not," said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, with emphasis. "If I do not object to Binks, I wegard it as pwofound cheek for anybody else to object to him."

"Hear, hear!" said Jack Blake. "Listen to the words of Lord Aubrey Adolphus Chesterfield Grandison Brummell! Hear, hear!"

"Weally, Blake—"

"But Gussy's quite right," said Lowther. "If he can stand Binks, and Binks can stand him, why shouldn't there be peace in the family?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Weally, Lowthah—"

"Hallo! Here he is! Come in, Binks!"

Binks came grinning into the study. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy gave him a welcoming smile, and then slightly turned his head away. He really could not stand the cut of those clothes.

"If you please, young gents, I've got my room," said Binks. "Would you care to see it, Master Merry?"

"Yes, rather! We'll all see it!"

Binks led the way to his new quarters.

Mrs. Mimms had accommodated him with a room near the junior dormitories, looking out over the quadrangle, and Binks showed the juniors into it with rather a flourish. It was very different from the apartment he had occupied as boots of the School House.

"Vewy nice indeed," said Arthur Augustus, turning his eyeglass round the room. "Bai Jove, though—what is that?"

It was a large and extremely ragged boot standing on the table, with the notice:

"FOR BINKS TO CLEAN!"

Binks turned crimson.

Tom Merry compressed his lips.

"That's some cad's idea of a joke," he remarked. "Whose scrawl is that on the card?"

The juniors looked at it and shook their heads. The words were scrawled on the card in large Roman letters, and there was no clue to the writer.

"I—I say, that is mean, ain't it?" said Binks. "I don't see why they want to do that, you know. I ain't done anything to offend any of the young gents since I come back that I knows of."

"Bai Jove, it's a wotten, caddish jape!" said D'Arcy. "And I shall give the perpetwatah of it a feahful thwashin'."

"Yes, rather!"

The juniors turned over the card in their hands. The letters were large and bold, but a little faint as to colour, having evidently been blotted as soon as written. The joker who had placed the card there had doubtless had to act

(Continued on page 14.)

LISTEN-IN HERE, CHUMS, TO YOUR EDITOR!



Let the Editor be your pal! Write to him to-day, addressing your letters: The Editor, The GEM, The Amalgamated Press, Ltd., Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

HALLO, chums! Now what about our superb Free Gifts! I can imagine how keen you all were to get this record-breaking number of the GEM this morning, and to take a good look at the Album and first set of coloured pictures. And what a pleasant surprise! Most of you, I imagine, will soon be busy with the scissors, cutting out the pictures and sticking them in their right places. Well, next week there will be another eight pictures to add to your Albums, and you will get a still better idea of the ripping show the full set of 100 pictures makes.

On the opposite page is given full details of a special offer that is being made in conjunction with our Companion Papers, "The Magnet," "The Ranger," and "The Modern Boy." This is a magnificent Album Cover, which will hold either one, two, three or all four of the Free Gift Albums which are being given with the Companion Papers. So no matter how many Picture Albums you decide to collect, this grand cover should not be missed—and the cost of it is merely twopenny! Send for yours to-day.

Now we will take a look at next Wednesday's tip-top programme. First comes the splendid St. Jim's yarn, which is entitled

"UP AGAINST IT!"

Who is up against it? It is the hero of the Shell—Tom Merry. Misfortune suddenly comes to Tom when he is playing in a football match—a telegram telling him that he is ruined—all his money gone! What a blow from Fate for the most popular junior in the school! But the ever-cheerful Tom is not downhearted, and sets about finding out how he really stands.

This dramatic yarn is the first of a powerful series dealing with Tom Merry's ups and downs in his efforts to earn an

honest living, and, chums, you are in for many fine fiction treats during the coming weeks. Don't miss one story of this series whatever you do.

"THE WHITE GIANTS OF EL DORADO!"

If you have read the first instalment of our super new St. Frank's serial, you'll know what a thrilling story you are in for. In the next instalment you will learn of the peril that the St. Frank's chums are up against. They get a big shock when they meet the king of the White Giants, for he is a super crook whom Nelson Lee and the St. Frank's boys have been fighting against for years. And now that the king crook has them in his hands it is his intention to exact a terrible revenge. Read all about the further adventures in this lost land of the St. Frank's chums. They're thrilling! They're amazing!

THIS WEEK'S HERO.

An act of heroism of a rather unusual kind has just come to light with the awarding of a cheque and the silver medal of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, to Frederick James Warren, of Taunton. Warren, who is a farm worker, was driving a team of horses with a cultivator, when the implement turned up a wasps' nest. Immediately the wasps swarmed to the attack, and in a moment the horses were in a frenzy. Had Warren left them and bolted they would in all probability have been killed or at any rate badly injured in their madness. However, Warren stuck by them, doing his best to calm them until the wasps drew off. Warren himself was stung no less than sixty times!

"—LIKE DUCKS TO WATER."

An unfortunate man has recently found that even if ducks like water they don't necessarily like ponds! This chap was

rather keen on the idea of having a pond in his garden with some ducks swimming about it, and so he dug himself a fine pond and bought some ducks. They weren't any special kind of ducks, just farmyard ones, but he thought they would look nice in the pond. The ducks arrived in a crate and the new owner unpacked them and let them out, expecting to see them rush wildly for the pond. They all took a look at the pond and then they did rush wildly—in the opposite direction! The ducks would only take a bath in a shallow pan with about three inches of water in it until their owner discovered what was lacking in his fine new pond. This was—mud! After plenty of mud had been introduced into that nice clean pond, the ducks swam about in it quite happily!

THE MODEL FLEET.

Lieutenant Max Bartsch was an officer aboard a German submarine during the War, and when it came to an end he felt that he did not wish to waste all the experience he had gained. One day he thought of a most novel idea; he would build models, large scale models, of the German Fleet, and man them with the children of poor people and teach them navigation and all the crafts that have a place in the Navy. With the help of some friends he started on his models, and now he has the most wonderful model fleet in the world. His ships are fitted with lifeboats and model aeroplanes built to scale. One of his models is of the Bremen, the giant German liner. This model is fifty-six feet long and has a displacement of six and a half tons. It is possible for six people to sleep aboard this ship. Lieutenant Bartsch's great ambition at the moment is to be allowed to sail his fleet, manned by poor boys, up the Thames.

ODDS AND ENDS.

A farmer in Ontario has a really intelligent cow. The only water on the farm for the animals is supplied by a pump with a trough attached to it, and when the trough is empty the animals can't have a drink. But not so this cow. When she wants a drink she pushes the pump handle up with her nose and then pushes it down again with her horns until there is enough water for her!

It is said that in Australia magpies are coming under the influence of modern engineering. At Inglewood, Victoria, a magpie's nest has been found weighing six pounds—it was made entirely of clippings from telephone wires.

A piece of amber has recently been found in an amber mine at Palmnicken inside which was a flea. It is said that this is the oldest flea in the world, being about five million years old!

THE EDITOR.

PEN PALS

A free feature which brings together readers all over the world for the purpose of exchanging topics of interest to each other. If you want a pen pal post your notice to The GEM LIBRARY, Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

Robert Grant, 2, Beach Terrace, Sheerness, Kent, wants correspondents in that county.

Eric March, 16, Tripeny Avenue, Peterborough, South Australia, wants correspondents; stamps, cricket, etc.—especially in America and Africa.

Stanley Worthington, 55 Wilfred Street, Moston, Manchester, wants correspondents.

John Lawrence, 185, Old Road West, Gravesend, Kent, wants a pen pal who lives in France. age 11 to 13.

G. Pittendigh, Merrygoon Street, Dunedon, N.S.W., Australia, wants a correspondent interested in stamp collecting; age 13 to 14.

Miss Sylvia Jones, 123, Falcon Road, Battersea, S.W.11, wants girl correspondents; ages 13 to 16; keen on swimming, films and drawing.

R. Bushel, 161, Croxsted Road, West Dulwich, London, S.E.21, wants correspondents interested in old stories of the "School-boys' Own Library"; ages 11 to 14.

Pat Allard, 171, Fairmont Road, Grimsby, Lincoln, wants correspondents interested in reading and films.

J. Harris, 12, Wellington Road, Wallasey, Cheshire, wants to hear from stamp collectors.

Miss Evelyn Virgo, 17, Sandown Road, South Norwood, S.E.25, wants girl correspondents in South Africa and Canada; ages 16 to 17.

Charles Walter Julian, 116, Edwards Road, Erdington, Birmingham, wants to hear from Gemites (stamp collectors especially) outside Great Britain.

H. J. Sutcliffe, The Croft, Church Road, South Benfleet, Essex, wants to hear from readers who are keen on the old stories.

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 1,344.

The Millionaire Boot-Boy!

(Continued from page 12.)

very quickly, knowing that he might be found in the room.

Binks stood by the window, looking very unhappy.

He was beginning to realise now what the Head had meant when he said that he would not be comfortable at St. Jini's.

If that was an example of what was to follow— But Binks looked at the chums of the School House, and he felt that he had at least some good friends who would stand by him, and his heart warmed again.

"Never mind that, Master Merry," he said. "It's all right. I don't bear no malice; it's only a joke."

Tom Merry shook his head.

"We're not going to have jokes of this sort in the School House," he said.

"Wathah not!"

"But how are we going to find out the chap who did it?" asked Blake.

"Let's take it to Mellish and ask him," said Monty Lowther.

"I regard it as a good ideal," D'Arcy remarked. "Come on, deah boys!"

"I—I say, I wish you'd let it drop, young gents," said Binks. "Look here, I'd rather you took no notice of it at all, I would."

"Binks, deah boy, you must regard this as an affair of honah, in which you have placed yourself unweservedly in our hands," said D'Arcy.

"But—" "No 'buts' can be allowed in the case, deah boy. You wait here, and we'll attend to the mattah for you."

And Binks stood looking glumly out of his window, while the chums of the School House went along to Mellish's study.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy knocked at the door and opened it.

The cad of the Fourth looked at them none too pleasantly. Crooke, who was standing by the mantelpiece, turned an equally unwelcoming glance upon them.

"What do you want?" said Mellish curtly.

Tom Merry laid the card upon the table. Mellish ran his eyes carelessly over it.

"For Binks to clean!" he said. "What does that mean?"

"We found that card, together with a tramp's boot, on the table in the room Mrs. Mimms has given Binks."

"Really!"

"Yaas, wathah, deah boy!"

"Well, what do you bring it to me for?"

"We want to know who did it."

Percy Mellish drew a deep breath and stepped back a pace.

"If you think that I—" he began.

"My hat!"

It was Tom Merry who suddenly uttered the exclamation.

"Hallo! What's the matter?"

Tom Merry pointed to the blotting-paper on Mellish's table, for on it was a blotted line of Roman letters backwards.

The whole letters were not there, but they were sufficiently clearly reproduced for the juniors to read backwards the line:

"FOR BINKS TO CLEAN!"

They stared at the blotting-paper.

Percy Mellish started forward, to catch

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The Northern Territories lay covered with frozen snow, for winter had fallen. Mick o' the Mounted had been ordered north to capture a gang of fur robbers, and, with dogs and sledge, he took the trail.

Passing through a pine forest, the sled of the barrens was suddenly shattered. Crack! A rifle report rang out from the trees, and, acting on instinct, Mick dropped to the ground as though wounded.



A few minutes later came a bigger surprise for the Mountie. There was a roar in the sky and an aeroplane, fitted with skis, landed in the snow outside the cabin. "Ges! What's this mean?" gasped Mick.

He was soon to know, for now he saw bundles of valuable furs being taken from the cabin and loaded into the aeroplane. "The fur robbers!" cried Mick and dashed forward to intervene.



Mick was dragged into the cabin and then bound hand and foot. "I thought I'd already made sure of you in the pine forest," snarled the robber. "But I guess I shan't make a second mistake!"

Mick, still helpless, was dumped into the fur robber's sledge while his captor carefully locked the door of the cabin. What fate was in store for him? wondered Mick as he struggled to free himself.

(What's going to happen to Mick?)

MOUNTED!

OF THE WILD WEST!



Somebody wants to get rid of me," said Mick. "Wonder if it's the fur robbers?" Peering from behind his sled, he saw a dog team emerge from the forest, being driven at a fast pace.

The Mountie followed cautiously, and towards dusk saw his quarry pull up at a cabin. Leaving his sledge, Mick approached the shack—and was amazed to see the man flashing signals to the sky.



pilot of the plane saw him, and suddenly roared the machine down upon The Mountie flung himself to the ground and one of the wings just missed him. The plane zoomed upwards and vanished.



Mick found himself attacked by the other robber. Over and over they rolled in the snow, but Mick was at a disadvantage against his heavier opponent. Thud! A gun-butt crashed down, stunning him.



mile or so from the shack the fur robber lay on the verge of a clump of spruce, when bound Mick to a tree. "I guess the wolves will be along shortly—and I be mighty hungry!"



Horried and helpless, Mick awaited his awful fate. He heard a chorus of howls in the distance—the wolf pack had scented him! Slowly they circled round Mick, ready to pounce on their prey!

(See next week's thrilling pictures.)

it up, but Tom Merry thrust him roughly back.

"Hands off!" he exclaimed.

"Look here—"

"Stand back, you cad!"

Mellish had to stand back, biting his lips.

Tom Merry held the card against the blotting-paper so that the letters and the blotted facsimile could be compared.

It was evident that it was this card that had been blotted upon the sheet as soon as it was written.

It was, therefore, quite clear that Mellish had written it, and had placed it, or had it placed, in Binks' room.

The accusing eyes of the juniors were turned upon him.

Mellish affected to laugh.

"Well," he said, with brazen effrontery, "what's the trouble?"

"This card has been blotted there," said Tom Merry sternly.

"Looks like it."

"You wrote it!"

"Perhaps the chap who wrote it popped into my study to use the blotting-paper," Mellish suggested.

"Weally, Mellish—"

"You cannot expect to impose upon us with a silly lie like that," said Tom Merry. "You wrote this card, Mellish, and you blotted it because you were in a hurry—you dared not be caught putting it and the boot in Binks' room."

Mellish shrugged his shoulders.

"Have it that way, if you like," he said.

"It is true," said Tom Merry.

"Well, supposing that it is?"

"You cad!"

Mellish turned a little pale.

"Well, now you've got the facts, will you oblige me by getting out of my study?" he suggested.

"Not yet, deah boy," said Arthur Augustus. "I remarked to my friend Binks that I would give the authah of that wotten card a feahful thwashin'."

Pway put up your fists, deah boy!"

And Arthur Augustus D'Arcy pushed back his cuffs in a most business-like manner.

CHAPTER 8.

Making Mellish Apologise.

AS Arthur Augustus prepared for war, Mellish retreated a pace or two, placing the table between himself and the swell of St. Jim's.

Arthur Augustus followed him.

D'Arcy meant business, and there was no escape for the cad of the Fourth.

But Mellish had no intention of fighting D'Arcy if he could help it. Although he affected to sneer at the swell of the Fourth as a dandy, he had seen D'Arcy box, and seen him punch the ball, and he had no desire to take the place of the punching-ball on this occasion.

"Oh, draw it mild!" he remarked.

"Don't be an ass, you know."

"I wefuse to be called an ass! Pway put up your hands!"

"Look here—"

"Are you weady, deah boy?"

"Dot him on the boko, Gussy, then he'll be ready," Monty Lowther suggested.

"Bai Jove, yaas!"

"Look here," said Mellish. "It was only a joke on that outsider Binks, and I don't see that it has anything to do with you, D'Arcy, at all."

"I wefuse to allow any friend of mine to be chawacterised as an outsiders!"

"Friend of yours—Binks?"

"Yaas, wathah!"

Mellish shrugged his shoulders.

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"You've got a queer taste in your choice of friends, that's all," he remarked.

"At all events, I have not made a friend of you," said Arthur Augustus, "and I should utterly refuse to do so under the circumstances."

"Clear out of this study!" exclaimed Mellish.

"Not a bit of it," said Tom Merry. "You've insulted a friend of ours, and you must expect to put up your fists!"

"Yaas, wathah! There is no alternative unless, of course, you prefer to make Binks a profound apology," suggested Arthur Augustus.

Mellish sneered.

"Oh, you want me to apologise to Binks—a giddy boot-boy?"

"Yaas, wathah! You would not need the suggestion if you were a gentleman," said D'Arcy. "But, of course, a gentleman would never have been guilty of such an offensive action in the first place."

"Hear, hear!" said the juniors.

"Oh, I don't mind apologising, if you want me to," said Mellish. "Fetch your friend Binks here, and I'll pitch it to him!"

"It would be infwa dig for my friend Binks to come here and apologise to a boundah of your description," said D'Arcy, with dignity. "You will proceed to Binks!"

"Oh, rats!"

"Vewy well! If you prefer to put up your hands—"

Mellish made an impatient gesture.

"I'll go, if you like."

"I regard you as wathah a poltween, Mellish, but you may go and apologise to Binks instead of takin' a fearful thwashin', if you like."

Mellish whistled carelessly as he stepped from the study. The juniors followed him closely. They did not mean to give him an opportunity of escaping till he had made the amende honorable to Binks.

Kangaroo and Clifton Dane met them in the passage, and looked at the procession in some surprise.

"Anything on?" asked the Cornstalk.

"Yaas, wathah, deah boy!" said Arthur Augustus. "Binks has insulted Binks, and is goin' to apologise to him."

"Is he? That's unusually decent of Mellish."

"He prefers it to a fearful thwashin', deah boy."

"Ha, ha, ha! I see!"

Binks was standing at the door of his room. He looked at Mellish, puzzled by the junior's presence and by the sneering smile on his face.

"We've found the cad, Binky!" said Tom Merry.

"Oh, Master Merry—"

"And he's goin' to apologise to you, deah boy."

"Oh, Master D'Arcy—"

"Come on," said Tom Merry; and they entered Binks' room. "Now, then, there's the fellow you insulted, and whom you've got to apologise to."

Mellish hesitated.

"I don't want 'im to, really, Master Merry," said Binks. "I know he didn't mean any 'arm. It's all right, really, it is."

"Rats!"

"Yaas, wathah—wats!"

"But, really, young gents—"

"Dry up, Binks! Now then, Mellish, it's your show."

Mellish gritted his teeth.

"I put a tramp's boot on your table, Binks," he said, "also a card, telling you to clean it."

"I know it did, Master Mellish."

"Well, you needn't clean it," said Mellish.

He turned towards the door.

Some of the juniors grinned, but Tom Merry slung the junior back with an iron grasp on his shoulder.

"That may be funny," he remarked, "but it doesn't amount to an apology. Tell Binks you're sorry for having treated him like a cad."

"I'm sorry for having treated you like a cad, Binks, though, really, it's how you ought to be treated," said Mellish, putting into Tom Merry's words a meaning he had never intended.

"That isn't right yet," said Tom Merry grimly. "Apologise properly, Mellish, or you'll stand up to Gussy before you get out of this room."

"Yaas, wathah!"

The cad of the Fourth flushed a little. Mean as he was, he could feel the humiliation of his position in the eyes of Binks.

"Well, I apologise," he said sullenly. "Is that enough?"

"That will do, I suppose," said Tom Merry.

"Hold on a moment!" said D'Arcy. "You will kindly add that you take back any reflection you may have cast upon our respected friend, Binks."

"I take back everything."

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"Yaas, that's all wight, then. Get out, you wottah!"

Mellish got out.

"I regard that affair as satisfactorily settled," remarked the swell of St. Jim's. "If anythin' of this sort occurs again we shall know that it is Mellish, and we will give him a fearful thwashin' without the option of an apology!"

"Good!"

"You're awfully kind to me, young gents," said Binks, with moist eyes.

"Wats! Of course, we shall stand by you so long as you are a decent chap," said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, "and I'll tell you what I will do, Binky, deah boy. If you'll come ovah to Wayland with me to-morrow I'll take you to my tailah and ordah you some new clothes."

Binks glanced down at his gorgeous attire. It was evident that he would be very sorry to part with it, and that he could not see where he had erred. But he was willing to place himself wholly in the hands of Tom Merry & Co.

"Thank you very much, Master D'Arcy!" he said.

"Of course, my own tailah is in London," D'Arcy added, "but this chap in Wayland is a wathah clevah fellow, and does things for me vewy well when I haven't time to weter them to town, you see. He will wig you out in vewy passable style, deah boy. Meanwhile, if you'll come up to the dormitow, Binks, I'll lend you some clothes."

"Ye-es, Master D'Arcy. But what's the matter with these?" Binks found the courage to blurt out.

Arthur Augustus turned his monocle upon Binks' attire.

"It would take too long to tell you, deah boy!" he exclaimed; "but, as a match of fact, they give me wathah a pain, you know. Come on!"

And D'Arcy led Binks away.

CHAPTER 9.

A Lesson for Binks.

TOM MERRY had just finished his prep, and was yawning. Manners and Lowther had gone downstairs, and Tom Merry was alone in the study.

There came a tap at the door, and Tom Merry sang out cheerily.

"Come in!"

Binks came in.

Binks was clad in some clothes of D'Arcy's now, of a really elegant cut. Binks' figure was not very elegant—Nature had overlooked the fact that he might become a millionaire when she planned him, so to speak. But he certainly looked better in D'Arcy's clothes than his own.

He blushed a little as Tom Merry's eye came upon him.

"Do you like this better, Master Merry?" he asked.

"Yes," said Tom frankly. "You can always trust Gussy in the matter of clothes. Why, we all rely upon him ourselves—don't we, Gussy?"

"Yaas, wathah!" said the swell of St. Jim's, putting in his head from the passage. "In a case of clothes, deah boy, you can always wely upon me to tell you the wight and pwopah thing to do. I am goin' to stand by Binks, and get him dwessed decently!"

"Hear, hear!"

"Thank you, sir!" said Binks.

Arthur Augustus hurried away, and Tom Merry took down his Latin grammar and turned back to the old familiar early pages, blotted with many a blot and scrawled with many a line. Across the second page was sprawled a line in Tom Merry's early handwriting: "Put the accusative before the verb." It was a long time since he had looked at that page, and that scrawled line brought back recollections of early lessons in a rush.

"Ready, Binks?" he said, assuming a cheerfulness he was not exactly feeling.

"Quite, sir!" said Binks.

"I suppose you really want to tackle the subject in real earnest?" Tom Merry asked.

"Yes, sir."

"You—you feel a real desire to study?" said Tom, with a faint resemblance of something Dr. Holmes had said to him when he first came to St. Jim's.

"Oh, yes, Master Merry!"

"Good! Shall we tackle Latin for a start?"

"Certainly, sir," said Binks.

"Good! Take a pen and write down what I tell you on a sheet of paper," said Tom. "We'll just break-up the ground, at all events."

"Right you are, sir."

"There are two sexes, Binks, and two genders; the third gender is neuter—that is, no sex at all—and the fourth, common—anything that might belong to either."

"Oh, I see, sir! That's artful, ain't it?"

"Yes," said Tom Merry, smiling. "Now, you know how many parts of speech there are in English?"

"Lots, I should think, sir," said Binks cheerfully.

"There are nine in English, Binks, counting the article."
 "Yes, sir."
 "There are eight in Latin, as in Latin there is no article."
 "Ain't there really, sir?"
 "No. You understand?"
 "But ain't there an article of any sort, sir?" asked Binks, looking very much surprised. "Ow did the Latins get on without any articles?"

"The noun stands by itself," said Tom Merry. "Thus—Why, you ass, I mean articles in a grammatical sense!" he shouted, as the cause of Binks' perplexity dawned suddenly upon him. Don't you know what an article is?"

"Yes, sir. The table 'ere is a harticle," said Binks; "the poker is a harticle, and everything in the room is a harticle."

"Exactly!" agreed Tom Merry. "Quite right, Binks; only—only they're not the sort of articles I was talking about. I mean the word 'the,' and the word 'an,' or a 'a'—definite and indefinite article, they are called."

"Ho!" said Binks.

"There are two numbers, singular and plural."

"Is that all?" said Binks, as if he expected some more.

Tom Merry laughed.

"There is a dual number in Greek—and you can thank your lucky stars you've not got to learn that," he said. "Two numbers are quite enough. Now, the noun has six cases."

"Ho!" said Binks.

"You'd better write that down," said Tom Merry.

"Yes, sir. What sort of cases are they?"

"Eh?"

"What sort of cases, sir? You don't mean wooden cases, like the 'Ead's piano came in?"

"My word!" groaned Tom Merry. "No, I don't mean wooden cases, Binky."

"Oh, I see!" said Binks. "I beg pardon, I'm sure!"

"Now, there are six cases," said Tom Merry. "Write them down as I tell you—nominative, vocative, genitive, dative, accusative, and ablative."

Binks wrote the names down very slowly and patiently.

"Now, let's see them," said Tom Merry.

Binks handed him the paper.

"I don't know if the spelling's all correct," he said.

Tom Merry looked at the paper, and did not allow his face to express the impression it made upon him. It was written thusly:

"There are sick cases in Latin. Nomytive, vockytiv, jennytiv, dativ, kewsativ, and abberativ."

"Is that all right, sir?" asked Binks eagerly.

Tom Merry hadn't the heart to say that it was not.

"You're getting on," he replied diplomatically. "We'll take the spelling by itself at another lesson. Now, I want you to start fairly in the grammar this time, so we'll get on, and take a noun of the first declension."

"Ho!" said Binks.

"Mensa, a table," said Tom Merry. "As there isn't an article in Latin, mensa may mean a table or the table, you see?"

"Ho!"

"Now, take the singular first. 'Mensa,' a table, nominative," said Tom Merry. "'Mensa,' vocative; 'mensa,' genitive; 'mensae,' dative; 'mensam,' accusative, and 'mensa,' ablative. Now you see that the different case-endings— Binks!"

Binks started and opened his eyes.

"You young boulder, you were asleep!" exclaimed Tom Merry indignantly.

"I—I—I just closed my eyes for a second," murmured Binks. "I'm awfully sorry, Master Merry—awfully!"

"Now, I'll just run over what I've told you already, and then we'll chuck it for this evening."

"Certainly, sir!" said Binks, with ill-concealed relief.

"How many cases have the substantives in Latin?" Tom Merry asked.

Binks reflected.

"Three, sir!" he said.

(Continued on next page.)

A treat for "after school"

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"What!" gasped Tom Merry.

"I mean four, sir," said Binks. "Nominative, indefinite, masculine, and feminine, sir."

Tom Merry looked blankly at Binks.

"Can—can you tell me anything else?" he said weakly.

"No!"

"Well, then," said Tom Merry, "the first lesson is over—and you are a promising pupil. We'll have another lesson to-morrow, Binks."

"Thank you kindly, sir," said Binks.

And Binks left the study murmuring to himself, with the determination to learn it:

"Latin has three alphabets—the genitive, dative, and indefinite; and four articles—called the accusative, the mensam, the singular, and the feminine. Good! I think Latin is easier than cleaning boots!"

CHAPTER 10.

A Social Superior.

THE next day Binks was still at St. Jim's, and he was strolling about in the quad when the fellows went in to morning classes.

Crooke called to him when the bell rang.

"Coming in with the Shell, Binks?"

Binks shook his head.

"No, Master Crooke; I'm not belonging to St. Jim's yet."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Crooke. "Why, if you came in we'd all walk out, you rotten outsider, and leave old Linton with only you for his class."

"Dear me! What did you say, Crooke?"

It was Mr. Linton, the master of the Shell, who had come

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along in time to hear Crooke's allusion to himself. Crooke turned a sickly colour.

"I—I— Please, sir—"

"You were speaking very rudely to Binks, Crooke."

"I—I'm sorry, sir—"

"And alluding very disrespectfully to myself, Crooke," said Mr. Linton, with his most magisterial manner.

"Oh, sir! I—I—"

"You will express your regret to Binks for your rudeness, Crooke."

"I—I'm sorry, Binks. I was only joking."

"And now you will be caned for your decidedly disrespectful allusion to your Form-master," said Mr. Linton. "You must not refer to me as old Linton, Crooke. Even if I were very much advanced in years, which is not the case, it would be disrespectful."

"I—I'm sorry, sir, and—"

"I have no doubt that you are, Crooke—and you will be sorrier very shortly," said the master of the Shell.

And Crooke entered the Form-room with Mr. Linton's finger and thumb compressing his ear, and a general grin on the faces of the Shell.

Crooke was caned before he went to his place, but he received no sympathy from the other fellows. Tom Merry confided to him in a whisper that if Linton hadn't caned him, he—Tom Merry—would have walloped him as soon as morning lessons were over.

Meanwhile, Binks visited his old haunts. Although he was keenly desirous of entering St. Jim's as a pupil, he was not sorry to have the evil hour postponed. He was not studious by nature, and although he was willing to study at the price of becoming a St. Jim's fellow, still he was not eager to start upon his lessons.

He spent some time in strolling about the quadrangle, and then he visited the kitchen, where he was received with awe and respect. Mrs. Mimms could hardly believe that the boy who had been so slack in cleaning the knives, and who had been given many a lecture by herself, was really a millionaire, and simply rolling in money.

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The cook was quite overcome by the reflection that the page who had hung about the kitchen stairs in the hopes of annexing fragments of pudding or an odd chop, was now ten times as rich as the Head himself. The housemaids related in awed tones that they had boxed the ears of a person who was now twice as rich as Lord Eastwood, D'Arcy's father.

It was very astounding, and it formed at least a nine days' wonder in the lower regions in both the Houses at St. Jim's.

Binks was very kind and condescending to the staff. He had a pocket full of pound notes, and he gave a couple of them to Johnny, the new page, who had taken his old place in the School House.

After impressing his grandeur upon the staff he turned his steps in the direction of the porter's lodge.

Between Taggles, the school porter, and Binks there had always been warfare. There had been painful misunderstandings as to certain tasks, whether they fell within the limits of Binks' duty or not. Binks accused Taggles of piling work on him, and Taggles, on the other hand, maintained that Binks was a lazy young rascal. Probably both of them were right.

Binks looked in at the lodge, and Taggles looked at him. Taggles did not know how to treat the new millionaire.

If Binks was disposed to be friendly, Taggles wasn't the man to serve up old offences against a chap—at all events, against a millionaire. If he was disposed to be haughty, Taggles was quite ready to show a due respect to wealth—if some of that wealth reached him in the shape of tips. But if Binks was lofty in tone, and did not shell out, Taggles was prepared to assert his rights as a free-born and independent Englishman, who was as good as anybody else.

"Good-morning, my man!" said Binks.

"Good-mornin'!" said Taggles.

"Good-morning what?" said Binks.

"Eh?"

"Fellows generally say 'sir' in addressing me," said Binks loftily.

"Do they?" said Taggles.

"They do, my man."

"Ho!" said Taggles.

"There's such a thing," said Binks, "as respect for a fellow's position in the world, my good man."

Taggles measured him with his eye. He could see no sign of a tip, and so his free-born English independence of character was naturally rising in arms within him.

"Ho!" he said. "Is there? Ho!"

"Yes, there is," said Binks. "But, of course, a fellow like you wouldn't understand it."

"Who are you calling a fellow?" demanded Taggles.

"I'm calling you a fellow," said Binks categorically. "I call anybody a fellow who piles work on a kid young enough to be his father—I mean to be his son—and tells whoppers to the Head about him! I call anybody a fellow who doesn't address his soshal superiors as 'sir.'"

"Ho!" said Taggles. "Ho! Nice goings hon, indeed! Soshal superiors, indeed! Ho! Ain't we grand since we come into a little money!"

"Two millions," said Binks—"two million pounds!"

"Which I believe it when I see it," said the school porter, who was not disposed to believe in a fortune he was not likely to touch.

"Ho! That's wery like you," said Binks scornfully—"wery like! But wot is one to expect of a fellow who's never even learned the parts of speech in Latin?"

"Wot!"

"I dare say you are aweer," said Binks, with crushing dignity, "that in Latin there are four numbers—the singular, the feminine, the indefinite, and the article."

"I wasn't aware of that," said Taggles, rather staggered by Binks' knowledge. "I dessay you've cribbed that out of one of the young gent's school books."

"I dare say," said Binks, still more crushingly, "that you have missed, at the Board school you went to, the fact that there are nine declensions in English, and only eight in Latin owing to the letter Z being left out of the alphabet."

"Ho!" said Taggles.

"It may be noos to you," went on Binks, glorifying in his advantage—"it may be noos to you, my good man, that if you say 'mensa' in Latin, meaning a declension, you have to say 'mensam' if you want to put it in the singular case, and 'mensy' if you want to put it in the plural indefinite article."

Taggles was silent. He was simply crushed under the extent and weight of Binks' learning.

"So don't cheek your betters," said Binks loftily. "I don't want to be 'ard on you, a poor man with no heddications. But I say—"



"Ow-ow!" roared Binks as Taggles' broom caught him behind and increased the impetus of his hurried exit. The millionaire boot-boy sailed out of Taggles' door on the head of the broom, as it were! "You come here again," roared the porter, "and see wot you'll get!"

"Get houter my lodge!" roared Taggles.
"I'm 'ardly likely to obey the orders of a menial! I don't want to get hout of your lodge," said Binks.

"Get hout!"
"Silence, my man!" said Binks, with a wave of the hand. "I horder you to be silent in the presence of your soshal superiors!"

Taggles was silent for a moment with sheer rage. Then he seized a broom from the corner, where Mrs. Taggles had left it, and made a rush at Binks. Binks, forgetful of his new dignity, hopped out of the lodge in record time, but not quite quickly enough to escape Taggles' charge.

"Ow!" he roared, as the head of the broom caught him behind, and propelled him into the open air.

The juniors were just out from morning lessons, and some of them were close at hand as Binks left the porter's lodge in that singular manner.

At the sight of the millionaire sailing out of Taggles' door, on the head of a broom, as it were, they stared.

"My only hat!" gasped Tom Merry.

"Bai Jove!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Binks alighted on the ground and squirmed away from the broom with remarkable celerity. Taggles brandished it after him.

"Lemme get at you with this!" he roared. "You come fore again with your soshal superiors and sich and see wot you'll get!"

And Taggles went into his lodge and closed the door.

CHAPTER 11.

Binks is Sorry!

TOM MERRY & CO. stared blankly at Binks.

"What on earth's the row with Taggles, Binks?" asked Tom Merry. "What did he go for you with a broom for?"

"Because he's an ill-tempered beast, and hasn't any respect for his soshal superiors!" gasped Binks.

"What!" roared the juniors.

"Bai Jove!"

"He's a low beast," explained Binks. "He was him-pertinent to me, and I rebuked him, and he went for me with a broom. It was disgraceful. This is what comes of pampering a menial!"

Tom Merry and his chums looked at Binks. They could hardly believe their ears.

Binks certainly had become a millionaire, but they had never expected him to become so much a millionaire as this.

"Bai Jove!" said D'Arcy at last. "Binks, I'm afwaid you are a boundah, aftah all. I am feahfully disappointed in you, Binks!"

"Oh, Master D'Arcy!"

"You have been patwonisin' Taggles, Binks."

Binks blushed.

He had not meant any harm, but it was beginning to dawn upon him in the presence of the shocked looks of the juniors that he had acted in a most outrageous and bounderish manner. He hung his head.

"Well, I never expected that of you, Binks," said Tom Merry, after a pause.

"Oh, Master Merry!"

"What did you go to Taggles for at all?"

Binks was silent.

"Was it to swank over him just because you've become rich?"

"I—I—I—"

"Have you been giving him any rotten snobbishness?"

Binks was crimson.

"Oh, Master Merry! I—I've just pointed out to him that—that I was his soshal superior, and that he—he ought to be respectful—"

"You howwid little cad!" said Arthur Augustus, turning his eyeglass in great disgust upon Binks. "I'm done with you!"

And D'Arcy walked away in great state.

Binks looked immensely distressed.

"Well, I'm afraid I shall have to chuck it, Binks, if you're getting on this way," said Tom Merry. "I hope you'll think better of it."

And Tom Merry walked after D'Arcy.

Binks stood rooted to the ground for a few moments, looking after the two juniors in something very like despair. Then he broke into a run, dashing after them.

"Master Merry! Stop a minute!"

Tom Merry paused.

"Well, what is it?" he said.

"I—I—I'm sorry, Master Merry—I'm sorry, Master D'Arcy!" said Binks penitently. "I know I acted like a beast. But—but you see, I ain't got used to 'avin' the money yet. I'll do anythin' you like."

"I'm awfraid, Binks, that you are a hopeless wottah!"

"I ain't, really," said Binks in great distress. "Taggles was always 'ard on me, and I always wanted to get my hown back, that was all, sir, really."

"If he was hard on you, Binks, you should have been specially careful now not to be hard on him. You should have heaped coals of fire on his head, deah boy."

Binks started.

"But—but that would have hurt 'im more'n wot I did!" he exclaimed. "It—it might 'ave burned 'im to death, Master D'Arcy."

"Bai Jove!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Tom Merry. "Gussy means you should have forgiven him, you young ass, and touched his conscience."

"But 'e said—"

"Never mind what he said. Look here, you've treated Taggles rottenly. You ought to be ashamed of yourself, Binks."

"And—and I am, really, Master Merry," said Binks humbly.

"You are weally sowwy, Binks?"

"Oh, yes, sir!"

"In that case," said D'Arcy thoughtfully, "I do not see why the affair should not be awwanged. An apology from one gentleman to another ought to be sufficient. I think you can leave this affair safely in my hands, Tom Merry."

"Certainly," said Tom Merry, laughing; and he strolled away, leaving Binks in the safe hands of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

The swell of the School House wagged a warning forefinger at Binks.

"Now, Binks, I twust you wealise the enormity of your howwid offence against good taste and good mannahs?"

"Oh, yes, Master D'Arcy."

"You are willin' to make the amende honowable?"

"I'll make anything you like, Master D'Arcy."

D'Arcy coughed.

"I mean, you're willin' to apologise to Taggles and make it all wight that way, Binks?"

"If you think fit, Master D'Arcy."

"Come on, then, and I'll see mattahs wight."

And D'Arcy led Binks away towards the porter's lodge. Binks, with a lively recollection of the broom, was reluctant to approach Taggles' den again, but he did not resist. He would have approached anything for the purpose of making his peace with the School House juniors.

Arthur Augustus knocked at Taggles' door, and Taggles opened it. He glared at the sight of Binks, and made a movement to get the broom.

D'Arcy put up his hand.

"Taggles, deah boy, I'm actin' as a mediatah in this mattah!"

"Ho!" said Taggles, who had very dim ideas as to what a mediator might be. "Ho!"

"Binks has been vewy wude and caddish to you."

Taggles' face cleared a little.

"He has, Master D'Arcy. Never saw sich treatment of a man old enough to be his father. Talkin' about soshul superiority and that! As if he was anything but a boot-black, with all his money!" snorted Taggles.

"That's all wight, Taggles! I twust you are not allowin' yourself to speak diswepfully of boot-blacks," said Arthur Augustus, in a tone of reproof. "I twust, Taggles, that you are not a snob."

"What!" gasped Taggles. He had been called many and various names before, but never that.

"I mean what I say, deah boy," said D'Arcy. "There are fellows at St. Jim's who are the sons of noblemen, and merchants, and gwocers, and so on, and some of them affect to look down on my friend Binks because he has been a page. I am sowwy, Taggles, to see a twace of the same snobishness in you!"

"My 'at!" murmured Taggles.

"Yes, Taggles. Snobishness is the most howwible of

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personal dwawbacks," said Arthur Augustus. "I could forgive anybody but a snob. And I should wegard it as most disgustin', Taggles, if you took advantage of your posish as a school portah to patronise a chap who cleaned boots for a livin'. Wemembah, a chap who cleans boots is a most useful membah of society, and we cannot all be school portahs."

Taggles could only gasp.

"And now to come to business," resumed D'Arcy. "Binks is sowwy for his wudeness to you, and wishes to apologise as one gentleman to another."

"Ho!" said Taggles.

"Go ahead, Binks, deah boy!" said Arthur Augustus, with an encouraging wave of the hand.

Binks was as red as a turkey-cock, but he spluttered out an apology. Taggles eyed him grimly the while.

"I'm sorry for wot I said, Mr. Taggles. I take it all back. I don't bear you no malice for bargin' into me with the broom. Is that all right, Master D'Arcy?"

D'Arcy nodded approval.

"That is all wight, deah boy, and quite satisfactory. I twust, Taggles, that you will now ovallook Binks' offence, and shake hands with him."

Taggles did not feel much inclined to shake hands, but he put out a horny fist.

"There's me 'and!" he said.

Binks shook it in a gingerly way, and peace was restored. Arthur Augustus, with his monocle jammed into his eye, beamed upon them.

"Vewy good—vewy good indeed!" he exclaimed. "I wejoyce to see you do the handsome thing in this way, Binks. I twust all discord is now at an end."

Binks had slipped his finger and thumb into his waistcoat pocket for a pound note. Taggles caught the rustle, and his eyes gleamed.

D'Arcy turned his eyeglass severely upon Binks.

"I twust, Binks, that you are not goin' to spoil the good taste and pwopah feelin' of this mattah by intwoducin' any of your disgustin' money into it," he said.

Binks dropped the note back into his pocket as if it had suddenly become red-hot.

"Certainly not, Master D'Arcy, certainly not!" he exclaimed in a hurry.

"Vewy good! You must pardon Binks, Taggles; he did not mean to wound your feelings, and you must not wegard it as an insult."

And D'Arcy walked away with Binks. Taggles stood staring after them with very mixed feelings. Arthur Augustus, in the innocence of his heart, did not know it, but the good taste and proper feeling he was so careful about did not appeal very closely to Taggles. As a matter of fact, Taggles would have been quite willing to pocket that insult.

CHAPTER 12.

Not Nice For Crooke!

BINKS, the millionaire, did not commit another faux pas. He had learned his lesson, and there was no danger of his patronising his old acquaintances of the servants' hall again.

The shocked disgust of his friends on that occasion had opened his mind to a sense of what he had done. Binks began to understand that being a gentleman did not consist wholly in wearing expensive clothes and a gold watch. A sense of kindness and consideration towards those below him in station was the first essential, and Binks learned that from Arthur Augustus. And Binks, with all his disadvantages, had one very great advantage; he could learn, and was willing to learn. He was not likely to commit the same fault of taste over again.

Other faults he was certain to commit, over and over again. He had the idea, which is frequently deeply rooted in the minds of those who have been hard-worked, that to be a gentleman is to do no work, and it was slowly dawning upon his mind, amid great astonishment, that to be a gentleman in the true sense of the word is to work harder than others, if need be, and certainly as hard.

Arthur Augustus pointed out to him very delicately that the ideal he had was that of a loafer, and that any corner boundah outside a public-house was a gentleman, if all that was required was to do no work. And Binks began to understand.

Then the necessary care of his person was news to him. To keep his body quite clean with sufficient washing, to keep his hair well brushed, and his nails white and wholesome and neatly trimmed—all these things were new to Binks.

He assimilated these dawnings of new knowledge gradually. It was not to be expected that he could take in everything at once.

Then Binks discovered, with great amazement, that what

he had been accustomed to describe below stairs as a haw-haw voice was in reality the proper use of the voice, and that it was easier and more healthy to speak correctly than to speak incorrectly. He learned that a correct enunciation and inflection put less strain upon the vocal organs, and enabled one to speak without tiring or growing red or breathless. He learned, too, that aspirates could be put in their right places without any serious consequences. But the "h's" were likely to take some time to get sorted out into their right places in Binks' speech.

Tom Merry & Co. were ready to stand by Binks, if he was decent; and the knowledge of that was sufficient to make Binks strive hard to be decent.

But there were some fellows at St. Jim's who were determined to see no good in Binks, of course. Gore and Crooke and Mellish and fellows of their kidney were victims of the most aristocratic alarm at the idea of Binks entering St. Jim's as a pupil, as now seemed very probable.

Dr. Holmes was known to be considering it, and a number of fellows were willing to take Binks up and make a friend of him if he came into the school; and Gore & Co. said that it was rot, and that it was disgraceful. As for Binks' millions, that was a special grievance to Crooke.

Crooke had long had the distinction of being a very rich man's son, and of late his father in the City had brought off a coup on the Stock Exchange which made the distinction greater than ever. Crooke senior had netted a cool half million for himself, and as to the people to whom the money belonged, of course, that did not matter. At least, that was how the Crookes looked at it.

The public, of course, were patient sheep, to be sheared whenever convenient. But what was it to Crooke that his pater—Crooke did not possess anything so vulgar as a father—was a millionaire, if a common page or boot-boy was a millionaire, too?

It was disgusting, Crooke said.

Crooke seemed to think there was something rotten about the laws of inheritance in Binks getting his Uncle Henry's money at all. At all events, if he had the disgusting money—made in trade, too, as Crooke remarked with horror—the least he could have done was to keep away from St. Jim's with it, and not flourish it in the eyes of fellows he wasn't fit to speak to.

Crooke held on in this style to a crowd in the Junior Common-room in the School House when a rumour had gone round that Binks was to be taken into the school.

Crooke glanced more than once at Tom Merry while he was speaking, but the hero of the Shell was very quiet. Crooke failed to draw him. But Crooke was not the fellow to fail. He pushed it further, till Tom Merry was bound to speak.

"It isn't only that the fellow himself is a low cad," said Crooke, "but he's backed up by chaps who ought to know better. And a fellow who will back up a rank outsider in swanking here is no better than the outsider himself."

"Hear, hear!" said Mellish.

"One's as big a cad as the other," went on Crooke.

"Hear, hear!"

Tom Merry rose to his feet. The look on his face as he came towards the group made Crooke quail a little.

"You're getting at me, of course," said Tom Merry in his direct way. "If you've got anything to say, Crooke, say it out."

Crooke flushed.

"Well, it's rotten to back up that cad Binks," he said. "I don't care if he is a millionaire. That's nothing to me."

"Nor to me, either," said Tom Merry. "I stand by Binks because he's decent, not because he's a millionaire. That's nothing. You know that as well as I do, Crooke. As for your saying that the money was made out of trade, that's all rot. All money is made out of trade, if you come to that."

"My pater's isn't," said Crooke.

"How is it made, then?" said Tom Merry. "I've only heard of three ways of making money—earning it, borrowing it, or stealing it. I suppose you're a better judge than I am of the method your pater uses."

There was a laugh, and Crooke turned fiery red.

"You know you're talking rot," said Tom Merry. "D'Arcy's governor gets his money out of trade—he lets out land to farmers, just the same as a Bloomsbury landlady lets out rooms—and takes his rent the same as she does. Doesn't he, Gussy?"

"Yaas!" said the swell of St. Jim's slowly. "That is certainly quite cowwect, Tom Mewwy; though I have nevalh looked at it in exactly that light before."

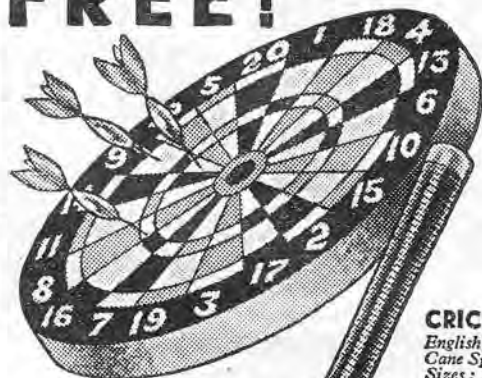
"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Blake.

"Weally, Blake—"

"You're a snobbish ass, Crooke, and you know it," said Tom Merry. "The only thing is, can Binks behave himself

(Continued on next page.)

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decently if he comes into the school—or is he willing to learn? That's all."

Crooke snorted.

"Look here, I'm not going to have this jaw from you, Tom Merry. I say that Binks is a rotten outsider, and ought not to be admitted to the school. He's a low cad, and St. Jim's ain't the place for him!"

"Well, if St. Jim's isn't the place for low cads, what the dickens are you doing here?" Tom Merry demanded.

"Yaas, wathah!" said D'Arcy. "What the dickens are you doing here, deah boy?"

Crooke made no reply. He stamped out of the room in a savage temper. A chuckle from the fellows followed him. Gore and Mellish went out to join him in the passage.

"There's Binks!" muttered Mellish, pointing down the passage towards a window recess that overlooked a quiet corner of the quadrangle.

Binks was standing there, with his hands in his pockets, looking out. Crooke's eyes gleamed.

The long, wide passage was deserted, save by themselves. "Come on!" muttered Crooke.

CHAPTER 13.

The Ragers Ragged!

"**H**OW do you do?" said Binks, as the three fellows came round him in the deep window recess. He was rather puzzled by their coming, but he greeted them in a friendly spirit.

But their intentions were not friendly.

Without speaking a word, they grasped Binks. He started to dodge them, but it was too late. He was bumped on the floor in a twinkling.

"Got the cad!" muttered Mellish.

"Bump him!"

"No; we'll give him a hiding!" said Crooke viciously.

"I've got a ruler here."

"Ha, ha, ha! Good!"

"Yank him over!"

"I've got him!"

"Don't! Owl! 'Elp! Wot have I done, young gents?"

Gore twisted the weedy youth over easily enough. Binks was not an athlete. He was twisted over Gore's knee and held face downwards, and Mellish added his grip to Gore's to keep him there.

Then Crooke drew the ruler from his pocket.

"Hold the cad tight!"

"We've got him!"

"Good! Now we'll give him a taste of what to expect if he comes to St. Jim's."

"Ha, ha, ha! Go it!"

And Crooke began. He laid on with the hard, heavy ruler till Binks shrieked with the pain of it. That the unfortunate lad was defenceless, and that he had done nothing to deserve such treatment, mattered nothing to Crooke.

Gore thrust a heavy hand over Binks' mouth and stifled his yells. He was afraid the noise might reach the juniors in the Common-room at the end of the passage. Binks bit desperately at the hand, and Gore yelled and dragged it away.

"Ow! He's bitten me!"

"Never mind; I'll give him some more for that!" said Crooke.

"'Elp!" shrieked Binks. "'Elp!"

There was a rush of footsteps in the passage.

"Cave!" muttered Mellish.

He let go Binks and dashed out of the window recess. A heavy-driving right-hander met him and hurled him back. He fell like a log in the corner of the window, and lay there—judging it best so to lie. For Tom Merry was standing in the opening of the recess, with clenched fists and flashing eyes, and Mellish preferred the horizontal to the perpendicular just then. It was safer.

Tom Merry was white with anger. The ragers had dropped Binks, and he was staggering against the wall, twisting with pain, his face white, and his eyes full of tears. He was trying to choke back a sob, and it came out like an explosion.

"You cowards!" shouted Tom Merry. "You hounds! What have you been doing to Binks?"

"Bai Jove!" said D'Arcy, who was just behind. "They've been waggin' him—waggin' the poor chap with a wulah!"

"Let me pass!" muttered Crooke fiercely.

Tom Merry pushed him back.

"Not yet!" he said grimly.

"I tell you—"

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"Stand back!"

Binks gasped painfully. Gore and Crooke stood with their fists clenched, but they did not attempt to push past Tom Merry again.

"The cads have hurt you, Binks?"

"It's—it's all right, Master Merry!" stammered Binks. "I—I don't mind. I—I suppose it was only in fun. Let them go!"

Tom Merry turned his flashing eyes upon Gore and Crooke.

"You hear that?" he exclaimed. "Binks is worth a hundred of you. You're not fit to touch him, you unspeakable cads!"

Gore sneered.

"That may be your opinion," he said. "If you've done your lecture, Tom Merry, we'll go."

"I'm not done yet. Put up your hands. You've been licking a chap who could not stand up for himself, now try your hands on me!"

"Look here—"

"Excuse me, Tom Mewwy!" said D'Arcy gently, but firmly. "I cannot allow this! I object to a decent fellow soilin' his hands upon those wascals. Keep back, my deah fellow, and we will wag them instead!"

"Good!" chimed in Blake. "They're not worth licking, Tommy. Let them have some of what they've given Binks."

Tom Merry smiled grimly.

"Oh, all right!" he exclaimed. "You hear that, you rotters?"

"Let me pass!" exclaimed Crooke furiously.

"Collar them!"

There were plenty of fellows to do it; Gore and Crooke and Mellish were collared in many hands.

They struggled, but it was of no use. They did not venture to hit out, for the natural result would have been that the juniors would have hit back, and the ragers would have had decidedly the worst of it.

"Let me go!" muttered Mellish, as he was dragged to his feet. "It—it was only a lark, you know, and—"

"Well, here are some more larks for you," said Digby, wielding the ruler he had jerked out of Crooke's hand.

Mellish roared. Digby held out the ruler to Binks.

"Now give Crooke some, Binks, old boy!"

"I—I'd rather let him off, Master Digby."

"Bai Jove! Binks is wight, deah boys. It is very wight and pwopah of him to pwefere to heap coals of fire on his enemy," said D'Arcy. "But it is wight and pwopah for us to wag them and so give me that wulah."

The yells the ragers gave sounded from one end of the passage to the other.

"There!" said D'Arcy at last. "I wegard that as sufficient. If any person here feels aggrieved at my actions, I am willin' to meet him in the gym and give him satisfaction, either with or without gloves. Now, kick them down the passage!"

"Good egg!"

The three ragers were bundled down the passage, and the crowd of juniors kicked them heartily till they ran.

There was no help for them, and as the kicks landed on them like rain, they put their pride in their pockets, so to speak, and pelted off, with the juniors behind, kicking at them till they were well out of the passage.

Then Tom Merry & Co. returned to Binks. Binks was still in great pain, but he was putting a brave face upon it.

"Feel pwetty bad, old fellow?" asked D'Arcy sympathetically.

"Ye-es!" stammered Binks. "But—but I shall be all right soon."

"I don't think there will be any more ragging," said Tom Merry. "They had it worse than you had it, Binks, my boy!"

And he was right. The three ragers had fled for refuge to the dormitory, and there they were bewailing their injuries, and making mental resolves not to appear in public in the characters of ragers again.

"Master Merry wanted in the Head's study," said the new buttons of the School House, a little later; and Tom Merry made his way to Dr. Holmes' room, wondering what was "up" this time.

But it was not to be called over the coals that Tom Merry had been summoned to the Head's study. Dr. Holmes gave him a kindly look as he came in.

"I want to speak to you, Merry, about Binks," he said.

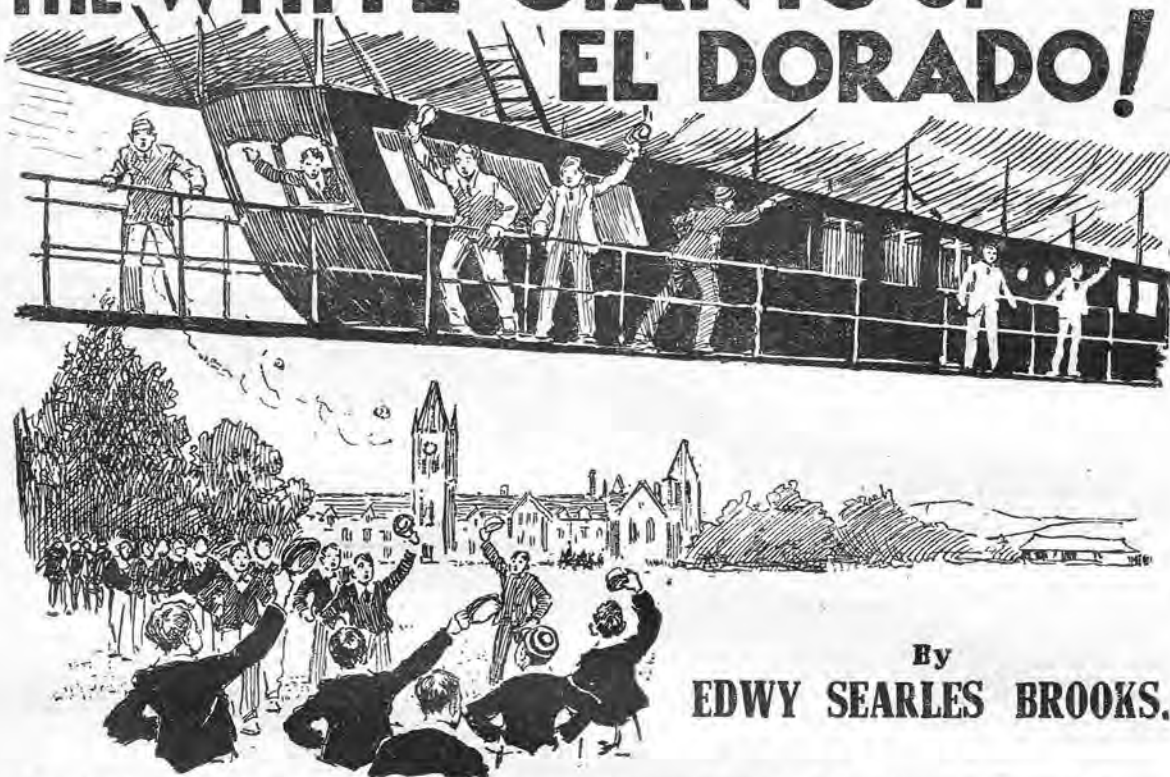
"Yes, sir."

"He has now been at St. Jim's four days," said the Head, tapping upon the table with his hand. "You have been taking some notice of him all that time, Merry?"

(Continued on page 23.)

OPENING CHAPTERS OF THE FINEST ST. FRANK'S SERIAL EVER WRITTEN!

THE WHITE GIANTS OF EL DORADO!



By
EDWY SEARLES BROOKS.

All aboard the Sky Wanderer for an exciting cruise with the St. Frank's Chums! They meet with amazing adventures in a lost land inhabited by giant people and terrifying monsters!

The Flying School!

"W E'RE off!"

"Hurrah!"

Enthusiastic cheers went up from scores of schoolboy throats as the giant airship, Sky Wanderer, rose gracefully from the famous playing fields of St. Frank's College, and soared over the grey, stately Houses of the great school.

"By George!" exclaimed Edward Oswald Handforth, the burly, aggressive leader of Study D, in the Remove. "Off at last! Off, after weeks of waiting and worry!"

"I don't wonder you were worried, old man," remarked Vivian Travers solemnly. "How the deuce you managed to scrape through the exam beats me!"

But Handforth, his eyes gleaming, his face flushed, did not even hear. With Church and McClure, his faithful study chums, he was leaning over the chromium rail and gazing down upon the heads of his luckless schoolfellows who had been left behind.

Not five minutes earlier, the airship had been secure at her moorings. She had got off without the assistance of a crew. Four anchor-claws, telescopically projected from the hull, had held her as firmly as a rock to the ground; but the movement of a lever in the control-room was sufficient to release the claws, and up she rose in all her majesty.

She was a wonder ship in every sense—the triumphant product of the Manners Aircraft Corporation, with Sir Hobart Manners himself, her designer, in command. She had been presented to the governors of St. Frank's by the multi-millionaire sporting peer, Lord Dorrimore. The one and only Dorrie, genial and smiling, was much in evidence, to say nothing of his faithful friend, Umlosi, the giant king of Kutanaland.

It had been Dorrie's idea from the outset—an airship school. A cruiser of the skies to take the boys to the far-flung corners of the Empire, to educate them by personal contact with all the peoples of the earth. At first, the governors had been dubious, but now they had no qualms.

The Sky Wanderer, with a full load of volunteer passengers, had already flown twice round the world, conquering the wildest storms. She was nearly 1,000 feet in length, with a gas capacity of four million cubic feet, and she was capable of making a non-stop flight of 16,000 miles, even allowing for adverse winds and weather. She had been tried and tested, and lucky were the St. Frank's fellows who started off on this, her first world-educational tour.

Unlike most airships of her type, she was not dependent upon specially prepared landing grounds, for she could come to earth anywhere and secure herself automatically and without any outside help. Her gas was non-inflammable and non-explosive, and she possessed a marvellous plant in her hull which enabled her to make additional gas as she flew. Furthermore, she used solid fuel, and this, too, was non-explosive.

As she rose higher and higher over St. Frank's, the November sun glinted on her silver shape, and the lucky passengers at the rail on her promenade deck could be clearly seen. This promenade deck was a novel feature of her construction. Built within the hull, like that of an ocean liner, it extended from bows to stern on either side—a wide, roomy deck, of enormous length. In bad weather protective screens could be automatically raised, enclosing the deck completely.

"Well, boys, by Friday you'll be playing football in New Zealand," said Nelson Lee, with a smile, as he joined a group of the Remove juniors, who were leaning over the starboard rail. "It hardly seems possible, does it?"

"It's almost a miracle, guv'nor," said Nipper. "Only about four days, and we shall be on the other side of the Hemisphere!"

"Yes, our cruising speed is about a hundred and twenty miles an hour," replied the great detective. "And as to-day is Monday, and New Zealand is between ten and twelve thousand miles away, the calculation is simple enough."

Nelson Lee had consented to take command, as it were, of the touring school. He was the headmaster of this flying

section of St. Frank's. In all, there were about seventy-five boys in the party, and all Forms were represented. So that there should be no unfairness, special examinations had been held some weeks ago for all those boys who had desired to undertake the world trip, and whose parents were sufficiently air-minded to grant the necessary permission. Over eighty per cent of the school had gone in for that exam, and the boys securing the highest marks won the honour of going on this, the Sky Wanderer's first school voyage.

If successful, as everybody believed, it was to be a regular and permanent feature of the school routine. On this wonder airship there were class-rooms, dormitories, and even private studies for the boys, exactly as in St. Frank's itself. She had been built, at Lord Dorrmore's expense, as a sky school, and nothing had been overlooked. Her masters included Mr. Alington Wilkes, Mr. Beverley Stokes, and Professor Sylvester Tucker.

By now the cheering had ceased on board, and the boys, seniors and juniors alike, were looking down at St. Frank's, now some thousands of feet below, and dwindling in the November haze. They were silenced by the impressiveness of the occasion, and awed, somewhat, by the knowledge that the great voyage had begun at last. Many of those youngsters had lumps in their throats as their old school dwindled at length into the hazy mist.

And the Sky Wanderer, supreme monarch of the clouds, set her course down the English Channel, out across the Atlantic, away to the far outposts of the great British Empire.

By Wednesday, such is the adaptability of youth, the boys settled down so thoroughly into the new routine that it was becoming almost monotonous. Handforth, in particular, was full of grumbles, after the first twenty-four hours. The excessive smoothness of the airship's motion, even through bad weather, disappointed them exceedingly.

The ordinary school routine was adhered to strictly on board; rising-bell, prayers, breakfast, lessons—everything just as at St. Frank's. But in the many leisure hours, the boys sought the great promenade deck rather than their studies and Common-rooms. The weather had already turned from the cold bleakness of the English November to the sunny warmth of the near Tropics—for they were heading across Brazil on this non-stop flight to New Zealand.

"Nothing happens!" complained Handforth, as he stared down at the sea with a moody frown. "We've only spotted one ship since this time yesterday. Nothing but sea, sea, all the time!"

"We've seen a good few clouds," said Church, with a grin.

"Grumbling already, Handy?" asked Lord Dorrmore, who happened to be strolling past. "Cheer up, old son! There'll be plenty to see as soon as we get over the South American Continent. Afterwards, too; for we shall fly over countless South Sea islands, and the skipper will make a point of flying low an' circlin' many of them."

Chuckling, Dorrie went forward, passing through the beautifully furnished lounge, and then along an electrically lit corridor until he came to the great control-room. Nelson Lee was here, chatting with Sir Hobart.

"Well?" asked Dorrie, his face full of eagerness.

Sir Hobart, a tall, fine man in the prime of life, smiled. "There's no reason why we shouldn't humour you, Dorrie," he said dryly. "Mr. Lee and I have been having a little talk. The original route was to have been over the Caribbean Sea, then by way of Panama to the Pacific. But it will be practically as quick for us to fly straight across Brazil and then reach the Pacific by way of Peru. A more southerly route, but just as interesting."

"For me a hundred times more interesting," said Lord Dorrmore dreamily. "Yes, and for you, too, Lee. Have you forgotten that wonderful trip we once made, when I took my yacht up the Amazon—when we penetrated to a strange country, surrounded by fever-infested swamps, in the heart of the Brazilian forests?"

"The city of El Dorado—the Land of the White Giants," said Nelson Lee, nodding. "No, Dorrie, I have not forgotten. Neither have I forgotten that a terrible earthquake destroyed that strange city and wiped the Arzac race out of existence."

"But can we be sure of that?" interrupted the sporting peer. "We barely escaped with our lives, an' it was impossible for us to make certain of the full extent of the catastrophe. It may have been far less destructive than we thought. That's why I want to fly over that region. It has always been a dream of mine."

Nelson Lee looked at him squarely.

"You are not hinting at any hazardous adventure, Dorrie?" he asked.

"Good glory, no!" laughed his lordship. "You're thinkin' of the boys, eh? But there can't be any danger in us flyin' across that strange, swamp-surrounded lost land."

So the schoolboy passengers were in for a thrill which they little expected; and if Nelson Lee, Lord Dorrmore, and Sir Hobart Manners could have foreseen what was to happen within the next twenty-four hours, they would have sent the Sky Wanderer on a new course, far, far away from the mysterious inner jungle of unexplored Brazil!

The City of Gold!

"THERE'S the beginning of the swamp!" said Nipper, his voice husky with excitement.

He and many other Removites and Fourth Formers were standing at the rail, gazing down upon the tropical forest. It was not yet breakfast-time, and during the night the airship had sped on her way across the northern part of South America. It was flying low now, well beneath the clouds, and as far as the eye could see in nearly every direction there was the primeval forest. Directly ahead, and yet only dimly seen, the forestland was changing to swamp.

Nipper, as well as many of the other fellows, had been on that exciting holiday adventure with Lord Dorrmore, and they were eager now to see once again the strange Lost Land of the Swamp. Those boys who had not taken part in the former expedition were even more thrilled, for all this was new to them.

Gazing down into the treetops, not a very great distance below, the boys could see the tangled masses of foliage, and now and again crowds of monkeys were to be observed, leaping among the branches, jabbering excitedly. There were birds of gorgeous plumage and colour.

As the Sky Wanderer at up the miles, the forest gave place to more open country, with small lagoons of water, muddy and almost steaming, here and there. Some of them were infested with caymans, which is the South American type of crocodile.

"We're on the direct route," said Lord Dorrmore keenly. "By gad! I wonder if we shall find any sign of life in that mystery land ahead? We must thank our stars we're not afoot! Look at that awful swamp, Lee! We're getting right over it now."

"A place of fever—of pestilence—of death!" said Nelson Lee grimly.

Trees grew here and there, but they were small and straggling, and between them lay tracts of reeking vegetation, alive with reptiles and myriads of insects.

It was a death trap—a morass which no human being could cross.

"Look!" yelled Handforth, pointing.

He had seen a giant anaconda, and there were snakes of many other varieties, too. So low was the airship flying that the vile reptilian life of the swamp could be clearly seen. It was like a nightmare, and the boys stared down at that passing panorama fascinated, even horrified.

"Wau!" rumbled the mighty Umlozi. "The stench of this land, N'Kose, is in my nostrils."

"Yes, even up here we get a whiff now and again," admitted Dorrie, with a grimace. "Sickenin', isn't it?"

"It is a poisoned land, my father," said the Kutana chief. "It is a land fit only for the insects and the reptiles. In the whole of Africa, my own beloved country, there is no such deathland as this. And it stretches, methinks, for miles without end."

"The Indians tell all sorts of stories about this swamp," said Lord Dorrmore thoughtfully. "In the main they are true. The bog country, impossible to cross on foot, extends in a circular form, and it must be a hundred miles wide—a great band of fever-ridden horror, stretchin' in a gigantic circle. But in the centre of it there is higher land—a little country on its own, cut off entirely from the rest of the world. It has been cut off like that for thousands of years."

"And this, then, N'Kose, is the fabulous Land of the White Giants?"

"It used to be, and we shall soon know whether it was completely destroyed or not," said Lord Dorrmore, his eyes glued to the binoculars. "By the Lord Harry, we're gettin' over it now! In the distance ahead the ground is changing. I can see hills and grassy slopes. Do you see, Lee?"

"This is a country where Nature quickly mends her scars," said Nelson Lee, nodding. "Perhaps that great cataclysm was not so all-destructive as we believed."

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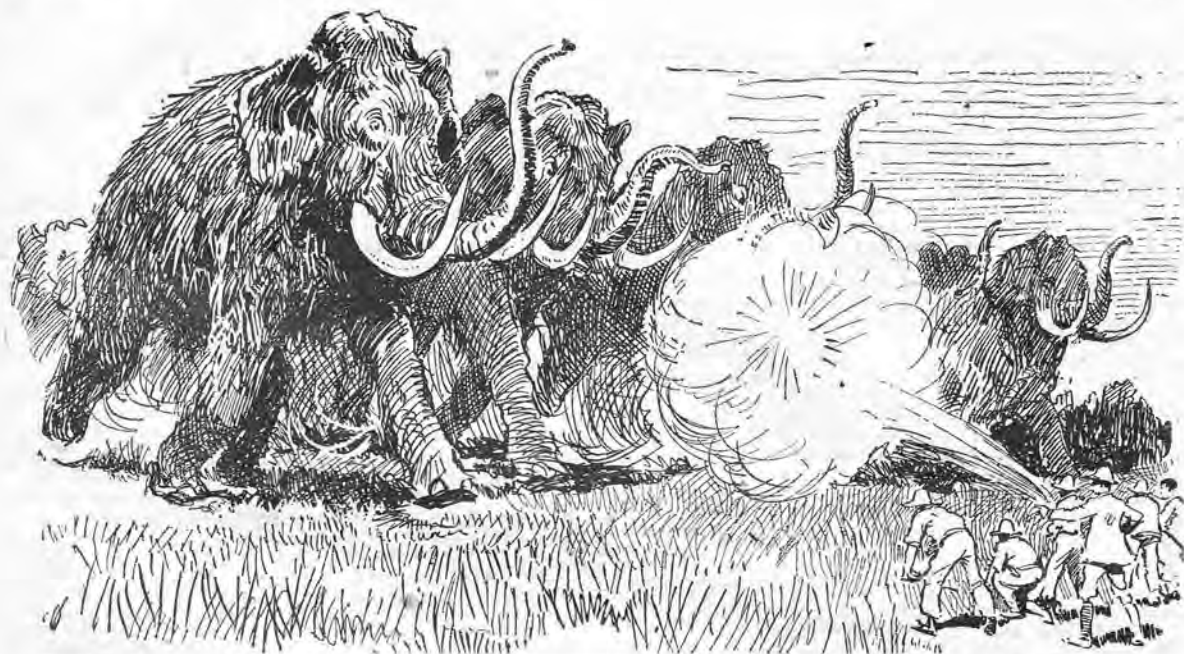
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On came the stampeding herd of mastodons—nearer, nearer! At close quarters the shaggy bodies of the monstrous creatures towered over the St. Frank's boys. It was a nightmare—a glimpse of death! Zzzzzzzh! Swoosh! The first signal light went shooting forward. If it failed to turn the monsters nothing could save the St. Frank's party from certain death!

The Sky Wanderer flew on, and now the boys were catching the great excitement, too. Where the swamp gradually changed its character the hills rose sharply, abruptly, forming a long, far-flung ridge. This mountain ridge, like the swamp, was circular in shape, and it formed the edges of a basin. It was in that basin beyond where the lost land lay.

As the airship neared the ridge, Sir Hobart caused her to rise to a greater altitude, and presently it was possible to see over the hilltops and to catch a glimpse of the changed country beyond.

"Look!" shouted Fenton of the Sixth, as excited as any of the juniors. "There's no swamp over there! It's a green, fair countryside."

"He's right, an' I was right!" exclaimed Dorrie exultantly. "The lost land was not destroyed, Lee! See for yourself!"

But Nelson Lee made no comment. The aircraft went soaring over the ridge, and everybody on the promenade decks stood gazing fascinated. As though by magic, the death swamp had been left behind. The Sky Wanderer was now flying swiftly over parklands which were intensely green, where majestic trees grew in isolated clumps. Clear, crystal streams wended their way down from the hills, joining broader rivers.

Through the powerful binoculars it was possible to gaze more closely upon that fair landscape; the adventurers could see the glorious green fields, smothered with richly coloured flowers. Just as the swamp had been a place of horror, this was a land of delight.

So fast was the airship travelling that the mountain ridge was now far in the rear, and even this new landscape was changing in character, for signs of cultivation were making themselves apparent.

"I'm glad we came!" said Dorrie breathlessly. "I've often wanted to find out for certain whether the Arzaes were wiped out or not. Look down there, Lee! Look at that immense wall which has been built—which stretches for endless miles across the country. That's new—built within the last few years, I should say."

"A protection against—what?" asked Nelson Lee significantly. "Isn't that a town or a village, away yonder?" He pointed. "Yes, I can see the houses now."

But the others were looking at something else—something which gleamed and shimmered in the far distance. It seemed like a beacon at first, a great, golden splash of light amid the green. Lord Dorrimore was the first to realise the actual truth.

"It is El Dorado—the City of Gold!" he exclaimed. "It has been restored, Lee—and made greater than ever before!"

His voice throbbed with exultation, and Nelson Lee was ready to believe that Dorrie had had the airship built, not so that the St. Frank's boys could go on a world tour, but

so that they should accompany him to this strange land. It was characteristic of the genial Dorrie that he should include the schoolboys in the adventure. If Dorrie had one fault, it was his recklessness.

"You're not expecting us to land among the Arzaes, are you?" asked Nelson Lee.

A shadow crossed over his lordship's face.

"Why not?" he asked innocently.

"Dorrie, you're incorrigible!" said Nelson Lee, giving him a hard, straight look. "The White Giants might be friendly—but, on the other hand, they might not. My dear man, we couldn't chance it!"

"I suppose you're right; but it's a pity, all the same," said Dorrie reluctantly. "Still, there can't be any harm in flying over the city, an' having a close look at it, can there?"

"We'll fly high," replied Nelson Lee briefly.

And he went off at once to the control-cabin. Dorrie stared after him almost sadly, and he turned when he felt a touch on his arm. Umlosi was standing beside him, against the rail.

"It has been truly said, N'Kose, that our friend is even as the wizard," said the Kutana chief. "For Umtagati knows, deep in him, what my snake has already told me. Fair as this land looks, my father, it teems with treachery. Beware! Venture not too close to this city of gold, which now grows so big and wondrous!"

"You've been dreamin', Umlosi," said Dorrie. "What harm can come to us so long as we keep in the air?"

But he felt just a little uncomfortable, and he was glad that Nelson Lee had not heard Umlosi's words. For, in some uncanny way, Umlosi seemed to know of dangers before they materialised. Perhaps it was instinct—or mere guesswork. None could tell. But it was a fact that Umlosi had never been proved wrong in his predictions.

By this time the boys were intensely excited. El Dorado, the fabulous city, was almost below them.

A city, literally, of gold!

The streets were wide and impressive, many of them lined with graceful palms and other trees. The buildings, of a square, futuristic design, shimmered and gleamed in the sunshine. It seemed that their very walls were built of gold, but it was probable that they were veneered with the precious metal. There were broad pavements, and they were edged with gold, too.

"Look at the people!" said Nipper, pointing. "They're staring up at us—they're shouting amongst themselves."

"And they're giants!" said Handforth breathlessly. "Great Scott! Every one of them must be between eight and nine feet in height!"

The airship was gaining height—probably by Nelson Lee's instructions—but the figures of the Arzaes could be clearly

seen. Gigantic they were, robed in simple white garments, with golden clasps and belts.

The streets were becoming crowded, for the people were pouring out of the houses, and coming into the main thoroughfares from the lesser streets. All were staring up at the silver monster which floated so serenely overhead.

The whole city was laid out in beautiful, terraced streets, and here and there fountains were playing. Whatever destruction had been wrought here earlier had now been fully restored. El Dorado was never before so flourishing.

"It's unbelievable!" muttered Tommy Watson, clutching at Nipper's arm. "On Monday we were at St. Frank's and now, on Wednesday—this! I expect we shall wake up soon."

Even as he spoke, a curiously narrow beam of light, like a golden ray, struck upwards, and swept across the sky. It came from a great, tower-like building, which soared five hundred feet high, in the very centre of the city. This building stood amid green gardens, in the main city square.

The ray hovered, swung round again, and then settled itself upon the bows of the airship. There it remained fixed, splashing a blinding light on the silvery hull.

And from that particular spot, where the ray splashed itself, a burst of fire and smoke went forth.

Attacked By Mastodons!

IN the control cabin, situated beneath the bows of the Sky Wanderer, Sir Hobart Manners turned as white as death. He had felt no difference in the handling of the airship; but he had seen that ominous smoke, and there could be only one explanation.

"Great Heaven above!" he ejaculated hoarsely. "We are attacked!"

Nelson Lee compressed his lips. He had not actually expected trouble, but he had been half-prepared for it—as his discussion with Lord Dorrimore proved.

"Take her higher, Manners!" he said sharply, as he leapt to the windows and stared up. "Higher—higher! Take her out of range!"

Already the Sky Wanderer was shooting upwards, answering the controlling hand of her commander. Nelson Lee was not seriously alarmed, for he knew that the airship's gas was non-inflammable—as, also, was the silver envelope. But as he gazed at the spot where the "ray" had concentrated itself, he drew his breath in with a quick hiss of incredulity.

"What is it?" asked Sir Hobart, in alarm.

And then he saw. Great drops of liquid were falling from the hull, and passing close to the windows of the control-cabin. And at the damaged spot the airship's girders were laid bare, and one of them appeared to be broken—bent and twisted.

"Don't you understand, Manners?" asked Nelson Lee tensely. "The metal framework has melted away."

The ray had disappeared from the bows. By now, the Sky Wanderer had risen to a great height, and was rising still. El Dorado, far below, and well astern, was just a shimmering patch amid the green of the countryside. And streaking up from the centre of the golden patch came that tiny, narrow beam.

It struck again—this time almost amidships, some little distance above the starboard promenade deck. And in spite of the airship's great height, the same thing happened! There came a puff of smoke, and molten metal dropped in great splashes.

There were boys crowding this deck; Nipper & Co., Handforth and his chums, and others, and on the other promenade deck there were numbers of seniors, with Edgar Fenton and William Napoleon Browne in evidence. Mr. Alington Wilkes—"Old Wilkey" to the boys—was standing with Barry Stokes, too. One and all, they were silenced for some seconds as though stricken with vocal paralysis.

They had seen the molten metal dripping past; they knew that their flying home was rushing headlong into the upper sky. And although they did not fully appreciate just what had happened, one fact was crystal clear. The Sky Wanderer was fleeing from some deadly peril—some horror which threatened her very existence.

Nipper, the shrewd, level-headed skipper of the Remove, was first to recover his powers of speech.

"They've got us!" he said, in a hard, strained voice. "Look at that ray! We can't escape from it! They've got us!"

Never had words been more truly spoken! Lord Dorrimore, who had hurried to the control-room at the first alarm, was now standing by Nelson Lee's side, and his face was haggard and pale. He needed no telling that the commander's efforts were futile. Already the Sky Wanderer had touched her "ceiling"—the greatest height at which she was capable of flying—and the countryside beneath had become hazy and blurred, owing to the great distance which separated airship and earth. She was out of range of all known weapons of offence, yet that destruction-ray, like a thin gold pencil, followed her, and with deliberate and malevolent certainty, the ray selected spots on the airship's hull.

"This is perfectly ghastly!" said Dorrie, at length. "We must be nearly fifty miles away from El Dorado by now—an' yet that infernal ray can still reach us!" He looked at Lee. "I'm sorry, old man. I didn't know—"

"It wasn't your fault, Dorrie," said Nelson Lee quietly. "None of us could have anticipated this."

In spite of his quiet tones, his voice was almost harsh. The Sky Wanderer was dropping in a steady descent. There were four or five rents in her hull, but, owing to her sound construction, there had been no grave fracture. In effect, she was still whole; but the gas was still escaping from her rent compartments far quicker than the automatically controlled machinery could re-make it. With her engines going at full speed, she was travelling fast; but none of those anxious men in the control-room fooled themselves. They knew that a landing was inevitable.

"We're not done yet!" said Dorrie, with suddenly revived optimism. "If we get to earth, Manners, that beam can't reach us—"

"I know it," interrupted Sir Hobart. "That's why I'm making a quick descent—and to find out the exact damage."

While speaking, he was operating the ship's telegraph—which sent warnings to every part of that great hull. The crew were ordered to stand by.

"The instant we land, it will be a case of 'all hands to the pumps'—for we must make the repairs as quickly as possible," said Nelson Lee crisply. "Dorrie, you had better come with me. We must tell the boys. They'll be needed in this repair work. Thank Heaven the vessel is not seriously damaged."

As the anxious minutes slipped away, the mighty Sky Wanderer, still under perfect control, dropped lower and lower towards a peaceful valley. By now, the mysterious ray had vanished, and all signs of life and civilisation had vanished, too. This part of Arzacland was primeval.

Landing was a dangerous and difficult manoeuvre, for with her normal buoyancy reduced, the airship was not free of movement. Yet, by the skilful use of her engine-power, and of her marvellous controlling fins and vanes, Sir Hobart succeeded. He brought her down in the centre of that grassy valley, and when she was still fifty feet from the ground, and dropping like a wounded bird, the great telescopic anchor-claws lowered themselves diagonally from bow and stern. As though endowed with life, the claws dug themselves into the ground, the Sky Wanderer shuddered from stem to stern, and the next moment she was rigidly at rest.

As she settled there, the lower part of her hull not more than twenty feet from the ground; two long metal staircases automatically swung to earth, and Lord Dorrimore and Nelson Lee were among the first to run down. They were followed by various officers and members of the crew—all of them anxious to obtain definite knowledge as to the damage. Down the other staircase ran the boys, now shouting triumphantly, giving vent to their untold relief.

"She's all right!" Handforth was yelling. "We were dotty to get scared. The damage doesn't amount to much."

"We're jolly lucky to be alive," said Church, with a gulp.

They went running through the long grass, staring up at the vast body of the airship.

All eyes were aloft. The damage, it could be seen, was not extensive. Where the girders had been melted away by that strange beam, the destruction was confined to very narrow limits. The girders were weakened, but not seriously. It was the loss of gas which had borne the vessel down. In the air, it had been impossible to repair the rents.

"Not so bad as we thought, eh?" said Dorrie cheerfully. "We'll get the gas compartments fixed up, an' then we'll be off."

"Yes, and we'll take it easily," said Sir Hobart, nodding. "As soon as we get free of this swamp-land we'll come down again, and make permanent repairs to the damaged metalwork."

**St.
Franks
STAMP
WHO'S
WHO**



E. O. Handforth. Nipper. Nelson Lee.

(Three more portraits next week.)

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He and Nelson Lee gave rapid instructions to crew and passengers. Lee handled the boys, and they were eager enough to do their bit. Lord Dorrimore, his effervescent spirits making a full recovery, strolled about with a genial grin on his face.

"I'd give a year's income to know why the White Giants attacked us," he said. "Hang it, we weren't doin' them any harm. Did they think we were goin' to drop bombs, or something? We gave no evidence of hostility."

"Perhaps they wanted to be on the safe side," said Nelson Lee. "However, it's no good conjecturing, Dorrie. Our job is to get away—and as quickly as we can. One visit to El Dorado is enough—What the blazes is that?"

A yell, loud and long, had sounded from almost immediately behind Nelson Lee. There was no mistaking that foghorn-like voice.

"Handforth, you young idiot—" began Lee, swinging round.

"Look, sir!" bellowed Handforth, pointing. "Look at those things over there—coming out of the trees! What are they—elephants?"

So occupied had the adventurers been that nobody had had time to look at anything except the airship. Edward Oswald Handforth, quite by chance, had glanced across the valley towards the dense forest, which began thickly a mile distant. All eyes were now turned in that direction—and all hearts thudded. For out of the trees some gigantic creatures were making their appearance; they were coming

Mr. Vickers, the second navigation officer, pulled hard at Dorrie's sleeve.

"It's all right, sir; Mr. Lee is fetching them now," he panted. "He has taken three of the men with him."

At that moment Nelson Lee himself came tearing down the stairs, with men at his heels. They were carrying armfuls of rocket-like objects—coloured signal lights which the airship carried for use in times of emergency.

"Quick! Lay them on the ground in a row, and then ignite the fuses!" ordered Lee. "They'll shoot off like rockets, level with the ground, straight at the mastodons. It's our only chance."

It was a matter of seconds; on came the herd—nearer, nearer. At close quarters the shaggy bodies of the monstrous creatures and their enormous tusks seemed impossibly large. It was a nightmare—a glimpse of death.

Zzzzzzzh—swooooooosh!

The first signal light went shooting forward, leaving a trail of sparks.

Zzzzzh—swooooosh!

Another—and another—and another; then—

Bang—bang!

There came a terrific ear-shattering detonation, accompanied by a blinding red light. It burst right amongst the foremost mastodons of the herd, and with shrill, deafening trumpeting, the mastodons checked.

Bang! Bang! Bang! Bang!

Red and green lights burst with violent reports. Like

For Next Wednesday

"UP AGAINST IT!"

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in dozens even as the airship party watched. Already a vast herd was in sight—a herd numbering hundreds.

"Mastodons!" muttered Nelson Lee in a startled voice.

"What!" ejaculated Lord Dorrimore.

"Creatures that we moderns have believed to be extinct for tens of thousands of years," continued the detective.

"Look at them! There can be no mistaking those hairy, shaggy, mammoth bodies! Look at the extraordinarily long tusks! These creatures are prehistoric mastodons!"

"Ye gods and little fishes!"

It was a thrilling moment, and boys and men alike continued to stare.

"Look out!" shouted Gore-Pearce in sudden fright.

"The brutes are charging, aren't they?"

"By Heaven, the boy's right!" said Nelson Lee sharply.

Prisoners of the White Giants!

THE ground beneath the feet of the startled schoolboys shook and trembled; it was like an earthquake. On the air came a dull, thunderous drumming. In their hundreds the mastodons swept on, and they were herded so close together that they looked like a solid tidal-wave.

"Guns!" yelled Handforth. "Aren't there any guns aboard?"

"As a matter of fact, yes," said Lord Dorrimore. "But what's the good of guns? A battery of field artillery wouldn't stop this—Good glory! That's given me an idea."

There was not a second to be lost. Panic was near at hand, but the St. Frank's fellows pluckily stood their ground, awaiting orders.

"Lee! Lee!" shouted Dorrie, as he raced for the stairway. "Here, you'll do, Vickers! Come with me and fetch the coloured signal lights—"

a suddenly stemmed flood, the herd broke its formation. There was chaotic confusion; the foremost mastodons checked so abruptly that great clods of earth went high into the air. The animals slithered over, and those behind heaped upon them. It was a horrifying sight.

But the situation was saved. The mastodons, terrified by this reception, turned tail and went charging back towards the forest. They went sweeping off at a tangent, trumpeting madly.

Nelson Lee wiped the cold perspiration from his forehead.

"That was a nasty minute, Dorrie!" he said evenly.

"Thou hast spoken, Umtagati," rumbled Umlosi, who was standing near by.

"But we're not out of the wood yet," said Lord Dorrimore. "The beggars might come back. Look here, Lee—I'm goin' to tell you a secret. Up in the airship I've got a pretty big supply of rifles, machine-guns, and ammunition—to say nothing of special gas-bombs an' a few trifles of that sort."

Nelson Lee gave him a hard look.

"Then you started on this trip with the deliberate intention of seeking adventure?" he asked.

"No, no, you've got me wrong!" protested Dorrie. "I knew that we should be flyin' over wild lands—an' I had the stuff packed aboard—secretly. I'll admit, since the school governors might have got the wind up if they had known—as a mere precautionary measure. No harm in bein' on the safe side, is there?"

"Hi!" shouted Nipper excitedly. "Look over there, guv'nor!"

"Glory be!" said Dorrie, spinning round. "Is there somethin' else already? What's the new danger?"

His jaw dropped slightly as he beheld the spectacle which had already gripped the attention of all the others.

From the opposite side of the valley, appearing through

a wide gap in the trees, a column of moving figures came into sight. The forest, on this side, was nearer—not more than a quarter of a mile away. The figures were men, and there were hundreds, marching in a solid column of twelve abreast.

"By George!" breathed Handforth excitedly. "The White Giants! What a sight!"

Never had the boys beheld anything so amazing. The advancing Arzacs were men of unbelievable height and girth; they stood at least nine feet in their shoes, and they were broad and muscular in proportion—fine, upstanding, magnificent specimens of humanity. How they had reached here in such a short space of time was a mystery—unless they had come from some Arzac stronghold nearer to this valley than El Dorado. They were all dressed in some silky, shimmering material, light and airy, but picturesque. They wore in uniform, in fact, and at their shoulders gleamed golden ornaments; their buttons and belts were of gold, too, and they wore gold ornamented helmets. Each man carried a long, spearlike staff.

"Your guns are no good now, Dorrie," said Nelson Lee, his lips tight. "It would be madness to fire on these men, even if we had the opportunity. The die is cast—we must face the Arzacs openly and in a friendly spirit!"

There was, indeed, no time. The impressive column was now almost at hand, for the advance was rapid. Although the White Giants were walking, they covered the ground at a very fast speed, so enormous were their strides.

As the column approached the airship, a word of command in a deep, stentorian voice rang out. The column divided itself into two, spreading out like a fan. In the centre, one man more richly attired than the others, detached himself, and he came marching alone towards the group of school-boys and men which stood beneath the airship's giant hull.

He advanced with set features—the fine, clean-shaven features of a man like a Roman gladiator. He saluted stiffly.

"In the name of His Majesty, King Yoga, you surrender!" he said, in strange, stilted English. "You may prisoners!"

It was another startling shock for the adventurers to learn that the Arzacs spoke the English language. The columns of soldiers had now marched round, and the airship party was encircled!

(What's going to happen to the St. Frank's boys now? Follow their nerve-rivling adventures in the land of the White Giants—and be thrilled!)

The Millionaire Boot-Boy!

(Continued from page 22.)

"Oh, yes, sir!"

"As a junior in the House, you will have had opportunities of making observations in this matter, Tom Merry. Is it your opinion that Binks could with advantage to himself and to others be admitted as a pupil at St. Jim's?"

"I don't see why not, sir," said Tom Merry frankly. "There are worse fellows than Binks in the School House."

The Head nodded.

"If I should consent to do as he wishes, Merry, Binks would learn more from the boys than the masters. I should wish him to associate with boys who would, without picking up any unpleasant ways from him, gradually train him by force of example into better ways."

"I understand, sir."

"Would you be prepared, Merry, to take Binks part, and stand by him and help him on by every possible means; treat him as a friend, in fact, if I allowed him to enter St. Jim's?"

Tom Merry hesitated one moment. It was no light task that was being imposed upon him. He was free to accept or refuse; and there was no reason why he should burden himself with Binks, excepting—excepting that he was Tom Merry, and that it was just like Tom Merry to do it.

"Yes, sir," he said firmly.

"Very well, Merry," said the Head. "I trust you; I rely upon you. You may tell Binks that he may enter St. Jim's."

And Tom Merry hurried off to carry the joyful news to Binks, the millionaire.

THE END.

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