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The **GEM** 2^D

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ARMAMENTS
STAMPS
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GRAND PRIZES
OFFERED FOR
THE LARGEST
COLLECTIONS!**



The **FUNK of the FOURTH!**

THE GREAT 'ARMAMENTS' RACE!

15 First Prizes of Hercules Bikes **6,000 Other TIP-TOP PRIZES**

ARE you collecting the Armaments Stamps I am giving away every week? You must, pals, because they will put you in the running for a super prize. There are fifteen spanking new Bikes, and THOUSANDS of other prizes, all going FREE.

The Armaments Stamps consist of BOMBERS, GUNS, SEARCHLIGHTS, and so on—eight kinds altogether—and all you do is just cut them out and keep them safely. Some were given in our last two issues, but even if you missed them you can start collecting TO-DAY—there are TWENTY-FOUR more stamps in this issue; fifteen are given on this page, while there are nine more on page 35—including four BONUS Battleships. If you also take other popular boys' papers, like "Modern Boy" and "Magnet," you'll find more stamps in them to swell your total.

Next week I shall ask you how many of one or more kinds of stamps you've collected. It may be Bombers, or Battleships, or perhaps Tanks and Destroyers together. Which? Well, that's my secret!

So keep at it! Make a special effort to collect all the stamps you can so as to be right in front for the first prize-giving of Five Bicycles and 2,000 of the other prizes. I shall ask you which prize you want, too—the highest collection of the stamps I call for will win. But don't send any yet! I'll tell you how, and where, next week.—THE EDITOR.

(The rules of the offer have already appeared, and will be repeated next week.)

Overseas Readers, Too!—You pals who are far away—you're in this great scheme also, and special awards will be given for the best collections from overseas readers. There will be a special closing date for you as well, of course!

N.B.—You can swap Armaments Stamps with pals who read "Magnet," "Modern Boy," "Detective Weekly," "Triumph," "Sports Budget," "Champion," "Thriller," and "Boy's Cinema."



MORE STAMPS TO SAVE ON PAGE 35.

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 1,579.

COULD THE NEW BOY LICK ANY ST. JIM'S FELLOW—OR WAS HE THE BIGGEST FUNK IN THE SCHOOL?

The FUNK of the FOURTH!



With a mocking smile Mellish struck the new junior in the face with his open hand. "Now come on, you funk!" he said. "Go it, deah boy!" sang out Arthur Augustus. But Outram turned and walked out of the Common-room.

CHAPTER 1. A Rough Welcome!

"**B**AI Jove! What a weally feahful wow!"
D'Arcy of the Fourth was exasperated.
It was really too trying.

The swell of St. Jim's, seated at the table, was alone in Study No. 6, in the Fourth Form passage in the School House.

There was a Latin grammar stuck against the inkstand on the table, and there was a sheaf of impot paper before the swell of St. Jim's. There was ink on his fingers, and a dab of ink on his aristocratic nose.

Arthur Augustus was hard at work. His noble brain was grappling with the ablative absolute.

For the ablative absolute Arthur Augustus did not care two pins, but his indifference to the ablative absolute did not meet with the approval of his Form-master.

Arthur Augustus would have preferred to join Tom Merry & Co. on the cricket field. But

he had to deal with the ablative absolute first, and show the result of his labours to Mr. Lathom before tea-time.

And while Arthur Augustus was getting to grips with the ablative absolute, there was a terrific din proceeding in the Fourth Form passage.

Bump, bump, bump!

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Give him another!"

"What a blessed funk!"

"Frogmarch!"

Bump, bump!

"Ow!"

It was evident that a ragging was proceeding in the passage outside.

"It's weally too bad!" muttered Arthur Augustus, throwing down his pen in despair. "How can a chap gwapple with this awful wot with that feahful wow goin' on? The fellows might shut up when I'm doin' howwid Latin gwammah! I've a jolly good mind to go out and give them a good thwashin' all wound!"

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 1,579.

By

MARTIN CLIFFORD.

Anyone but Arthur Augustus would scorn to back up a fellow as cowardly as Outram, the newcomer, appears to be. But Gussy is nothing if not loyal in championing the funk of the Fourth!

"Bump him!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bump, bump!

"Yah!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Arthur Augustus jumped up. He was not going to stand it any longer. He rushed to the door and threw it open.

"You uttah asses!" he shouted. "Not so much feahful wow when a fellow's twyin' to work!"

Bump, bump!

Arthur Augustus put up his eyeglass and surveyed the scene outside in astonishment. Half a dozen fellows were there, and it was evidently a ragging of an unusually rough kind.

Crooke and Racke of the Shell, Mellish of the Fourth, and Piggott of the Third were bumping another fellow along the passage, amid shouts of laughter.

The victim was a junior in dusty Etons—a fellow whom Arthur Augustus had never seen before.

He guessed that it was a new boy.

The new fellow was struggling in the grasp of the raggars, and seemed to have been hurt considerably, but he was not hitting out. And his non-resistance encouraged the raggars to proceed to greater lengths.

The new boy was rumpled and dusty and dishevelled, and panting for breath.

Arthur Augustus' brow darkened at the sight. A little gentle ragging of a new boy was harmless enough; but the four cads of the School House, finding their victim unresisting, were growing rougher and more brutal.

It was curious, too, for the new junior was a sturdy fellow, with broad shoulders and strong limbs, and looked as if he could easily have knocked out any of the raggars in a fair fight.

Arthur Augustus strode out of the study, his eye gleaming behind his monocle.

"Stop that at once, you wottahs!" he rapped out.

Racke of the Shell turned on him.

"Mind your own business!" he snapped. "Come on, you chaps! Give the funky cad the frogmarch!"

"Let me go!" gasped the new boy.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Excepting for Arthur Augustus, the raggars had the place to themselves. Everybody was out of doors on that sunny afternoon. Arthur Augustus' eyes gleamed with wrath as he pushed back his cuffs.

"You uttah wuffians!" he exclaimed. "How dare you treat a new kid like that! Let him alone at once!"

"Rats!"

"Get out of the way, you tailor's dummy!"

"Bring the funk along! Frogmarch!"

And, unheeding the wrathful swell of St. Jim's, the raggars rushed the new boy along the passage again, struggling in their grasp.

Arthur Augustus did not waste any more time on words.

In spite of his immaculate attire and his elegant ways, Arthur Augustus prided himself upon being a fighting-man. He sailed in. His left caught Racke of the Shell, and his right landed on Crooke's chin, and the two Shell fellows roared and rolled over their victim.

Then Mellish caught D'Arcy's left with his eye, and sat down, yelling, and Piggott of the Third reeled away from a terrific back-hander and fell.

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Arthur Augustus looked down upon fallen foes on all sides. Like Cæsar of old, he came, he saw, he conquered.

He stooped and helped the victim of the raggars to his feet.

"Buck up, deah boy!" he said kindly. "They shan't wag you any more. Why didn't you hit out?"

The new junior panted.

"I—I—I—"

"You can cut off, you uttah wottahs!" said Arthur Augustus. "You ought to be ashamed of yourselves, bai Jove! What will the new kid think of the mannahs of St. Jim's at this wate?"

The raggars staggered up. D'Arcy's charge had bowled them over, but they were not at all satisfied. They were four to two, even if the new boy stood up for himself, as he did not seem inclined to do.

"Collar that silly idiot!" panted Racke. "We'll rag him the same as that funk Outram!"

"Hands off, you wottahs!"

"Rush him!" yelled Crooke.

"Back me up, deah boy!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus, as he put up his hands and met the rush of the raggars.

The new boy stood hesitating. As he stood beside D'Arcy, it could be seen that he was bigger and more powerful in every way than the swell of St. Jim's.

But he did not put up his hands.

Arthur Augustus hit out valiantly, but he was borne over by the rush of the four and jammed against the wall.

"Scrag him!" yelled Piggott.

"Yawwooh! Wescue!"

"Hallo, what's the row?" asked a cheery voice.

Tom Merry and Manners and Lowther, in cricketing flannels, came along from the stairs on the way to their study.

"Four to one!" exclaimed Manners. "Pile in!"

The Terrible Three rushed to the rescue.

Thump! Crash! Bump! Yell!

In three seconds Racke, Crooke, Mellish, and Piggott were fleeing down the passage for their lives.

The Terrible Three had come just in time. Arthur Augustus sat gasping on the floor. The new boy, whom he had so gallantly rescued, had not raised a hand.

CHAPTER 2.

Under Gussy's Wing!

"GWOOOOOOH!"

Thus Arthur Augustus.

The Terrible Three, grinning, helped the swell of the Fourth to his feet.

Arthur Augustus leaned against the wall and panted. Crooke & Co. had disappeared along the passage and round the nearest corner. They were not looking for a "scrap" with the Terrible Three.

"Now, what's the row about?" demanded Tom Merry. "Getting quarrelsome in your old age, Gussy, and taking on four at a time?"

"Gwooooh! The uttah wottahs! They have wumped my collah feahfully!"

"But what were you scrapping with those cads for?" asked Manners.

"They were waggin' this kid, and I came to pwotect him," said Arthur Augustus.

"Looks as if he could protect himself," said Tom Merry, with a glance at the new junior, who

stood with crimson cheeks. "By Jove, you look dusty, kid! You've had a pleasant welcome to St. Jim's, and no mistake!"

"Why didn't you back up, you boundah?" demanded Arthur Augustus warmly. "We could easily have handled those four wottahs! Why didn't you help me?"

"I—I'm sorry! I—I was hurt—I——"

"Yaas, I suppose you were," said Arthur Augustus, more amicably. "What did the wottahs pile on you for?"

"I don't know. Because I'm a new kid, I suppose. They said they'd take me to my study after I'd seen Mr. Railton," said Outram. "They brought me here, and then started."

Tom Merry laughed.

"You fell into jolly bad hands, kid," he said. "Those four are howling cads—the biggest rotters at St. Jim's! You mustn't think we're all like that."

"No, I can see you're not," said Outram. "I'm much obliged to you for helping me!"

"Oh, don't mench!"

The Terrible Three went on their way. Arthur Augustus was left alone with the dusty new boy. He put up his eyeglass and surveyed him with some curiosity.

The ragging had been going on for ten minutes or more before Arthur Augustus had come on the scene. There was no doubt that Outram was hurt. But what puzzled D'Arcy was that he had not put up a fight. It looked as if the new fellow was a funk. But Arthur Augustus was willing to make every allowance for a new fellow, alone and unfriended in a big school, and finding himself suddenly attacked by a gang of ragers.

"I didn't know the wottahs were waggin' a new kid, or I'd have come out before," said D'Arcy. "I didn't know a new kid was comin'. I am sowwy you have had a veception like this. Those chaps who were waggin' you are all funks, and if you'd stood up to them they'd have left you alone. As you are a new chap, I'll give you a tip. When a chap hits you, hit him hardah!"

"Thank you!" said the new boy.

"You look wathah an athletic chap, too," said D'Arcy, eyeing him. "You could make wings wound Wacke——"

"I—I never fight."

Arthur Augustus laughed.

"You'll have to learn here, deah boy, or you'll be in lots of twouble!" he said cheerily. "What Form are you in?"

"Fourth."

"That's my Form. I'm D'Arcy."

"My name is Outram—Valentine Outram," said the new boy.

"Bai Jove! What a wippin' name!" said Arthur Augustus. "You look wathah in need of a bwush-up. Shall I take you to the dorm?"

"You're very kind."

"Not at all, deah boy. This way!"

The ablative absolute was neglected in Study No. 6. Arthur Augustus was in the habit of showing polite courtesy to new boys. He felt called upon to be more polite than ever in this case, to make up for the rowdy manners of Racke & Co. He led the new junior to the Fourth Form dormitory and helped him to put himself to rights.

"Know anybody here, deah boy?" he asked, as Outram brushed his hair.

"No; I—I think not."

"Have you been here long?"

"About an hour and a half. I was some time with the Housemaster."

"You haven't had your tea, I pwesume?"

"No."

"Pewwaps you would honah us by comin' to tea in Study No. 6. My fwiennds would be vewy pleased."

"You are very kind. I'll be glad."

"Not at all, deah boy. It's a wotten shame that those cads piled on you like that. They are a disgwace to the House," said Arthur Augustus. "Aftah tea we'll go and see Wacke, and we'll see fair play while you thwash him, Outwam."

The new boy started.

"No," he exclaimed—"no!"

"Bettah begin by thwashin' him. You can take my tip as an old hand, you know," said Arthur Augustus, in his most fatherly way.

"No, no; I don't bear him any malice!"

"Well, that's all wight, of course! But I heard those wottahs callin' you a funk. It

THE GEM SPELLING BEE

Try Your Skill With These Ten Words!

Put on your thinking-cap now and sort out the misspelled words in this list:

EXISTANCE
UPROARIOUS
CRINGEING
JUDGEMENT
ACQUIRE
PUTRIFY
ERRONEOUS
PERVIEW
ACCEPTIBLE
SINGEING

Are all the words wrong, or are some spelled right? Make your corrections and then turn to page 31, where the answers are given.

would be bettah to give Wacke a feahful thwashin', to show that you are not a funk."

"I'd rather not."

"Oh, very well!" said Arthur Augustus, in a somewhat stately manner. "I was only givin' you a tip, as an old hand."

"The—the fact is, I'd rather not fight anybody!" stammered the new boy. "I—I don't like it! I'm not afraid, but I'd rather not."

"If you tell the fellows that, I'm afwaid you will have a good many fights on your hands!" grinned Arthur Augustus. "Wacke will bully you no end if you say you can't fight, you know."

The new boy was silent.

Arthur Augustus scanned him seriously. Outram was a handsome lad, and one could not help liking his face. And he looked so well-built and sturdy that it seemed absurd to suppose that he could be afraid of a weedy slacker like Racke of the Shell.

"It's all vewy well to be a forgivin' chap," said Arthur Augustus. "I'm a forgivin' chap myself. But you can cawwy good-tempah too far, you know."

"I'm not good-tempered. I—I've got a beastly

temper," muttered Outram. "I'm trying to learn to keep it in check."

"Vewy good ideah," said Arthur Augustus, puzzled a little. "I'm a vewy good-tempahed chap myself, though I'm wathah a demon when I'm weally woused. If you've finished, we'll go down to the study. Blake, Hewwies, and Dig will be comin' in soon; the match must be ovah as those Shell boundahs have come in."

The two juniors returned to Study No. 6.

"I've got a wotten detention task," said Arthur Augustus, as he sat down at the table. "I've got to get it done before tea. Would you like to west in the armchair till tea, or take a twot woud?"

"Perhaps I could help you?" suggested Outram.

"Bai Jove! Do you know anythin' about the wotten ablative absolute?"

Outram smiled.

"Lots," he said. "I was working on it only last week, with my tutor. Let me lend you a hand; I am well up in it, really."

"Huwviah! I'm gettin' tied into a beastly knot with the beastly thing," said Arthur Augustus. "Lathom insists upon wammin' it into my head, you know; but there doesn't seem woom for it. Pewwaps you can explain the uttah wot, if you undahstand it."

Outram dropped into a chair at the table, and the two juniors were soon busy.

To Arthur Augustus' surprise, the new fellow seemed to have the ablative absolute at his fingertips. Valentine Outram was as "well up" in Latin grammar as the veriest "swot" in the School House.

Arthur Augustus' noble face brightened up wonderfully. The new boy had knowledge, and a clear way of explaining, and the difficulties that had beset Arthur Augustus' path seemed to melt away like snow in the sunshine.

"Bai Jove, Lathom will be surprised when he sees my papah!" smiled Gussy. "You are a bwick, Outram! I am goin' to surprise Lathom with this!"

And Arthur Augustus carried off his finished paper to Mr. Lathom's study, and did indeed succeed in surprising the Fourth Form master with his masterly exposition of the ablative absolute. He returned to Study No. 6 in great spirits.

CHAPTER 3.

An Astounding Recognition!

JACK BLAKE of the Fourth came into his study, and pitched his bat into a corner. Herries and Digby followed him in.

The three were looking ruddy, and warm, and very satisfied. School House had beaten New House, and Figgins & Co. had to hide their diminished heads; and Study No. 6 had contributed a handsome total of runs to the victory, in spite of the enforced absence of Arthur Augustus.

"Hallo, you ass! Why haven't you got tea ready?" said Blake.

There was a junior in the study, and Blake did not see, for a moment, that it was not Arthur Augustus. The swell of St. Jim's was in his Form-master's study at that moment.

"Hallo! Who are you?" he added, as he became aware of the fact that he was addressing a stranger.

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Outram smiled.

"I'm the new kid," he said.

"Oh, you're a new kid, are you?" said Blake, eyeing him. "Well, I suppose new kids will come—there's no stopping 'em. But they haven't shoved you into this study, I suppose? We're four already, and we're jolly well not going to stand five. Little room enough, as it is, with Gussy's toppers and Herries' feet."

"Silly ass!" growled Herries.

"I'm going to Study No. 7," said Outram.

"Oh, good!" said Blake, in great relief. "Nothing against you, you know; but a chap doesn't like to be crowded out in his own study. Study No. 7's next door, up the passage."

It was a hint for the new boy's departure.

"I—I'm waiting for Gussy," said Outram, colouring a little.

"Oh, you've made Gussy's acquaintance already, have you?" said Blake. "Did he tell you to wait here for him?"

"He asked me to tea."

"Oh, he did, did he? Just like Gussy!"

"If you don't want me, I'll clear off," said Outram, his colour deepening.

Blake laughed.

"My dear chap, don't be an ass! If Gussy's asked you to tea, you're welcome; but all the manners in this study aren't so polished as Gussy's. You have to take us as you find us—see?"

"I see," said Outram.

"If you're staying to tea, you may as well lend a hand getting it," said Blake. "Know how to poach eggs?"

"Yes, certainly."

"Got the eggs, Dig?"

"Here they are," said Digby.

"What's your name, kid?"

"Valentine Outram."

"Well, Valentine Outram, poach the eggs, and make yourself useful. There's a spirit stove in the grate. Pile in!"

"Right-ho!"

"By the way," said Blake, struck by a sudden thought, "I've just been hearing about a new kid. Mellish was telling Levison. He says there's a new kid who's a howling funk. Is that you?"

"I hope not."

"I suppose you're the only specimen who's come along to-day?"

"I suppose so."

"Then you're the chap Mellish was talking about. He says you couldn't fight, and then some of them collared you and ragged you, and you never raised a finger."

"They were four to one," said Outram, crimsoning.

"Oh, I see—just like Mellish and his set," said Blake. "I advise you to give Mellish a hiding. Can you box?"

"I—I—I don't care for it."

"You look as if you could box. I'll give you a round with the gloves, after tea, if you like, and see what you can do," said Blake. "Mellish is a worm, and anybody could lick him. Buck up with those eggs!"

Outram, with a troubled face, turned to the cooking. Blake laid the cloth, and Herries sawed the loaf, and Digby scraped jam out of a jar into the soapdish. They were thus occupied when Arthur Augustus D'Arcy returned, with a beaming face.

"Oh, here you are, deah boys! Did the New House beat you?"

"Beat your grandmother!" said Blake.
 "Bai Jove, you've beaten the New House, with me left out?"
 "Because you were left out," said Blake cheerfully.

"Wats!" Arthur Augustus changed the subject. "This chap is Outram, the new kid in the Fourth. He's been helpin' me with that wotten ablativ, and old Lathom was vewy pleased. He says that he will know what to expect of me in futuah," chuckled Arthur Augustus. "Fairly astonished him, bai Jove!"

"Oh, we've got a swot here, have we?" grunted Herries.

"Weally, Hewwies, Outram has helped me vewy wippingly. Pway be a little more civil than Wacke, Hewwies! By the way, I am goin' to thwash Wacke aftah tea. He was waggin' the new kid—"

"Can't the new kid fight his own battles?" demanded Digby.

"You're not goin' to fight them for him, anyway, Gustavus," said Blake. "How are those eggs getting on, Outram?"

"Done!" said Outram.

"Well, you can poach eggs," said Blake, looking at the results of Outram's labour critically.

"That's better than swotting over the giddy ablativ absolute. Stick that spirit stove on the window-sill—it niffs. There's a chair for you—mind how you sit on it—one leg's rocky. That's a chair we keep specially for visitors!"

Outram grinned, and sat down carefully in the visitors' chair.

The five juniors were all hungry, and they

were soon progressing rapidly with tea. There was a sound of footsteps and voices in the passage outside.

"He's in there." It was Mellish's voice. "The rottenest funk you ever heard of!"

Blake & Co. looked uncomfortable, and Outram flushed.

"Well, I'm going to have a look at him," said another voice—that of Levison of the Fourth. "It will be interesting to see a bigger funk than you, Mellish."

"Why, you rotter, Levison—"

The study door opened, and the thin, keen, hard face of Levison looked in. Outram was seated with his back to the door, and only the back of his head was visible to the newcomer.

Blake jumped up angrily.

"Don't you ever knock at a door?" he demanded.

"I want to see the funk," said Levison coolly. "You fellows chunming up with a champion funk—what?"

"Levison, you uttably wude wascal—"

"Come in!" said Blake. "Come in, and Outram will chuck you out! Get up, Outram, and let's see you chuck that howling cad into the passage."

"Yes, let's see it!" said Levison, with a sneer.

Outram did not move.

"Outram, deah boy—" murmured Arthur Augustus.

Blake stared at the new fellow.

"Do you hear me, Outram?"

"Ye-es."

"Then why don't you get up?"

Outram crimsoned, but he did not rise.



"Rush him!" yelled Crooke. "Back me up, deah boy!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus, as he put up his hands and met the rush of the raggars. Outram stood hesitating—but he made no move to help the fellow who was standing up for him!

The juniors exchanged glances of disgust. Outram's tameness bore out only too fully Mellish's description of him. Arthur Augustus looked distressed. He had befriended Outram, and it was distressing to discover that the fellow he had taken under his aristocratic wing was a funk.

Blake sniffed contemptuously.

"Well, if you're a funk, Outram, the sooner you get out of this study the better!" he said. "We don't like funks here."

"I twust, Blake, that you will not forget your manna's to a visitah."

"He's not my visitor," said Blake.

Outram rose to his feet with evident reluctance. Levison burst into a mocking laugh. It was a great pleasure to Levison's peculiar nature to torment and humiliate some unfortunate victim who could not stand up for himself.

"Is he going to chuck me out?" grinned Levison. "I fancy I'm going to do the chucking."

He grasped the new boy by the shoulder and spun him away from the table, amid a roar of laughter from his friends in the passage.

Outram's eyes blazed and his fists clenched hard, and for a moment he looked as if he would spring on Levison.

The change in him was so startling that the cad of the Fourth backed quickly away. Then Levison's eyes became glued upon the new boy's face, with so startling an expression that Blake & Co. stared at him.

"You!" yelled Levison. "You here! My hat!"

"Hallo! Do you know him?" exclaimed Racke from the passage.

Levison backed out of the doorway hastily.



**8 UNBEATABLE
STORIES!
20 More Armament
STAMPS!**

That is today's programme in MODERN BOY! Read in "The Gold Plane Mystery" how Sky-Detective Jaggers of the R.A.F. sees a plane plunge into the sea in mid-Channel and rescues the pilot, only to find himself confronted by a baffling problem. How he solves it makes a yarn of breathless excitement. Meet Jaggers and his assistant, the Winkle, today!

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"Know him! Rather! I'm not taking on that blessed bruiser. But what's he doing here?" "Bruiser!" repeated Mellish. "What the dickens do you mean? That's the chap who can't fight—that's the funk."

"Oh, don't be an ass!" said Levison. "He could kill me with one punch if he liked, as he very nearly did another chap once."

"What!"

"What are you dwivin' at, Levison?" asked Arthur Augustus, in utter astonishment. "What do you mean by his nearly killin' a chap? You don't know Outwam."

"Outram! So he calls himself Outram?" exclaimed Levison. "He's got a cheek to come here to St. Jim's! Oh, my hat! The Head must have been dotty to let him in; but he must have taken the Head in, though."

"What do you mean?" asked Blake. "Isn't the chap's name what he says it is?"

"No!"

"Then what is it, if you know so jolly well?"

Levison grinned.

"His name's George Purkiss, and last year he was in Hilstall Reformatory," he said.

CHAPTER 4.

Schoolboy or Convict?

"WHAT!"

"Gammon!"

"You silly ass, Levison!"

"Hilstall Weformatowy!" repeated Arthur Augustus dazedly. "You must be mad, Levison!"

All eyes were glued on the new boy now. There were a dozen juniors in the passage, craning their necks to see him. The four chums of Study No. 6 regarded him blankly.

Levison's extraordinary statement had fallen like a bombshell in the study.

A fellow under an assumed name—a fellow who had been an inmate in a reformatory—at St. Jim's! It was quite incredible.

The new boy did not speak. He gazed at Levison with a stony gaze, his eyes fixed, his face deadly pale.

Jack Blake shook him by the shoulder.

"Wake up, Outram, you ass! Tell him he's a liar, and punch his silly head!"

"Yaas, wathah! Punch his head, Outwam, deah boy!"

Outram seemed to pull himself together.

"Look at his face!" chuckled Levison. "Can't you see it's true?"

"My hat! It looks like it," said Croke, with a whistle. "It sounds rather thick, but if it isn't true, why can't he say so?"

The Terrible Three came down the passage, attracted by the tumult. They shoved their way cheerily through the crowd with their elbows.

"What's the row?" asked Tom Merry, when the three had reached the study. "Ragging this study—what?"

"Catch anybody ragging this study!" said Blake disdainfully.

"It's Levison talking out of his hat again," said Digby. "He says this new kid is a chap escaped from a reformatory."

"Oh crumbs! That's thick, even for Levison."

"Yaas, wathah!"

"It's true," sneered Levison. "Look at his face! The Head ought to be told!"

Tom Merry, Manners, and Lowther, like all the rest, looked curiously at the new junior. A faint flush of colour was coming back into Outram's face now.

"Speak up, kid," said Tom Merry encouragingly. "Nobody here believes Levison. We know it's a lie."

"I'll prove it," said Levison.

"Shut up and give the new kid a chance to speak."

Outram found his voice at last.

"I—I hardly know what to say," he stammered.

"I—I'm rather taken aback, I—I suppose this is a joke on me because I'm a new chap. I suppose I can take a joke, if it is a joke."

"Of course," said Arthur Augustus, with a breath of relief. "It's a wotten joke—just one of Levison's wotten jokes. Of course, it couldn't be true."

"It's the truth!" said Levison. "And all St. Jim's ought to know it. We don't want reformatory kids here, I suppose."

Tom looked at the cad of the Fourth.

"We'd better have this out," he said. "You say that seriously, Levison?"

"Yes, I do."

"Are you willing to repeat it before the Housemaster?"

"I'm going to the Housemaster about it."

"You uttah ass! He will lick you for sayin' such wotten things!"

"It's the truth," said Levison.

"Well, prove it, then!" said Tom Merry. "Of course, you deny it, Outram?"

Outram laughed. He seemed to have recovered from the shock now.

"I hardly think, it needs denying," he said. "That fellow says my name is George Purkiss. Did you say Purkiss?"

"You know your name's Purkiss!" snarled Levison.

"Very good! Well, my name is Valentine Outram," said the new Fourth Former. "My father is Major Outram. He wrote to the Head about my coming here. He is known personally to Mr. Railton, the Housemaster here."

"That wathah settles it!" grinned Arthur Augustus.

"My uncle, Sir Robert Outram, came down to the school with me this afternoon and saw the Head and Mr. Railton," went on the new junior. "A dozen fellows must have seen him come in with me. It was just after he left that those cads collared me and began ragging me, and D'Arcy chipped in to help."

Tom Merry laughed.

"That settles it, if it wanted settling," he said.

"It does, by gum!" said Kangaroo of the Shell, who had joined the excited crowd in the passage. "I saw the old boy with the new kid, and saw him speaking to Mr. Railton. An old johnny with white whiskers."

"That's my uncle," said Outram. "He's an old St. Jim's chap, too; he was in the Fourth Form here thirty-five years ago."

"Well, what do you say now, Levison?" asked Tom Merry, fixing his eyes on the cad of the Fourth.

Levison shrugged his narrow shoulders.

"I say that that fellow's name is George Purkiss, and that last year he was in Hilstall Reformatory!"

"Bai Jove! Are you still stickin' to that?" ejaculated D'Arcy.

"I'm sticking to the truth!"

"You couldn't!" said Monty Lowther, with a grave shake of the head. "Don't pile it on too thick, old man!"

Levison's eyes gleamed.

Outram's explanation had settled the matter for everyone but Levison.

Even Racke, Crooke, and Mellish, ill-natured as they were, were not inclined to back up the cad of the Fourth in an accusation which seemed, on the face of it, groundless and dictated only by a perverted malice.

"Better chuck it!" murmured Crooke in Levison's ear. "A rag's a rag, but it's no good piling it on."

Levison pushed him back roughly.

"That fellow is George Purkiss, of Hilstall Reformatory!" he said. "I don't say he escaped; his sentence has run out all right. He was there for six months."

"And how do you know anything about it?" asked Herries. "Have you been in a reformatory yourself? You ought to be!"

"I have been there. My uncle is governor of Hilstall," said Levison. "Last year I visited him in a vac. I stayed with him a week. I saw a lot of the reformatory boys. I mightn't have noticed Purkiss especially, but there was a row while I



"They gave Thompson fifty lines!"

Half-a-crown has been awarded to A. Burton, 1, Hawstead Road, Catford, London, S.E.6.

was there, and I saw it. Purkiss broke out in a fury, and knocked one of the warders about. I saw it all."

"That chap knocked a warder about!" grinned Blake. "And he let himself be ragged by funks like Racke and Crooke!"

"I don't quite catch on to that," admitted Levison. "He could knock out Racke and Crooke and me, too, with one hand if he liked. He's as strong as a horse, and a splendid boxer."

"You were calling him a funk ten minutes ago," said Digby.

"He isn't a funk, whatever he is," said Levison. "I know all about him. He was sent to Hilstall under the First Offenders Act. He had knocked out a fellow at Brighton—a row on the sea-front. He has a vile temper, and he got into a row, and nearly killed a fellow who tackled him. That's why he was sent to Hilstall. There, as I said, he tackled a warder, and had to stay six months instead of three."

"Is that all you've got to say?"

"That's all!" growled Levison.

"Can't you make up a little more?" asked Monty Lowther persuasively. "You are awfully entertaining!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Do you fellows mean to say that you don't believe me?" demanded Levison.

"Why, of course we don't!" said Kangaroo, in surprise. "Does anybody ever believe you, Levison?"

There was a laugh.

"Well, I shall jolly well ask Mr. Railton!" said Levison.

"You can go and do it!" said Blake. "We're fed-up with you here! I should advise Outram to give you a jolly good licking for your lies!"

Levison backed away hastily.

"I'm not going to fight him!"

"Ha, ha, ha! Who's the funk now?"

Levison gritted his teeth.

"I'm not a funk, but I'm not going to fight a reformatory rotter—a young bruiser who can knock a man out! There isn't a chap here who could stand up to him if he chose to hit out. He could knock out any fellow in the Sixth if he liked."

"I dare say he might if he's George Purkiss, of Hilstall!" grinned Blake. "But, as the matter stands, I undertake to knock him out, with you thrown in, Levison!"

"He's fooling you!" howled Levison. "I can see now why he's pretending that he can't fight. He doesn't want to get recognised as a bruiser!"

"Oh, rats! Outram, why don't you knock him down?"

"I—I'd rather not!" stammered Outram. "I—I'm not a funk, really, but—but I'm not a fighting chap. I don't want any row. You can think me a funk, if you like."

"Weally, Outwam!"

"I only want to be left alone," said Outram. "I'm a peaceful fellow. And whether you think me a funk or not, I won't fight anybody."

"Well, either you're a rotten funk, or you're too good for this world!" commented Tom Merry. "Levison, you ass, you'd better chuck that yarn! If Outram were the fellow you say he is, he could knock you out!"

"I know he could. He won't do it because he's afraid it would prove what I say!" sneered Levison.

"Bow-wow!"

Levison gritted his teeth, and strode away. A minute later he was knocking at Mr. Railton's door. However baseless Levison's extraordinary accusation might be, there seemed to be little doubt that he firmly believed in it himself.

CHAPTER 5.

No Luck for Levison!

"COME in!" said Mr. Railton.

The Housemaster was chatting with Mr. Lathom, the master of the Fourth, when Ernest Levison presented himself.

He glanced round.

"Well, what is it, Levison?"

"If you please, sir, there is something that I feel bound to tell you," said Levison, very respectfully.

The Housemaster raised his hand.

"One moment, Levison! I will listen to you, but I warn you that I do not desire to hear any tales about your schoolfellows."

"It isn't that, sir—it's the new chap—"

"Are you referring to Outram of the Fourth?"

"Yes, sir. I have recognised him."

Mr. Railton looked puzzled.

"You mean to say that he is an old acquaintance of yours?"

"Yes, sir."

"I fail to see why you should take the trouble to acquaint me with the fact," said Mr. Railton dryly.

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Mr. Lathom blinked curiously over his glasses at the cad of the Fourth. Both the masters could see that Levison was labouring under suppressed excitement, and it puzzled them.

"He is a criminal, sir."

"What!"

Mr. Railton almost jumped and Mr. Lathom started.

"Are you out of your senses?" exclaimed Mr. Lathom.

"I know what I'm talking about, sir," said Levison firmly. "I recognised that fellow as a criminal who was a prisoner in a reformatory last year."

"You are dreaming, Levison, unless you are out of your senses. Unless, indeed, this is sheer insolence!" exclaimed Mr. Railton sternly.

"I felt it my duty to come to you, sir," said Levison. "I knew you could not know that a sentenced criminal had been allowed to enter the school."

"It would be your duty if it were true!" snapped Mr. Railton. "But it is not true. You will explain at once what grounds you have for this accusation."

Levison explained.

The two masters listened to him attentively.

"You see a resemblance, then, between this boy and the Purkiss you speak of?" said Mr. Railton.

"It is not a resemblance, sir. He is the same chap."

"You appear to be sincerely convinced of what you say, Levison, so I will not be angry with you," said the Housemaster. "Have you told this wild idea to anyone else?"

"All the House, sir."

"You should not have done so, Levison."

"I thought he ought to be shown up, sir," said Levison. "He isn't wanted here."

"He is not the person you take him for, Levison. I am willing to believe that you have been deceived by a chance resemblance. I should be sorry to think that you were wicked enough to invent such a story."

"He is George Purkiss, sir!"

"He is Valentine Outram," said Mr. Railton.

"In order to put an end to the story you have spread about, Levison, I will explain that I know the boy."

"You—you know him, sir!" stammered Levison, taken aback.

"I know him. I was acquainted with Sir Robert Outram, his uncle, in whose charge he has been placed while his father is abroad. Sir Robert brought him to this school this afternoon. Moreover, I saw the boy about two years ago at his father's house. He was then thirteen years old."

Levison staggered.

"But—but—but—" he stammered. "He is George Purkiss, sir! If you asked my uncle to come from Hilstall, sir, he would identify him at once."

"I repeat, Levison, that there is no shadow of foundation for your absurd story! Do you suggest that a reformatory boy named Purkiss has palmed himself on Major Outram as his son, and on Sir Robert Outram as his nephew?"

"I—I suppose so, sir!"

"And what do you suggest has become of the real Valentine Outram whose place he is taking?" asked the Housemaster ironically.

"I—I don't know."

"And how do you account for the fact that I

LAUGH THESE OFF!

—with Monty
Lowther.



Hallo, Everybody!

Third Form Howler: *An oboe is an American tramp who plays in a dance band.*

Did you know that behind the scenes of American radio, a xylophonist is known as a woodchopper, an accordion is a groan-box, a piano an eighty-eight, and a trombone a putty-blower? Queer slangage!

Printer's error: *Multi-Magnograph Productions have just filmed another of their dull-length dramas.*

So many people who were duffers at school seem to have become successful in after life, observes a writer. The sap always rises!

Scotsmen, says a writer, *always enjoy a joke against themselves. Especially if it is a cheap one.*

A newspaper photographer says it is difficult to get a hippopotamus to pose for a photograph. It seems they have at last found out what they look like!

Then there was the boy who, told to appear at court as a witness in his father's suit, walked in wearing clothes at least three sizes too large for him!

Definition: A secret is something you tell one person at a time.

Remember, there is nobody so perfect that something bad can't be found to say about him.

New coins for West Africa will have a hole perforated in the centre to enable natives to string them around their necks. In this country, of course, the cost of living already makes a big enough hole in the money!

Latest Zoo News: "Monkeys Enjoy Dinner Party." Presumably, tails were worn.

Next, please! "What brought you here?" asked the visitor to the prison. "Well, ma'am," explained the prisoner, "I want to become prison governor one day, and I thought I'd better begin at the bottom of the ladder!"

As the burglar said to the goldfish in the bowl: "Go on—stare!"

Latest dance is called the Big Apple. It certainly should have a peel.

Story: "Why did you say you had plenty of experience, when you only left school six months ago?" demanded the prospective employer. "Well, sir," said the youthful applicant, "your advert stated you required a young man with plenty of imagination!"

Here it comes: The chief constable of Wayland is also a veterinary surgeon. One night the telephone rang. "Do you want me in my capacity as a veterinary surgeon, or as chief constable?" he inquired. "Both, please," came the gasping reply. "We can't get our bulldog to open his mouth, and there's a burglar in it!"

Hang on, chaps!

saw him two years ago in his father's house, and knew him to be the same lad?"

"I—I—I—"

Levison's tongue clove to the roof of his mouth. In the face of such overwhelming evidence he could not keep to his story.

"I have been patient with you, Levison," said Mr. Railton, "because I think you really believed this nonsense yourself. It is possible that there is a resemblance between Outram and the boy Purkiss you speak of. But now that you see you are mistaken, you will explain the fact to your Form-fellows who have listened to your foolish accusation. You may go."

Levison limped from the study.

"What an extraordinary thing!" said Mr. Lathom, when he was gone.

"I have given Levison the benefit of the doubt," the School House master said. "But I cannot possibly overlook the possibility that he has invented this story; he has a peculiar and revengeful nature, and possibly he has quarrelled with the new boy. If he should repeat this slander, I shall deal very severely with him."

"Undoubtedly," said Mr. Lathom, in hearty agreement.

Levison's face was white as he left the study.

Crooke met him in the passage.

"Well, what luck?" he asked.

"I—I can't understand it," said Levison. "Railton knows his people. He says he knew the kid himself two years ago, and it's the same kid."

"Well, I suppose that settles it, even for you!" said Crooke, laughing.

"It doesn't," said Levison, clenching his hands. "He's Purkiss; he's a reformatory rotter, and he's taken them all in somehow!"

"Oh, draw it mild!"

"I'll prove it yet!" snarled Levison. "The reformatory cad is making me out a liar! I'll prove it somehow!"

"What rot!" said Crooke. "Better chuck it! I'm willing to believe you've seen a chap like him in the reformatory, but most of the fellows think you have invented the whole yarn!"

"Hang them!"

"But, look here, we can have lots of fun with the rotter!" said Crooke. "He's a howling funk, and he can't fight for toffee! He's afraid

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of his own shadow. We can have no end of fun with him!"

"Not for me!" said Levison promptly. "Suppose he hits out?"

"Phew! He can't hit!"

"He could kill you with one blow if he wanted to."

Crooke laughed.

"Well, I'll give him a chance pretty soon," he said. "Do you mean to say you're going to let him alone?"

"Yes, rather!"

"Well, you must be a bigger blessed funk than he is!" said Crooke.

And he sauntered away, whistling.

Levison went to his study and slammed the door, and threw himself into a chair, his brows knitted savagely.

He was trying to think it out. The conviction was firmly fixed in his mind that the new junior was the boy he had seen in the reformatory at Hilstall; yet it was clearly proved that he was Valentine Outram, son of a major in the Army, nephew of a baronet, and personally known to the Housemaster of the School House.

What was the meaning of it? It was a problem which required all the cunning of the cad of the Fourth to solve.

CHAPTER 6.

The Funk!

OUTRAM of the Fourth came in for a good deal of attention during the next few days.

Levison's accusation was known all over the school, and it directed general attention upon the new boy.

Outram could not, therefore, drop into his place unnoticed, as new boys usually did. Every fellow took an interest in the junior who was accused of being a young criminal released from a reformatory.

Even the seniors took special notice of him.

He was soon quite well known to everybody in the Fifth and Sixth—an honour that fell to few juniors, especially newcomers.

Levison's story was treated with derision on all sides.

In order to nip the matter in the bud, Mr. Lathom made a statement to his class in the Fourth Form Room the first morning.

He explained that Outram's people were well known to the Housemaster, who had also known the boy himself at an early age. This knocked on the head Levison's accusation, and some of the fellows advised him to apologise to Outram and have done with it.

To the general surprise Levison persisted in his story.

In the face of the plainest evidence he persisted that Valentine Outram was George Purkiss of Hilstall Reformatory, and when he addressed him he never called him anything but "Purkiss."

As the two were not, of course, on friendly terms, Levison had no reason for addressing him at all; but he found opportunities.

At the breakfast table he would say: "Pass the salt, Purkiss." In the dormitory he would say: "Good-night, Purkiss."

He lost no opportunity of addressing that name to the new junior, till the other fellows were as tired of it as Outram himself.

Levison did not convince anybody of anything except that he was a persistent slanderer.

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He was known, in the first place, to be untruthful, and it was pretty evident that he had taken a dislike to the new Fourth Former. That accounted for his persistence.

Had Outram been of a quarrelsome nature; had he, indeed, "stood up" for himself, as any other fellow at St. Jim's would have done, there would have been serious trouble between the two.

But the new junior took everything quietly.

Sometimes his good-looking face would flush under Levison's taunting words; but he did not retort, and he did not hit out.

His patience had only one possible explanation, so far as the St. Jim's fellows could see. He must be a hopeless funk.

But that in itself made Levison's accusation absurd than ever. Levison's contention was that Outram could have knocked him out with a single blow if he had chosen, and that he was a desperate character, who had been sent to a juvenile prison for ruffianism and contempt of law and order. It was not likely that such a character would take Levison's taunts quietly.

Indeed, Blake declared that Levison would never have dared to repeat his accusation if he believed it to be true.

But in that that he did the cad of the Fourth an injustice. Levison flattered himself that he was acting from a sense of duty, and he was in hopes that the young ruffian, as he called him, would betray himself by some brutal outbreak. If that came to pass, Levison was certain to be the sufferer, but he would have gained his point.

And he was running the risk in order to prove sooner or later that he was in the right.

Meanwhile, Outram's life was not a happy one. Apart from Levison's persecution, he had found other enemies. The fact being fully established that he was a funk, and could not stand up for himself, he was at the mercy of fellows like Racke, Crooke, and Mellish.

He was ragged, and tricks were played upon his property: his books were torn or hidden, his bicycle damaged, his clothes sewn up, his Sunday topper stamped upon. Tom Merry & Co. frowned upon these proceedings, but they did not feel called upon to interfere.

If the new boy had been an invalid, or a fellow with glasses, like Skimpole, they would soon have put an end to the persecution. But Outram was a strong and well set-up fellow, and there seemed no reason at all why he could not take his own part.

Tom Merry offered to teach him to box, in a good-natured moment, but Outram declined. He did not want to learn to box.

He played cricket, and played it well, and before a week was out his name was down as a reserve for the Junior House eleven.

Most of the fellows let him alone, though they could not help despising his pusillanimity.

But the few ill-natured rotters like Racke, Crooke, and Mellish found a constant amusement in torturing him, feeling safe from consequences.

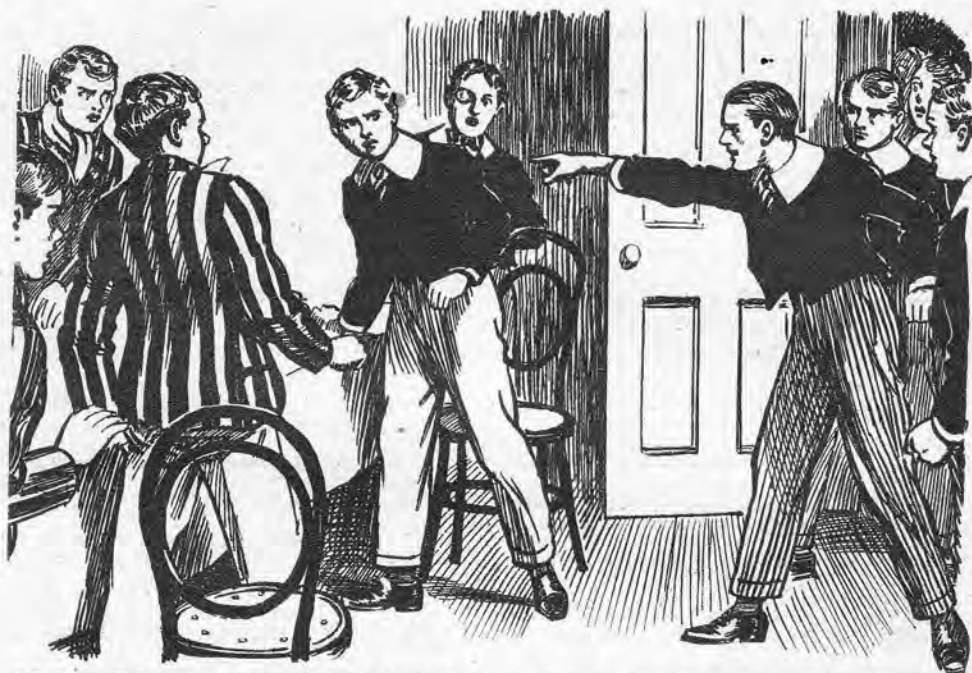
Tom Merry took the new boy to task on the subject one day. Levison had called him "Purkiss" in the passage, and Outram had gone out into the quad with flushed cheeks. The captain of the Shell went after him.

"Look here, Outram——" he said.

"Well?" said Outram.

"Why don't you knock Levison down and shut him up?"

"I don't want to fight."



"So he calls himself Outram!" exclaimed Levison, pointing to the new boy. "His name's not Outram—it's George Purkiss, and last year he was in Hilstall Reformatory!"

"Well, it wouldn't be much of a fight between you and Levison. He's a weedy waster," said Tom. "You look twice as strong as he is!"

"All the more reason why I shouldn't hit him," said Outram quietly.

"H'm, yes, in a way. But—but a fellow is expected to stand up for himself," urged Tom. "I suppose it isn't pleasant to you to be called a coward?"

Outram crimsoned.

"I'm not a coward," he said.

"Well, then, don't make fellows think you are one. It's pretty rotten for the House," said Tom. "Nobody believes that lie of Levison's. But the New House chip us about having a funk here."

"I'm sorry."

"I saw Clampe, a New House cad, knock your hat off this morning, and you let him do it."

"I didn't mind!"

"Oh, rats! Would you have let him punch your nose?"

"I—I don't know. They haven't gone so far as that yet."

"They jolly soon will, if you don't hit back. If you're not a worm and a funk, what are you playing this game for?"

"I'm a peaceful chap. I'm determined not to get into a fight."

"But why? There's no harm in a mill with the gloves on."

"It's a principle."

Tom Merry rubbed his nose.

"Well, if it's a principle, and you believe in it, you'd better stick to it, I suppose," he said slowly.

"But I'm blessed if I catch on! Most fellows

would think that principle was another word for funk."

"You think so, I suppose?" said Outram quietly.

"Blessed if I know what to think!" said Tom. "You don't look like a coward, but you act like one!"

Outram was silent.

Tom Merry left him, feeling perplexed.

That evening, in the Common-room, when Outram came in, Levison greeted him as usual:

"Hallo! Here's Purkiss!"

"Oh, shut up!" said Tom Merry irritably. "We've had enough of that, Levison."

"Yaas, do wing off, Levison!" said Arthur Augustus. "You are gwowin' to be a feahful bore, you know."

"When Purkiss has had enough of it, he may clear out," said Levison. "We don't want reformatory kids here!"

"You know what you'd get if Railton heard you say that," said Manners.

"He's taken Railton in."

"And taken Major Outram in, and Sir Robert Outram, you ass?" hooted Blake.

"He must have, as he's Purkiss of Hilstall."

"For goodness' sake, don't be such an ass, Levison!" said Talbot of the Shell. "I suppose you don't deny that there is a real Valentine Outram somewhere?"

"I suppose there is."

"Well, if a chap named Purkiss has taken his place, where is he?"

"I shouldn't wonder if this fellow's ruffianly friends have kidnapped him and are keeping him out of the way," said Levison coolly.

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CHAPTER 7.

Gussy Thinks It Out!

"Well, you are an ass!"
 "Bai Jove! Dwaw it mild, Levison!"
 "The rotter would say anything rather than own up he was lying," said Tom Merry.
 "You can call me what you like!" sneered Levison. "I shall go on calling him Purkiss, as his name is Purkiss."

"Now look here," said Talbot, "be reasonable, Levison! You are suggesting that this kid has palmed himself off on Valentine Outram's people as the real Outram?"

"Yes!"

"Then he must be just like the real Outram, or he couldn't do it?"

"Yes."

"That's the same as saying that there's a strong likeness between the real Outram and the Purkiss you speak of."

"Ye-es," said Levison, more slowly, as he realised Talbot's drift.

"Very well. The likeness exists," said Talbot, "and that's what made you think this kid was like Purkiss."

"Bai Jove! That is weasoned out wemarkably well!" said D'Arcy.

"Only it isn't merely a case of likeness," said Levison obstinately. "This fellow is the real Purkiss."

"Then you claim to know him better than his own father?"

"It looks like it. Yes."

"Oh, it's no good talking to you!" said Talbot impatiently. "I think it's time you chucked it, Levison."

"I shan't chuck it till Purkiss owns up."

"Outwam, deah boy, I recommend you to take Levison by the scwuff of the neck and wub his wotten nose in the coal-lockah!" said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

"He hasn't the pluck!" sneered Racke.

Certainly Racke's remark seemed to be well founded, for Outram turned away without a word. He had listened to the discussion with burning cheeks, but without speaking.

Outram sat down by the window, and as he did so Mellish of the Fourth pulled his chair away from behind, and the new junior sprawled on the floor with a heavy bump.

It was a dangerous trick. Outram's head struck the floor hard, and he lay dazed for some moments. He rose slowly, and Mellish grinned at him.

Outram rubbed the back of his head, his eyes glinting.

"What did you do that for, Mellish?" he said between his teeth.

"Why shouldn't I, funk?" said Mellish insolently.

Outram strode towards him, his fists clenched. He caught Levison's eyes fixed on him expectantly. It was the anticipated outbreak at last, the cad of the Fourth told himself gleefully. But Outram paused.

Mellish had shrunk for a moment from the blaze in the new junior's eyes. But as Outram turned back he recovered his courage, and, with a mocking smile, he struck the new junior in the face with his open hand.

"Now come on, you funk!" said Mellish.

"Go it, deah boy!" sang out Arthur Augustus. There was a breathless pause. Then Outram turned quietly and walked out of the Common-room.

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"PENNY for 'em!" said Blake humorously.

It was a half-holiday, and the chums of Study No. 6 were sauntering along the towing-path beside the shining Rhyl.

It was a sunny afternoon, and the chums of the Fourth were looking very cheery, with the exception of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

The swell of St. Jim's had a wrinkle in his brow, and had seemed in a brown study for some time. Hence Blake's offer of the small sum of one penny for his thoughts—probably their full value, in Blake's opinion.

"I've been thinkin', deah boys," said Arthur Augustus, breaking his long silence at last.

"Oh, good!" said Blake. "Have you found out how to get tea in the study for threepence-halfpenny? If you haven't, we'd better get in in time for tea in Hall."

"I have not been thinkin' about tea, Blake."

"I have," said Herries feelingly. "I'm getting hungry now."

"I've been thinkin' about the new chap, Blake."

"Oh, that funk!" said Blake carelessly. "I hope you haven't asked him to tea. Threepence-halfpenny won't go far among five."

"And we don't want any funks in Study No. 6," growled Herries. "I told you that plain enough last time, Gussy."

"So did I," agreed Dig.

"The fact is, deah boys, I don't weally believe that chap is a funk at all," said Arthur Augustus.

"Rats!"

"You are aware that I have wathah a gift of tact and judgment. I have come to the conclusion that Outwam is not a funk."

"Bow-wow!"

"He told me the day he came he had a vewy bad tempah, and was twyin' to learn to keep it in check. For that weason he is determined not to fight anybody. It is a mattah of high pwinciples with him."

"High rats!" said Herries.

"Weally, Hewwies—"

"About tea—" said Blake thoughtfully.

"Nevah mind tea, Blake! I twust you can wely on my judgment, and will agwee with me that poor old Outwam is not a funk. I admit that his pwinciples are wathah peculiah, and that I wegard them as mistaken. But a chap has a wight to have his pwinciples wespected—I wegard Outwam as an ass, but I don't wegard him as a funk."

"There's plenty of bread for toast," said Blake, "and some of the sardines are still fairly fit. But as for anything else—"

"Pway don't intewwupt me with that wot, Blake. I am sure that Outwam is not a funk. Look how he plays cricket. At pwactice the othah day Clampe was bowlin' to him, and we all know he meant to hit Outwam with the ball. Outwam knew it, too, but he stood up without flinchin'. And you know that beast Clampe caught him a cwack on the head with the ball."

"I'd have busted a stump over Clampe's head for that!" said Herries. "Outram didn't, because he's a measly funk."

"Wats! I am suah it was his pwinciples!"

"Well, that's enough about Outram," said Blake. "Now about tea—"

"I have not quite finished, Blake. You will acknowledge that poor old Outwam is bein' led a dog's life."

"Funks usually are," said Digby. "A school



Francis Ferdinand and his consort, whose murder in 1914 put Charles directly in line to succession to the Austrian throne —and plunged the world into war!



The Last Emperor

The life-story of Austria-Hungary's last ruler, as told on the stamps of that one-time powerful empire.

and Zita were crowned Emperor and Empress of Austria-Hungary.

In those days, as now, both Austria and Hungary had their own separate stamp issues, and Charles' accession called not only for freshly designed regular stamps, but special "coronations" as well. Hungary provided these latter, one of which we illustrate.

THE CROWN OF ST. STEPHEN.

Unfortunately, war-time conditions prevented full justice being done to the occasion, and the subsequent regular series were a vast improvement on the coronations. On these, as on the coronations, Charles is depicted wearing the magnificent Crown of St. Stephen, which was one of the major glories of the Austro-Hungarian regalia.

This crown, which has appeared on several Hungarian stamps subsequently, is reputed to have been given to St. Stephen, patron saint of Hungary, in the year 1000. In the intervening nine hundred-odd years the crown has had many strange adventures. Notice that the cross surmounting it is always shown crooked. This is no mistake in drawing, but actual fact.

In 1849 the Hungarian patriot Kossuth (whose portrait graces the 30 filler Hungarian stamp of 1932) tried to take the crown with him out of Hungary. Unable to do so, he buried it near Orsova, on the Rumanian frontier, and when, later, it was dug up, the cross was found badly bent.

The closing days of the Great War put paid to both Austria's chances of winning the War and to the Charles stamps as well, for, embittered at their country's failure, the Austrians forced Charles to abdicate, and Austria became a republic. Still, although Charles reigned only a couple of years, there are close on three hundred stamps to his credit.



King Charles himself, wearing the "crooked" Hungarian crown.

A FATEFUL DAY.

At the time of Charles' marriage, the mighty Austro-Hungarian Empire of fifty-four million people was being ruled by the aged Emperor Francis Joseph, whose life-story on stamps, incidentally, is worthy of individual attention. His portrait graces the majority of Austria's first four hundred-odd stamps. Direct heir to Francis Joseph was Charles' uncle, the Archduke Francis Ferdinand, whose portrait, together with that of his consort, appears on the 40 heller commemoratives of Bosnia of 1917.

Came that fateful day of June 28th, 1914, when the Archduke and the Archduchess were murdered at Serajevo. Charles became heir-apparent, and the world was flung into the shambles of the Great War. In the middle of the War, Francis Joseph died, and on December 30th, 1916, Charles

isn't the place for a funk. It made me sick to see him let Mellish smack his face the other day. I was jolly well inclined to give him another myself for taking it quietly."

"But it was a mattah of pwinciple—"

"Oh, ring off!"

"I wegard that wemark as wude, Dig. But to come to the point—"

"You're really coming to a point?" exclaimed Blake, in astonishment.

"Yaas, you ass! To come to the point, I wegard it as bein' up to this study to look aftah Outwam."

"Rats!"

"He is bein' led a dog's life for his peculiah pwinciples—"

"His peculiar funk, you mean."

"His pwinciples, deah boy. I suggest that Study No. 6 takes him undah its pwotection, and puts down all that wotten waggin'. Whenevah a chap goes for poor old Outwam, one of us can fight the chap. We will take it in turns. Then the wottahs will leave the kid alone."

Arthur Augustus propounded this surprising proposition with great seriousness. His chums simply blinked at him.

"Well, you ass!" gasped Herries.

"Yes," exclaimed Blake, "I can see myself turning into a nurse for a funk—I don't think!"

"I've a jolly good mind to lick him myself

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for being such a worm," said Dig. "That's how I look at it."

"I twust you will back me up?" said Arthur Augustus, with dignity.

"If you start chumming with that funk, we won't back you up; we'll knock you down!" said Blake.

"And jump on you," added Herries.

"I should uttally wufuse to be jumped on, Hewwies! I wegard this as a duty, and if you fellows don't back me up, I shall do the duty on my own. I am not goin' to see a chap wagged for his high pwninciples."

"Fathead!" howled Blake. "It isn't principles, it's funk."

"Blue funk, you ass!" growled Herries.

"Wats! I considah— Bai Jove—" Arthur Augustus D'Arcy broke off suddenly. "There's that wascal Weekes!"

A fat man, with a bowler hat cocked on one side of his head, was sitting on a stile, which gave access to a field beside the towing-path.

The juniors knew him well enough. It was Mr. Weekes, a bookmaker of a particularly disreputable kind, who lived in Wayland. Owing to certain of Mr. Weekes' practices, he was unable to show himself on the racecourse, and he turned a more or less honest penny making bets in public-houses and such resorts. And it had come to the knowledge of the Co. that he had inveigled into his shady practices a junior belonging to St. Jim's, and he had been solemnly threatened with a tremendous ragging if he showed himself anywhere near the school again.

The four juniors stopped at the sight of him. Arthur Augustus' noble eye gleamed behind his eyeglass. He forgot all about Outram of the Fourth. There was other business on hand now.

"That wascal again!" he said. "You wemembah that we pwomised him that we would wag him if he came wound St. Jim's again."

"We've got time before tea," said Blake, consulting his watch.

"Yaas, wathah!"

The four juniors advanced upon Mr. Weekes. That gentleman lifted a large walking-stick into view.

"'Ands off!" he said truculently.

"You uttah wottah!" said Arthur Augustus, in measured tones. "I have very little doubt that you are waitin' here for a St. Jim's chap, and you are cawwyin' on your wascally games again."

"Oh, go 'ome!" said Mr. Weekes.

"I wufuse to go home! I am goin' to thwash you!"

"'Ands off!" roared Mr. Weekes, flourishing his stick.

Blake dodged under the stick, and the next moment Mr. Weekes was yanked off the stile, and was sprawling on his back in the grass.

CHAPTER 8.

A Licking for Two!

"YOOOOOP!"

Thus Mr. Weekes, as he came down on the hard, unsympathetic earth.

There was a patter of feet on the towing-path, and Levison of the Fourth came running up.

"Let the man alone!" he exclaimed savagely.

"What the dickens are you meddling with him for?"

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D'Arcy's eyeglass turned upon the flushed, panting cad of the Fourth.

"So you are the wottah he was waitin' for, Levison?"

"Might have guessed that," grunted Herries.

"Mind your own business!" said Levison fiercely. "It's nothing to do with you, I suppose."

"That's where you make a little mistake," said Blake cheerily. "We're not going to let you disgrace our school more than we can help, Levison. Turn that fat rotter over, and we'll wallop him!"

"Yaas, wathah!"

"'Ands off!" yelled Mr. Weekes. "'Elp, Master Levison!"

Levison clenched his fists; but he hesitated. His hesitation was cut short by Jack Blake, who put up his hands and advanced on him.

"Both these cads want a licking!" said Blake. "You lick that blackguard while I attend to Levison."

"Hear, hear!"

Mr. Weekes was struggling in the grasp of Herries and Digby; but he struggled in vain. He was rolled over on his face in the grass, and Arthur Augustus picked up the big stick he had dropped.

Arthur Augustus' aristocratic face was very grim. He felt it a stern duty to administer corporal punishment to Mr. Weekes, and he was not the fellow to falter in the execution of his duty.

"Hold the wottah, deah boys! I will give him a dozen!"

"Go it!"

Whack, whack, whack!

"Yoop! 'Elp! Perlice!" yelled Mr. Weekes. "'Elp, Master Levison!"

But Levison was in no condition to render aid. Jack Blake was driving him back into the rushes beside the river, under a shower of heavy drives.

Levison caught one with his nose, and one with his eye, and one with his chin. Then he went down with a crash into the muddy rushes, and stayed there.

"Get up again, if you want some more!" said Blake invitingly.

Levison did not get up. He squirmed in the rushes, nursing his nose and eye, and muttering furious words.

Meanwhile, the drastic punishment of Mr. Weekes was proceeding.

Whack, whack, whack, whack!

The fat bookmaker squirmed, wriggled, and yelled under the infliction. He howled with anguish, and howled for mercy. But he received the full dozen cuts.

"There!" said Arthur Augustus breathlessly, throwing down the stick. "I wathah think that will be enough."

"Is that enough, Weekes?" asked Blake.

"Yow-ow-ow!"

Mr. Weekes sat up, perspiring and crimson. He shook a knuckly and exceedingly dirty fist at the juniors.

"I'll make you squirm for this 'ere!" he gasped. "You young 'ounds—"

"Pway let us go deah boys! That wottah's language is quite intolewable."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Lemme get a chance at yer on a dark night,

and a few pals with me!" shrieked Mr. Weekes. "I'll make yer sorry you'd laid 'ands on me!"

"Bai Jove! If you fellows are weady, we will go. That feahful person has a most waucous, unpleasant voice. It weally jars on my nerves."

And Arthur Augustus walked away gracefully down the towing-path with his grinning chums.

Levison crawled out of the rushes. His nose was crimson, but his cheeks were almost white with rage. The bookmaker sat up and glared at him.

"Nice thing you've got me into!" he snarled.

"What about me?" snarled Levison in turn.

"Look at my nose! Look at my eye! I warned you it wasn't safe to meet so near the school, too!"

"Ain't it a free country?" demanded Mr. Weekes. "Can't an honest man go where he blessed well likes?"

"An honest man, perhaps," sneered Levison. "Don't blow off gas, Weekes—that doesn't do any good. Think of some way of getting even with them."

"I'll make 'em squirm for it, if I go to choky over it!" hissed Mr. Weekes, struggling painfully to his feet. "Wot business is it of theirs if a man 'as a bet on with a sporting young gent—wot?"

"None at all," said Levison.

"Course it ain't! Let me come on D'Arcy on a quiet night in the lane, with two or three of us to 'andle 'im!" said Mr. Weekes. "I'll make 'im sorry he raised 'is 'and to me!" Levison's eyes glittered.

"Do you mean business, or are you only gassing?" he asked.

"I'll show you whether I mean it, if I get a dog's chance," said Mr. Weekes, wriggling with pain. "I'll show 'im, too!"

"Suppose I could fix it for you?"

"Eh?"

"If you mean what you say it would be easy enough," said Levison, sinking his voice, and his eyes glittering greenly. "I could easily discover when he's going out—alone—or only one other chap with him—and if I sent you word—"

"Only gimme a chance!" said Mr. Weekes hoarsely. "I tell yer that if I get a chance he won't be able to crawl 'ome arterwards."

"It's a go!" said Levison.

"Gimme a chance, that's all. I'll 'ave Dick 'Ogg with me, and the Ferret, and Bill the Smasher," muttered Mr. Weekes, "and one or two other coves, and 'tween us we'll make 'im 'op—if we git 'im nice and quiet to ourselves." "Done!"

When Levison turned homeward Mr. Weekes went limping away across the fields towards Wayland, still wriggling with pain and muttering vengeance.

Levison's eye was darkening, and there were grinning looks turned upon him as he came into the School House.

He was rubbing his eye and nose alternately in the study when his studymates came in for their preparation.

Lumley-Lumley, Mellish and Trimble grinned at the sight of him.

"Has Outram hit out at last, then?" chuckled Lumley-Lumley.

"It wasn't Outram—it was Blake," grinned Trimble. "I saw it all from the river. Levison met a bookmaker, and those chaps licked the pair of them. He, he, he!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Lumley-Lumley.

Levison did not speak, but his eyes burned.

The next morning Blake and Levison received a hundred lines each from the Form-master for fighting.

For the next two or three days Levison's eye changed to all colours of the rainbow before it settled down to an art shade in purple. But the cad of the Fourth had one consolation. He felt that he would be indemnified for his injuries when one, at least—perhaps two—of the chums of Study No. 6 were betrayed into the hands of Mr. Weekes and his rowdy friends. And Levison waited and watched for his opportunity.

CHAPTER 9.

A Peculiar Fight!

OUTRAM of the Fourth stood at the window of his study, looking out towards the cricket field.

It was Saturday afternoon, and the bright summer sunshine streamed down upon the playing fields of St. Jim's.

A House match was proceeding on Little Side between Tom Merry & Co. and Figgins & Co. of the New House.

Outram could see a part of the cricket field



"What do you think of our new shaving soap, sir?"

"Best I've ever tasted!"

Half-a-crown has been awarded to J. Spencer, Red Croft, Harland Road, Southbourne, Bournemouth.

from his window, and he was watching the white-clad figures moving on the level green.

The scene was cheery and inspiring, but the junior's brow was dark, his mouth drooping.

He was alone in the study. Both his studymates were on the cricket field.

Outram was down on the list of reserves, and he had shown good form at cricket, and could expect to have a chance in the House matches before long. But—there was a big "but." The reputation of funking that clung to him did not make any difference to his form as a cricketer; but it was likely to make a good deal of difference to his prospects of playing for the House.

Tom Merry would certainly hesitate to include him in the eleven, at least, unless he was very hard-up for a player. It was very likely that the other fellows would raise strong objections to his inclusion, too.

Outram had become a "rank outsider" in his House.

His active persecutors numbered only half a dozen, but most of the fellows despised him, and did not trouble to conceal their opinion. Nobody wanted to chum with a funk. He had no friends.

His studymates tolerated him, that was all. They were good-natured fellows enough, which was fortunate for him. But they did not want to "pal" with a fellow who allowed a cad like Mellish to hit him at his own sweet will.

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Since that scene in the Common-room a week ago, hardly a fellow had taken any notice of Outram.

Tom Merry & Co. sometimes gave him a greeting, from sheer good nature; but they did not want to have anything to do with him. His studymates were ashamed of him, though they kept civil.

Indeed, if Levison's strange accusation had proved true, the School House fellows would probably have thought more highly of "George Purkiss" than they did of Valentine Outram. Even a hooligan was better than a funk.

Racke & Co. did not trouble Outram in his own study.

Outram stared from the window, his brow growing darker and darker.

He wanted to be on the cricket field himself, to watch, if he could not play. But he was aware that the merry raggers were lying in wait for him in the passage.

Racke, Crooke, and Mellish were not cricketers, and took no interest in House matches. They preferred smoking and playing nap. On this particular afternoon, having nothing especial to do, the idle young rascals had planned to amuse themselves by ragging the funk.

Outram certainly had given them no cause of offence; but he did not defend himself, and that was enough for the cads of the School House.

They were waiting in the passage, ready to collar Outram as he came out.

The House was almost deserted that bright half-holiday, and the opportunity was excellent.

Several times Outram had heard whisperings and soft footsteps in the passage. He did not leave the study. He wondered whether Racke & Co. would lose patience and come there for him.

The door opened at last, and Outram turned wearily from the window.

Aubrey Racke grinned into the study. Crooke and Mellish grinned over his shoulder.

"Aren't you coming out this lovely afternoon?" grinned Racke.

Outram shook his head.

"Blessed if the funk isn't afraid to come out of his study!" said Crooke.

"We've come to see you, Outram, as you won't come to see us!" chorled Mellish.

"I wish you'd leave me alone!" said Outram quietly.

The three juniors laughed in chorus.

"No fear!" said Racke. "We don't like funks in this House! Why don't you get out of St. Jim's? You know you're a disgrace to the school!"

"I'll tell you what!" said Crooke. "Mellish punched your head the other day. Why don't you fight Mellish?"

"Yes, come on!" said Mellish valiantly.

Outram shook his head.

"I am not a funk," he said quietly, "but I have made up my mind to fight no one. I think you might let me alone."

"Well, we're going to make you fight Mellish!" chorled Racke. "Now, stand up to him!"

"I will not!"

"Then you stand up to him, Percy, and punch his nose till he begins!"

"He, he, he!" chuckled Mellish.

Percy Mellish was as brave as a lion—when he had to deal with a fellow who was quite at his mercy. He advanced upon Outram, with his hands up.

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"Mind he doesn't dodge out!" he said.

But Outram showed no inclination to dodge. He faced Mellish calmly, though he did not put up his hands.

"Here goes for your nose!" said the cheerful Percy.

And he let out his right full at Outram's handsome face.

Outram's arm came up like a flash, and the blow was guarded.

Mellish gave a yelp of pain; the knock on his wrist had hurt him.

Racke and Crooke stared. Outram could have knocked the cad of the Fourth flying if he liked, but he did not strike.



As Outram sat down by the window Mellish pulled floor with a heavy bun

"Go for him, Percy!"

"Mop him up!"

"By gosh, I will!" snarled Mellish. "I'll smash the funky cad!"

And Mellish attacked hotly.

Outram guarded.

He did not hit out in return, but he stopped every blow Mellish aimed at him with a skill and success which showed that he was a past-master of the boxer's art.

Racke and Crooke looked on in wonder.

That a fellow who could box like this should allow himself to be bullied by Percy Mellish was simply astounding. It was clear that Mellish was at his mercy if he chose to hit out. But he did not.

"Blessed if I ever saw such a coward!" said Racke. "Too funky to hit out! He could make hay of Mellish if he had the pluck to hit him!"

"He's making hay of him now!" grinned Crooke.

Mellish was getting hurt from the sharp raps that knocked his clumsy drives aside. He was getting furious, too. Not a single blow had reached the new junior, and Mellish had bellows to mend. His two companions were laughing heartily at his failure.

Mellish backed away at last, gritting his teeth. He was breathless and winded, and scowling with rage.

"I'm fed-up with the cad!" he growled. "He won't fight! He hasn't pluck enough to fight a white rabbit! Collar him, and we'll ink him!"

"Good egg!"



ay from behind, and the new junior sprawled on the floor striking the floor hard.

The three ragers advanced upon Outram together. But then the study door opened, and an eyeglass glimmered in. Behind the eyeglass was Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, the swell of the Fourth.

"Bai Jove! I thought I should find you wottahs here!" said D'Arcy, as he came into the study.

CHAPTER 10.

Gussy Comes, Sees, and Conquers!

ARTHUR AUGUSTUS D'ARCY peeled off his elegant jacket and threw it upon a chair. Then he removed his eyeglass, and pushed back his cuffs.

Racke & Co. watched those proceedings in angry astonishment, Outram with a very peculiar expression.

"Look here, you clear out, D'Arcy!" snapped Racke.

"It is you who are goin' to clear out, Wacke! I am goin' to give you thwee wottahs a feahful thwashin' all wound!" said Arthur Augustus calmly. "I wegard Outwam as a fiwend, and I am not goin' to allow him to be wagged!"

"So you choose a blue funk for a pal?" sneered Mellish.

"I do not wegard Outwam as a funk; I wegard him as a fellow with vevy queeah pwinciples."

"Silly ass!" said Crooke.

"He's a rotten coward," said Racke, "and we're going to rag him as much as we like, and you can mind your own business!"

"Which of you is comin' on first?" asked Arthur Augustus calmly. "I am goin' to thwash the lot of you! As you are all wotten funks and slackahs, I am willin' to take two togethah, if you like!"

"You'll take three together if you don't clear off, you tailor's dummy!" said Crooke.

"I wefuse to be called a tailah's dummay, Cwooke! Upon the whole, I will thwash you first! Put up your hands, you wottah!"

The three ragers exchanged a quick glance and closed in on D'Arcy together. They did not expect any interference from Outram, who had not spoken a word, but was looking on, with a pale and harassed face.

"Fair play, you wottahs!" said Arthur Augustus indignantly. "Thwee to one is not fair!"

"Will you get out, then?" demanded Racke.

"Certainly not! Outwam, deah boy, I suppose it is no use wequestin' you to take one of these cowardly wottahs off my hands?"

"I am not going to fight," said Outram quietly. "I don't ask you to interfere, D'Arcy. It's very kind of you, but I don't want you to."

"Wats! Suppose you take Cwooke by the neck and hold him while I thwash the othah wottahs?" suggested D'Arcy. "He is a weedy beast, and you could hold him quite easily."

Outram hesitated.

"Let him touch me, that's all!" sneered Crooke.

"Come on, Outwam! You can hold the wottah by his beastly neck without wowwyin' about your weird pwinciples, you know."

"I will do that," said Outram.

He advanced on Crooke. The cad of the Shell stared at him, taken quite by surprise. Then he put up his hands and hit out furiously, expecting Outram to cower away. But he was disappointed. The new junior guarded his blows with cool skill, brushed his clumsy hands aside, and gripped him.

Crooke simply shrivelled up in that powerful grasp. His wrists were seized and held together, and, struggle as he would, the cad of the Shell could not release them. He glared at Outram in rage and dismay.

"Let me go, you rotten funk!" he bawled.

Outram did not reply, but he dragged Crooke across the study, still gripping his wrists with a grip like a vice.

Crooke howled with pain under that grip. But he resisted no longer, for that grasp betrayed a tremendous physical strength that scared him.

Arthur Augustus chirruped gleefully.

Racke and Mellish would have gone to Crooke's aid, but they had no time. The swell of St. Jim's was attacking, and they had to defend themselves.

If the two young rascals had equalled Arthur Augustus in pluck they would have had the best

of the combat—two to one. But they were weedy and out of condition and by no means of the stuff of which heroes are made. And Arthur Augustus, elegant and knutty as he was, had simply unlimited pluck.

He sailed in like a hurricane.

Racke and Mellish met him savagely, hitting out with furious force.

But two or three drives did not suffice to stop the swell of St. Jim's. He drove his right at Mellish's chin and sent the cad of the Fourth spinning like a top across the study.

Mellish crashed down in the fender and stayed there, groaning. He had had enough already.

Then Racke was driven right round the study under D'Arcy's whirlwind attack. He defended himself in vain. Blow after blow crashed upon him, and he dodged and twisted and yelled.

"Yoop! Oh, my nose! Yow-ow-ow!"

Crash!

A terrific drive on the chest sent Racke crashing down on Mellish in the fender.

He sprawled there, groaning and clasping his nose.

Arthur Augustus grinned down at them a little breathlessly.

"Get up, you wottahs, and have some more!" he gasped.

"Ow, ow, ow!"

"If you don't want any more you can cleah out!" said Arthur Augustus. "And if you don't depart immediately I shall kick you fwom the study!"

Racke and Mellish picked themselves up and slunk out of the room.

They had had more than enough.

Arthur Augustus threw the door shut after them and turned to the scowling Crooke.

The Shell fellow was still helpless in Outram's iron grasp. He blinked apprehensively at D'Arcy.

"Look here, I'll—I'll—I'll go!" he panted.

"I'm goin' to give you a feahful thwashin' first, Cwooke. Pway welease him, Outwam, deah boy."

Outram let the Shell fellow go.

Crooke made a rush for the door, but he found Arthur Augustus like a lion in his path.

"Put up your hands, you wottah!"

"Look here—Ow! Yow! Yah!"

Crooke put up his hands promptly to stop the rain of blows. But he did not succeed in stopping many of them. He backed round the table under the hot attack, panting, and as he came near the door he made a sudden spring for it and tore it open, and bolted.

Arthur Augustus rushed after him, and his foot crashed on Crooke as he went through the doorway, and the Shell fellow sprawled in the passage.

Arthur Augustus closed the door.

"All sewene!" he remarked.

Outram laughed.

"I don't think they will come back so long as you are here," he said.

"Wathah not! And I do not think they will wag you any more, deah boy. I am goin' to thwash them ewevy time."

"You're very good," said Outram gratefully. "I don't quite know why you're chipping in like this for me."

"I wegard it as a duty," said D'Arcy loftily. "I do not believe you are a funk, deah boy, but only a howlin' ass with vewy queeah pwinciples. I'm goin' to look aftah you. Besides, you helped me with that wotten ablativ absolute the day you came, you know, and got me out of a wow. I

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suppose you don't want to stick indoors on a half-holiday? Come and watch the cwicket."

"You've given up cwicket this afternoon to look after me?" said Outram, eyeing the swell of St. Jim's curiously.

"Yaas."

"But why?"

"I wegard it as a duty. I am goin' to stand by you."

"Every fellow in the House is down on me."

"Yaas. You can wegard me as the champion of the oppwessed, you know," said Arthur Augustus cheerfully.

"And—and you don't despise me like the rest?" said Outram slowly.

"No; I only wegard you as a howlin' ass. Let's go down to the cwicket."

"Right-ho!"

The two juniors left the study together.

Outram was silent and thoughtful, but Arthur Augustus chatted away cheerily as they walked down to Little Side.

CHAPTER 11.

A Lesson for Levison!

TOM MERRY'S wicket had just fallen to Fatty Wynn's bowling.

Talbot and Jack Blaka were at the wickets now, and batting well.

Most of the juniors of both Houses were gathered round the field, looking on.

Arthur Augustus and Outram came up to the pavilion with a good many eyes on them. Gussy desired all the world to see that Outram was his friend. That would be enough to convince all St. Jim's that Outram was the right sort, in the great Gussy's opinion.

"What the thunder are you doing with that chap, Gussy?" growled Herries.

"Are you wefewwin' to my fwriend Outwam, Hewwies?"

"I am referring to that funk!" said Herries truculently.

"Weally, Hewwies—"

"Are you playing the' giddy ox again?" demanded Digby.

"Weally, Digby—"

"Hallo, Gussy!" said Tom Merry cheerily.

"Have you come to see the duck's egg you've saved us from?"

"Weally, Tom Mewwy—"

"Hallo, Purkiss!" chimed in Levison of the Fourth. "Bit of a change here after Hilstall Reformatory, isn't it?"

Outram did not speak; and some of the fellows laughed. But Arthur Augustus frowned. He made a step towards Levison.

"Levison, deah boy, you have addresssed an offensive wemark to my fwriend Outwam," he said quietly.

"Your friend Purkiss, you mean," said Levison.

"I should wecommend Outwam to knock you down, Levison, but his extwaordinawy pwinciples stand in the way."

"His extraordinary funk, you mean!" said Kangaroo.

"Pway, do not intewwupt me, Kangawoo. Levison, I wish you to undahstand that I shall not allow you to address my fwriend Outwam in that offensive mcnah."

"I don't know any chap here named Outram," said Levison. "I know a chap named Purkiss—George Purkiss."

(Continued on page 22.)



In Town To-day

Introducing
Herbert Skimpole
to the Microphone. By a
B.B.C. TALENT SCOUT.

SKIMPOLE: Excuse me, are you Mr. Interviewer?
INTERVIEWER: Yes. I take it you are Herbert Skimpole?

SKIMPOLE: That is correct, inasmuch as the visual ego is concerned. I am delighted to meet you, Mr. Interviewer.

INTERVIEWER: I understand you have been in touch with our talks department?

SKIMPOLE: We have exchanged a few words. I wrote perhaps thirty or forty pages explaining in brief the type of talk I am anxious to give. I received three or four lines in reply, asking me to call—

INTERVIEWER: Exactly. Well, as you appear to be the only junior at St. Jim's who is desirous of giving a talk upon the subject of the Fourth Dimension, we are eager to hear what you have to say, Skimpole.

SKIMPOLE: To prevent any misapprehension, the full title of my talk is, Radio-Activity between the Spheres in relation to Inter-Planetary Influences as Correlated with Professor Einstein's Theory of the Fourth Dimension, with Sidelights on Centrifugal Force and a résumé of the Axioms governing the Logical Expansion of the Universe.

INTERVIEWER: That is merely the title?

SKIMPOLE: Oh, yes.

INTERVIEWER: May I inquire how long is the actual talk?

SKIMPOLE: Quite brief, Mr. Interviewer. It is divided, for convenience, into five parts, each not longer than ten thousand words. I feel certain that I shall be able to word my views in each part, in the space of one hour, making five hours' broadcasting in all. Would you do me a favour, Mr. Interviewer?

INTERVIEWER: Give you more time for the logical expansion of your views?

SKIMPOLE: Have a glass of water within reach, as it is possible that I may feel a little dry towards the end of the talk.

INTERVIEWER: So would the listeners—if still listening.

SKIMPOLE: Surely, Mr. Interviewer, you don't think I have drawn out my tale to too great a length?

INTERVIEWER: I suggest we either brighten up your talk, Skimpole, making it sparkling and electrical, glowing with light, or else switch over to the last page or two. Otherwise, I'm afraid listeners will switch out.

SKIMPOLE: This is an affront, if not assault and battery. However, you know the strength of listeners' defence. Boxing the compass, how long can you allow for my five-hours' talk?

INTERVIEWER: I'll have to sound the gong after five minutes.

SKIMPOLE: But really—f-f-five minutes! In that time, I shall not be able to get through one-f-f-fifteenth of the script!

INTERVIEWER: Which I think listeners will find f-f-fine, Skimpole. Look out—the red light is on, and you are on, too.

SKIMPOLE: Dear me! It will all have to be compressed. What a rush. I feel hot and bothered. Where is my script? Oh, here it is! Two hundred typed pages. I will just attempt to fly through the major items. I hardly know how to take off for a start, or how to balance myself. It would be simply dreadful to crash between two stools. I must spread my wings and trust to the winds of chance. Here goes—why, what ever has happened? The first page is a blank, so is the second, and the next—why, they are *all* blank! Some rascal has been tampering with my script! I am up in the clouds. What ever shall I do to avoid disaster? Without verbal ammunition, I cannot possibly hope to propel myself through this engagement! This is a bombshell!

INTERVIEWER: Well, Skimpole, the engagement is over—I hope it went over with a bang! Oh, coming to earth, here is a package just left for you by a St. Jim's boy named Gore—

SKIMPOLE: Goodness gracious! Did Gore leave any message?

INTERVIEWER: He said you might like to have your script—after the broadcast. Gore thought it best, in the interests of people unable to follow your flights of imagination, to substitute a wad of blanks for you to rain down on their defenceless heads.

SKIMPOLE: Really, when I meet Gore next I shall feel a desire to alter the dimensions of his proboscis.

INTERVIEWER: As far as the Fourth Dimension, Skimpole?

SKIMPOLE: If I were a fighting man, Mr. Interviewer, I would willingly make it the fourteenth dimension! Good-bye!

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"You have wepeated the offence, Levison!"
 "If Purkiss doesn't like it, he can say so," suggested Levison. "What are you chipping in for?"

"I'm chippia' in because Outwam is my fwiend—"

"He isn't!" hooted Herries.

"You are undah a misapprehension, Hewwies; he is. I am not goin' to allow you to be impertinent to Outwam, Levison."

"Do you mean Purkiss?"

"May I wequest you, Levison, to come into the gym with me?" asked Arthur Augustus, with elaborate politeness.

"You can request anything you like, you tailor's dummy, but I am going to call him Purkiss."

"Don't begin a row now, Gussy," said Tom Merry. "Watch the cricket, old chap, and tell us about that century you wouldn't have got."

"Wats! I am goin' to thwash Levison for insultin' my fwiend!"

"Can't your precious friend stand up for himself?" bawled Herries.

"No. It is a mattah of pwinciple."

"A matter of sneaking funk, you mean."

"I do not mean anythin' of the sort, Hewwies. I do not pwofess to comprehend Outwam's weird pwinciples, but I wespect them."

"Fathead!"

"Ass!" said Digby.

"Wats! Levison, will you, or will you not, come into the gym?"

"Go and eat coke!"

Arthur Augustus pushed his cuffs back.

"Then I shall thwash you here, Levison!"

"I say—" began Outram, pulling at D'Arcy's sleeve.

"Pway don't intewwupt me, Outwam. I am goin' to put an end to that wascal's wotten insinuations. Levison, I wequest you to apologise to Outwam at once!"

"Yes, I'm likely to apologise to a reformatory criminal—I don't think!" sneered Levison.

"Then come on, you cad!"

And Arthur Augustus rushed at Levison, hitting out.

Levison backed away; but he had to put up his hands.

The other fellows gathered round in a ring.

"Go it, Gussy!" chirruped Digby. Dig was "down" on his noble chum making friends with the funk. But he was quite in favour of licking Levison, anyway. Dig's opinion was the more likings Levison had, the better it would be for him.

"You silly fool, let me alone!" howled Levison.

"Wats! I am goin' to give you a feaful thwashin'!"

"Give him beans, Levison!" howled Piggott.

But Levison did not look like giving the noble Gussy beans. He began to fight, as he had no choice in the matter. But he had little chance against the swell of the Fourth.

He was knocked right and left.

Panting for breath, he receded before Gussy's hot attack, and went down, at last, in a heap, spluttering.

"Too many cigarettes, dear boy," grinned Monty Lowther. "You never have your wind when you want it."

Arthur Augustus waited for Levison to rise.

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The cad of the Fourth sat up, scowling, in a circle of grinning faces.

"Do you wish to go any furthah, Levison?" asked Arthur Augustus politely.

"Hang you!"

"Will you have the extweme goodness to answah my question?"

"No, hang you!"

"Vewy well. I do not desiah to cwow ovah you in any way, Levison; but I must insist that you do not address my fwiend Outwam as Purkiss any more, and do not uttah any of your wotten insinuations. If you do so, I must warn you that I shall give you a feaful thwashin' ewvery time."

Levison staggered to his feet. His face was black with rage.

"Hang you, the fellow's name is Purkiss—" Biff!

Levison measured his length on the ground again, with a yell.

He blinked up furiously at the gleaming eyes of Arthur Augustus.

"Wepeat that wemark, Levison, and I will wepeat that thump," said the swell of St. Jim's. "Jivewy time, you know."

"Hang you!" groaned Levison.

"I am vewy sowwy to have to wesort to such wuff methods, Levison, but you have left me no othah wesource."

Levison scrambled up, but he did not renew the conflict. He was not looking for a fight to a finish, and there were safer methods for vengeance—if all went well. He gave D'Arcy a black look and strode away from the pavilion.

Tom Merry clapped the swell of St. Jim's on the back.

"Well done, Gussy! What a ripping chap you are for minding other people's business!" he remarked.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Weally, Tom Mewwy—"

"And now leave that worn Outram alone!" growled Herries.

Arthur Augustus looked distressed.

"I should be awfully sowwy, Hewwies, to thwash an old pal—"

"Eh?"

"But I cannot allow you to address appwobwious wemarks to my fwiend Outwam," said Arthur Augustus firmly.

"You silly chump!" roared Herries. "I've a jolly good mind to mop up the ground with you and knock a little sense into your silly head!"

"Man in!" rapped out Tom Merry.

Talbot's wicket was down, and Herries had to take his bat and go to the wicket—which was, perhaps, fortunate just then.

Many curious glances were cast upon Outram as he stood watching the cricket with Arthur Augustus.

Gussy's quixotic defence of the "funk" evoked tolerant smiles. The juniors agreed it was just like Gussy. But that a strong, healthy, fit fellow should stand idle while another fellow fought his battles for him caused nothing but disgust, and it added, if possible, to the contempt with which the unlucky Outram was always regarded.

But the despised outcast had a friend now, at all events. Arthur Augustus was loyal to the core, and he intended to stand by his new pal through thick and thin. But it was probable that Study No. 6 would have something to say about that.

CHAPTER 12.

Trouble in Study No. 6!

"IT'S a disgrace to this study!"

Thus said Herries emphatically.

Blake and Digby nodded assent. Tom Merry, Manners, and Lowther, who had called in to give their valuable opinion, had to concur.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy sniffed. Evidently he did not concur.

It was several days since the "row" on the cricket field. Blake & Co. had hoped that Gussy's new idea would "fizzle out" of its own accord. But the swell of the School House was a sticker.

He had chummed up with Valentine Outram, and wild horses would not have dragged him aside from the path; he had marked out for himself.

It had been a good thing for Outram. The curious new boy, who either could not or would not stand up for himself, certainly needed a pal to stand up for him. Arthur Augustus had taken up the cudgels in his cause in the most warlike manner.

Racke, Croke, and Mellish had ceased to rag. As they were booked for a row with D'Arcy whenever they meddled with Outram, they soon tired of that amusement. They were still showing signs of the "scrap" in the study.

Neither did Levison continue to address him as "Purkiss," or make references to the reformatory. Only once had he tried it on since the fight at the pavilion. It was in the Common-

room one evening, and Arthur Augustus had immediately got his head into chancery, and hammered till Levison howled for mercy. After that, the cad of the Fourth let the matter drop, so far as open taunts went. He was no match for D'Arcy, either in fitness or courage, and he had to give way.

So the persecution had dropped. But the new junior was despised for allowing another fellow to fight his battles, and no one but Arthur Augustus attributed his curious conduct to his "weird principles." As Blake remarked, the long and the short of it was that he was a rotten funk; and Study No. 6 didn't want to have anything to say to a funk. If the poor beast couldn't help it, they were sorry for him, but they wanted him to keep clear of the study.

Hence the meeting in Study No. 6, at which the Terrible Three had been called in to assist in reasoning with the swell of St. Jim's.

Blake & Co.'s view was that D'Arcy should drop the funk like a hot potato. Gussy's obstinate opinion was that he wasn't going to drop a chap because of his high principles.

"Leave it to your Uncle Tom," suggested the captain of the Shell. "Now, Gussy, are you willing to put it to the vote?"

"Wats!"

"Well, I agree to that," said Blake, feeling sure of a majority. "Put it to the vote, Gussy. That's fair."



Whack, whack, whack, whack! "Yoop! 'Elp! Perlice!" shrieked Mr. Weekes, as Arthur Augustus thrashed him with the stick. The fat bookmaker squirmed and yelled under the infliction, but he squirmed and yelled in vain!

"Wubbish! You are pwejudiced against my friend Outwam. I am goin' to stand up for him and look aftah him. It's no good arguin', deah boy."

"The fellow is a worm," said Digby. "I don't want to rag him, as far as that goes. But let him keep to himself."

"Chuck up chumming with him, that's all," said Blake.

"Imposs, deah boy!"

"Look here, you'll have to chuck him up, or chuck us up!" exclaimed Herries excitedly. "We're not going to pal with a funk. The New House rotters were chipping us about him only this afternoon."

"Blow the New House wottahs!"

"But they're right this time," said Blake. "Outram's a disgrace to the House, and a disgrace to anybody who knows him. Now, look here, Gussy, we ask you in a friendly way to chuck him. These Shell chaps agree."

The Terrible Three nodded. They sympathised with Blake.

"I don't mind being civil to a chap," said Blake. "I'm not the fellow to be down on a funk even. But I can't pal with him. And if he's with you, he's with us!"



"Ma! I shan't 'arf be late for school if you don't call me soon!"

Half-a-crown has been awarded to Miss D. Howe, 25, King Street, Wednesbury, Staffs.

"That's all wight, if you come wound and back me up. Then we can pal with him," suggested Arthur Augustus.

"Fathead!" howled Blake.

"Ass!" hooted Digby.

"Duffer!" said Herries.

"I wefuse to weply to those oppwobwious wemarks," said Arthur Augustus, with dignity. "I twust you will agree with me when you are coolah. You weally might wely on a fellow's tact and judgment."

"Rats and piffle!" said Blake. "Look here, we mean business, D'Arcy! If you go on pal-ling with that outsider, you needn't speak to us, and that's flat."

"Agreed!" said Herries and Digby together. Arthur Augustus rose to his feet and turned his eyeglass on his old chums, more in sorrow than in anger.

"Vewy well," he said quietly. "I must do what I weward as a duty, of course. If you chaps do not approve, you are at liberty to dwop my acquaintance. I have the honah to wish you a vewy good-evenin'!"

And Arthur Augustus walked out of the study, with his noble nose considerably elevated.

Blake & Co. and the Terrible Three looked at one another, and Jack Blake gave a dismal groan.

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"Now the silly ass is on the high horse," he said. "What the merry dickens are we to do with the idiot?"

"Suppose we swallow Outram whole?" suggested Tom Merry.

"No fear!"

"He isn't really a bad chap, if only he wasn't such a funk," remarked Manners.

Blake snorted.

"This study doesn't pal with funks. If Gussy chooses to go off, he can go; I'm fed up with his rot. I expect he'll come back to tea, any-way."

But D'Arcy did not come back to tea. The six juniors had their tea. And when they strolled out into the quadrangle afterwards, they found Arthur Augustus there, chatting with Outram.

"So you're keeping it up, you ass!" growled Blake.

Arthur Augustus looked at him coldly.

"Are you addressin' me?" he asked.

"You know I am, you fathead!"

"Am I to take that as a wespectful wequest to wewen my acquaintance?"

"Not unless you drop that funk!"

"Then prway do not take the twouble to address me at all, Blake." And Arthur Augustus walked away with his new friend.

"The—the frabjous ass!" exclaimed Blake wrathfully.

"Oh, let 'em both go and eat coke, and let's get down to the cricket," said Herries. "I dare say Gussy will get tired of playing the giddy goat in the long run."

Outram was looking troubled as he walked away with the swell of St. Jim's.

D'Arcy was calm—loftily calm.

"I can't have this," said Outram abruptly.

"You're quarrelling with your friends on my account, D'Arcy."

"Oh, that's nothing!"

"You'd better do as Blake asks you, and leave me alone," urged Outram. "I don't want to be the cause of trouble for you."

"Wubbish! I shall nevah speak to those chaps again, unless they wequest me to wewen the acquaintance. And I shall not dwop your acquaintance, Outwam, unless you assuah me that you do not wish to speak to me again."

"I'm not likely to do that," said Outram, laughing a little. "It makes a lot of difference to me. But on your account—"

"That's all wight; they'll come wound."

"Will they?" said Outram doubtfully.

"Yaas, I think so. But if they do not, it is all the same. I shall wefuse to wecognise them," said Arthur Augustus loftily. "Let's go and watch the cwicket."

Outram still looked troubled; but his champion was determined to be cheery. The dispute in Study No. 6 was soon known all over the School House, and many curious eyes were turned on D'Arcy and Outram when they came into the Common-room that evening together.

Blake, Herries, and Dig were there, but they did not speak to their old chum, and D'Arcy did not seem to be aware of their existence. The two strangely assorted friends played chess till bed-time.

The other fellows did not all follow Blake's line. Hammond of the Fourth was devoted to the noble Gussy, and he was prepared to "swallow" the funk rather than cut his chum. And Julian and Kerruish spoke to them both.

But most of the fellows let Outram severely alone; and as D'Arcy was with him, they let D'Arcy alone, too.

The swell of St. Jim's did not seem to mind. The noble Gussy was sufficient unto himself.

Levison stopped to speak to D'Arcy in the passage when they were leaving the Common-room. D'Arcy eyed him coldly.

"Pway, do not detain me, Levison!" he said.

"Just a word," said Levison, with an evil grin. "It's something that concerns your dear friend Outram. I mustn't say Purkiss now."

"Not unless you want to be knocked ovah, you wottah!"

"I'm going to get my uncle from Hilstall to visit me here," grinned Levison. "He will see Outram. I think that will be the finish, then."

"Kindly allow me to pass, Levison."

"And if my uncle recognises him as Purkiss—"
Biff!

Arthur Augustus followed Outram down the passage, leaving Levison sitting on the floor.

Outram had heard Levison's words, and his face had gone white.

D'Arcy glanced at him in surprise.

"It makes no difference to you if that wottah's wotten uncle comes here, of course?" asked D'Arcy.

"Of—of course not."

"In fact, it may turn out a good thin'," said Arthur Augustus thoughtfully. "The governah of Hilstall will be able to say quite positively that you are not the fellow Levison took you for, and even Levison will be satisfied then."

Outram did not reply.

CHAPTER 13.

Back Up!

TOM MERRY tapped Arthur Augustus on the shoulder as the juniors came out after dinner on the following Wednesday.

Tom Merry was somewhat concerned about the trouble in Study No. 6, which showed no sign so far of healing.

"You're playing this afternoon, Gussy?" asked Tom.

D'Arcy shook his head.

"I am afraid I shall have to stand out, Tom Mewwy."

"But you're not going to cut out a Form match?" urged Tom. "What will the Fourth do without you?"

"They'll be simply lost sheep, you know," said Monty Lowther solemnly.

"Yaas, I feah so," said Arthur Augustus unsuspiciously. "But I weally have no choice in the mattah. Blake is captainin' the Fourth, and Hewwies and Digby are playin'. I cannot vewy well play when I am not on-speakin' terms with them."

"It isn't really necessary to speak during ericket," remarked Manners. "You could give your lower jaw a rest during the match."

"Weally, Mannahs—"

"Berter play," urged Tom. "Why not make it up with Blake? Haven't you often said that an apology sets anything right?"

"Yaas, but Blake won't apologise."

"Well, you apologise to him instead. So long as there's an apology, it doesn't matter about trifling details."

"I wegard you as an ass, Tom Mewwy."

(Continued on the next page.)



THE EDITOR'S CHAIR

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

HALLO, Chums! How's the collecting of armaments stamps going? It's good fun, isn't it? Just as interesting as collecting postage stamps or picture cards. But apart from the fun and interest, all of you have an equal chance of turning your collections to prize profit.

This week there are four extra stamps in the GEM. Last week the "Magnet" contained a like bonus. Next Saturday it's "Modern Boy's" turn, and twenty-four stamps will be found in its pages. But the important point to remember is, collect as many stamps as you can, for soon you will learn which types of stamps are to be sent in for the first month's prize-giving. I'm sure all GEM readers want to be first in the field for those grand prizes!

"THE BOY WHO BETRAYED HIMSELF!"

Having read the great 'St. Jim's yarn in this number, I expect you are all eager to read the sequel, which bears the above title. Valentine Outram is certainly an intriguing character, and there is no doubt that he is not all he seems. Is he really Purkiss, the reformatory boy? If so, what has happened to the real Outram, whose name he is accused of taking?

Probably many readers have formed a solution to these problems already, but I bet most of you will receive a big surprise when you read the real solution of the mystery, as Martin Clifford so vividly and dramatically unravels it in next week's thrilling yarn!

"THE GREYFRIARS CRUSOES!"

Cast away on a rocky isle, with three foreign ruffians menacing them, doesn't seem a cheery prospect for the chums of Greyfriars. But in spite of the hardships and the element of danger, they enjoy their adventures as Crusoes. How they fend for themselves on the barren islet and fight for their own rights and safety against armed, stop-at-nothing foreigners, makes a thrill-packed Frank Richards story which every reader will revel in. Don't miss it!

All our shorter features of fun and fact will be well up to the usual high standard. Taggles is "on the air" in "In Town To-day," and the crusty old St. Jim's porter has some amusing things to broadcast. Monty Lowther invites you to laugh off some more wisecracks and jokes, and our stamp expert puts you wise on more matters of philatelic and general interest. Illustrated jokes and another Spelling Bee round off a great number. See your GEM is reserved for you.

My last item of news this week concerns the "School-boys' Own Library." I should like to remind readers that this month's issues contain grand book-length stories of the chums of Greyfriars, Rookwood, and St. Frank's Schools. "Harry Wharton Declares War" is a powerful yarn of a bitter feud between schoolboy and master. "Under False Colours" tells of a Rookwood master who tries to live down his shady past—only to find someone knows him at the school! And finally there is "The St. Frank's Castaways"—a thrilling story of the perilous adventures of Nipper & Co. in a wild Balkan state. These three numbers are now on sale, price 4d. each.

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Arthur Augustus joined Outram and walked away with him.

The Terrible Three looked for Blake. The Shell were playing the Fourth that afternoon, and as a rule D'Arcy played for his Form in these matches. But the swell of St. Jim's was willing even to give up cricket rather than surrender.

"Gussy won't be playing for you, Blake," Tom remarked.

Blake grunted.

"No, I suppose not. It won't hurt the team much, I reckon. The silly ass is still sticking it out. He doesn't do his prep in Study No. 6 now."

"It's jolly decent of him to stick to that fellow Outram like this."

"Jolly fatheaded, you mean!" growled Blake. "I've had a hint that the New House kids are going to chivvy the funk this afternoon. That means another row for Gussy, and we can't look after him while we're playing cricket. Why can't he let the rotter alone?"

"Do you want to look after a fellow you don't know?" grinned Lowther.

"Oh, rats! We can't, anyway!"

But Blake was looking worried as he went down to the cricket field with his team. If the New House juniors chivvied the funk, Arthur Augustus was certain to stand up in his defence, and it meant a ragging for Gussy. The noble Gussy never counted his foes; and Blake expected to see him looking a wreck after the match. As the honourable Arthur Augustus was no longer an acquaintance of his, it really did not concern Jack Blake—but he felt concerned all the same.

From a distance, D'Arcy watched the beginning of the Form match, and he could hardly suppress a sigh. It was the second match he had "cut" on Outram's account, and it looked as if there might be many more to follow.

"Let's have a twot along the wivah, deah boy," he said, with resolute cheerfulness. "We can have tea at the Feathahs, and walk back by the towing-path."

They walked out of the gates; and a number of New House juniors, who were looking for the "funk" shortly afterwards, were disappointed. The merry youths of the New House regarded it as a great lark to "chivvy" the School House funk. But the funk was not to be found, and they went to watch the Form match instead.

But as the summer evening was closing in, Diggs and Pratt and the rest waited at the school gates for D'Arcy and his chum to come in.

The two juniors, when they came back from their walk in the cool of the evening, found seven or eight fellows waiting for them.

"Here they come!" chorried Diggs.

"Never mind D'Arcy," said Owen. "Let D'Arcy clear off! It's the funk we want! I've got the white feathers ready to decorate him!"

The New House party chuckled. They lined up in the gateway as D'Arcy and Outram arrived.

"Pway allow us to entah, deah boys!" said Arthur Augustus mildly.

"Pass in, and all's well!" said Owen, with a wink at his comrades.

Three or four pairs of hands suddenly grasped D'Arcy, and he was "passed in" headlong. The rest closed round Outram.

The latter backed away, but he was quickly surrounded.

"What do you want?" he exclaimed.

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"Only a little joke!" said Owen cheerily. "We only want to show the School House what we think of its funk! We've got some nice white feathers for you."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Keep that howling ass off!" added Owen, looking round.

Arthur Augustus was endeavouring to join his proteges. But Clampe, Pratt, and Thompson barred the way.

Great fighting man as Gussy was, Gussy could not deal with three of them, and he was barred off.

"Let me pass, you wottahs!" shouted Arthur Augustus wrathfully, and he charged at the three like a bull.

Three pairs of hands closed on him, and he was held.

"All serene!" grinned Thompson. "We've got him! Get on with the decorations, Owen!"

Diggs and another fellow held Outram's arms to his side.

For a moment the new junior looked like resisting, but he did not.

Owen proceeded to stick white feathers into his hair and collar till he was thickly covered with them, amid howls of laughter from the New House raggars.

"We'll march him round the quad like that!" chorried Diggs.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You uttah wuffians!" yelled Arthur Augustus, struggling desperately with the three men who were holding him. "I will thwash you all round. I'll—I'll—yawwooh! Gwoogh! Oh cwumbs!"

Bump!

"Yow! Ow, ow!"

It was just then that Blake sighted the scene in the gateway.

"Rescue!" yelled Blake.

The chums from Study No. 6 had come from the cricket field a little tired; but they showed plenty of energy now.

Blake, Herries, and Digby rushed to the rescue, and Arthur Augustus' assailants were knocked right and left.

The swell of St. Jim's sat gasping on the ground.

Blake gave him a hand up.

"All serene now, Gussy!" he grinned.

"Yaas, wathah! I'm goin' to thwash those wottahs!" And Arthur Augustus made a rush towards the group in the road.

Herries caught him by the arm and yanked him back.

"Let them alone!" he growled. "They're only sticking white feathers on the funk."

"Welease me, you ass! Besides, I wefuse to allow you to speak to me, Hewwies, and I decline to uttah a word to you!"

"Look here, you ass—"

Arthur Augustus jerked his arm away and rushed into the fray.

In a moment he was engaged in a wild and whirling combat with the raggars.

Blake hesitated for a moment, but the claims of old friendship were too strong. He rushed after D'Arcy, and Herries and Dig followed.

"Back up, New House!" roared Owen.

"Pile in, School House!" yelled Blake.

"Give the wottahs beans! Huwwah!"

Tom Merry & Co. came racing out of the gates and threw themselves into the combat.

Then the New House fellows, outnumbered, had to retreat.



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K. Lithgow, 190, Burnett Street, Ashburton, New Zealand; age 15; stamps; all over the world.

They were fairly driven off the ground, leaving Outram in the midst of his rescuers, with the white feathers still sticking to him.

With a burning face the unfortunate junior plucked them away and threw them into the road. Blake's lip curled.

"Bai Jove! We've beaten the boundahs!" gasped Arthur Augustus. "Huwwah for us! I twust the boundahs did not hurt you, Outwam, deah boy."

"No," said Outram, in a low voice.

"White feathers don't hurt—some people," said Herries, with a snort. "They'd rather hurt me, I think; but Outram doesn't mind."

"Weally, Hewwies—"

Outram moved away through the crowd of School House fellows to the gate.

Arthur Augustus quietly joined him.

"Hold on a minute," said Blake gruffly. "Look here, D'Arcy, you howling ass, how long are you going to keep up this rot?"

"I fail to undahstand you, Blake."

"You'll be in a fresh row every day so long as you stick to that fellow!" howled Blake.

"Yaas, vewy likely."

"Well, chuck it, then! If the fellow wasn't a worm he would ask you to chuck it himself."

"I—I have asked him!" faltered Outram.

"Yaas, wathah! But I'm stickin' it out," said Arthur Augustus calmly. "I vegard it as a duty. I wefuse to desert a chap because of his high principles!"

"Fathead! Do you think we're going to see you ragged every day?"

"Weally, Blake, as you have dwopped my acquaintance it does not concern you vewy much," said Arthur Augustus loftily.

"Oh, don't be a goat!" said Blake irritably. "Look here, will you chuck up that chap and come back to Study No. 6?"

"Imposs!"

"You won't come back to the study unless we swallow him—what?"

"I'm sowwy, Blake, but it is imposs!"

Blake sniffed.

"Then we'll swallow him!" he growled. "Now, come to tea, and don't play the giddy goat any longer."

"I wefuse to have my conduct chawactewised as playin' the giddy goat. Howevah, I shall be vewy pleased to come to the study to tea, if I may bwing a fwriend with me."

J. Viford, 4489, Sherbrooke Street W., Westmount, Montreal, Canada; sports, autographs, stamps, and movies; Europe and Great Britain.

J. Smith, 57, Rothery Road, Coffimal, N.S.W., Australia; age 11-13; stamps, codes, aeroplanes; S. Africa preferred.

L. Cordes, 5936, Jeanne Manec Street, Montreal, Quebec, Canada; stamps, photographs; any age; anywhere.

H. Clarke, 61, Market Street, Penang, Straits Settlements; age 12-18; stamps; anywhere, except Japan and Straits Settlements.

Miss Sonja Leino, 13, Pulau Tikus Lane, Penang, S.S.; girl correspondents, age 16-20; views, fashions in dress, exchange of personal experiences.

G. Dabbs, Kelvin, 115, Holyhead Road, Coventry; has a number of copies of GEM and "Nelson Lee" dating from 1926 to 1933 for sale.

PEN PALS COUPON

21-5-38

Blake, Herries and Dig looked at one another. Then they all three nodded together.

"All right," said Blake resignedly. "We'll make the best we can of the blessed funk."

"I—I say—" began Outram.

Blake interrupted him.

"Don't you say anything. If that champion ass sticks to you we shall have to make the best of it, that's all."

"Pway be a little more civil about it, Blake!"

Snort!

"I am willin' to admit," said Arthur Augustus, turning to his old chums, "that I have found the separation fwom my old fwriends vewy painful; but if I come back to the study it must be undahstood that no oppwobwious epithets are to be applied to my fwriend Outwam."

Snort!

"Unless that is agweed to, Blake, I feah that I shall be unable to wewew your acquaintance."

"Any old thing!" groaned Blake. "Let's go and have tea."

"Vewy good!"

And the reunited chums went in to tea, Arthur Augustus marching Outram in by the arm, and giving him no chance to escape.

Tom Merry, Manners, and Lowther came in to tea, and it was quite a merry party.

Having "swallowed" the funk, as they expressed it, Blake, Herries, and Dig exerted themselves to be civil, and Outram was put at his ease at last.

Jack Blake did not do things by halves, and, having made friends with Outram, he backed up Arthur Augustus heartily in "looking after" the unfortunate outsider, and Herries and Dig followed his lead.

Funk or no funk, there were no more raggings for the new junior to fear.

Study No. 6, so happily reunited, saw to that.

Levison was perforce silent, but he had not forgotten.

A dark and threatening cloud still hung over the new boy in the Fourth, and before long the storm was to burst.

(Look out for the thrilling sequel to this great yarn. Order your GEM early to make sure of reading "THE BOY WHO BETRAYED HIMSELF.")

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SHIPWRECKED IN A STORM AND CAST ASHORE ON A DESERTED ROCKY ISLE!

The Shipwrecked Schoolboys!

By FRANK RICHARDS.

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



The boat, hurled like a stone from a giant's hand, suddenly crashed into soft sand, and the mast whipped over the side like a stick. The next second the juniors and girls were struggling in foaming waters.

A Surprise for Bunter!

"GOOD! Oh, ripping!" Billy Bunter uttered those words in tones of the keenest satisfaction as he came into Study No. 1, in the Remove passage at Greyfriars.

The fat junior had been looking somewhat discontented; but his expression changed the moment he entered the study. He looked at a pile of things stacked on the table, and his eyes grew big and round behind his spectacles.

"Good! Half a ham, a bag of eggs, a tin of biscuits! My word! I suppose this was meant as a surprise for me."

It was certainly a surprise. The Famous Four—Wharton, Cherry, Nugent, and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh—who had the honour of sharing that study with Billy Bunter, had not been so chummy lately as Bunter might have desired.

Even now they were getting up a boating outing on Pegg Bay, and hadn't asked Bunter to join them. The fat junior had taken it as a matter of course that he was to go, especially when he heard that Marjorie Hazeldene was going, and

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he had been astounded to learn that he had been left off the list.

Hence the dissatisfaction on his fat face, till it was removed by the sight of the good things in the study. There wasn't any dissatisfaction in Billy Bunter's visage now. His face beamed like a full moon.

"A whole plum cake—ripping! Six tins of salmon—good! Eight small steak pies—glorious! Twelve bottles of ginger-pop—splendid! Bags of apples—excell—Ow!"

Bunter broke off as he received a slap on the back from a junior who had just entered the study.

"Ow! Really, Wharton——"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!"

"Oh, is it you, Cherry? I wish you wouldn't thump me like that. I'm in a weak state, owing to want of sufficient nourishment. But, I say, this is all right."

"What's all right?" demanded Bob Cherry.

"This little surprise you've got up for me."

Bob Cherry grinned, and Harry Wharton and Nugent, who had followed him in, grinned, too. And a gentle smile overspread the dusky features of Hurree Singh, the Nabob of Bhanipur.

But Billy Bunter was short-sighted, and he went on unheeding.

"It's very decent of you. Upon the whole, I won't come with you this afternoon. I'd rather stay at home, and have a feed on my own."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I can see anything in that to cackle at, Bob Cherry!" said the fat junior peevishly. "Was it your idea to get these things as a joyful surprise for me?"

"Not much!" said Bob Cherry, grinning. "They're the provisions we're going to take with us this afternoon. Why, you young ass, we've had to pool all our week's pocket-money for that little lot. We're likely to do that for the pleasure of feeding a fat porpoise—I don't think!"

"Oh, really, Cherry——"

"Where's the bugs?" said Bob Cherry, looking round the study. "It's time we were off, as we have to meet Marjorie and Clara near Cliff House before we go down to the boat. Pack up! I think this lot will be enough for us."

"I hope so," said Wharton, laughing. "Enough there for one afternoon, I should imagine, though the sea air makes one hungry. If we take one bag each we shall manage the lot all right."

"I say, you fellows——"

"Four bags will be enough. Wun Lung will have his umbrella to carry. He won't go anywhere without that. They'll be a good weight. Don't forget to shove the knives and forks into your bag, Frank!"

"Don't you forget the tin mugs and coffee pot!"

"I say, you fellows——"

"Don't bother, Bunter! Can't you see we're busy?"

"I'd like to help you carry the things, you

HARRY WHARTON & CO. FIGURE IN A DESPERATE ADVENTURE IN THIS BIG-THRILL YARN.

know," said Bunter. "I'm an awfully obliging fellow when——"

"When there's something to eat about."

"Oh, really, Cherry——"

"You can't carry anything. You have all your work cut out to carry your own weight, I should think. Good-bye, Bunter!"

"Look here, you fellows, I don't want to fish for an invitation," said Bunter, with a great deal of dignity. "If you like to leave a studymate out, I don't mind, but——"

"It isn't that, Bunter," said Harry Wharton. "You see, we're going out in a boat, and you would be in the way, and you'd be uncomfortable, too. Besides——"

"I suppose I'm the best judge of that, Wharton. But if Marjorie Hazeldene is coming, that's what I was thinking of. She may expect to see me."

"Why should she?" asked Bob Cherry.

"Oh, really, Cherry! You know perfectly well that——that——"

"Well, what?" said Bob Cherry quietly, but with a dangerous gleam in his eyes, as Billy Bunter paused and simpered.

"Well, I'm not a conceited chap, and I know you're jealous of me. But if I don't go you'll see that Marjorie won't enjoy the trip much, and I don't think a girl ought to be disappointed. You see, one ought to think of the lady first, in a matter like this, and put all feelings of personal jealousy aside. I say—— Wow!"

Bunter had not intended to say "Wow!" but he said it involuntarily as Bob Cherry's heavy hand descended upon him. Bob had been going to put a bag of tarts into his bag, and they were in his hand as he smote Bunter. There was a horrid squelch as the tarts burst through the paper bag, smashed on Bunter's fat face and head, and jammed his features beyond recognition.

"Ow! Groo-o-o-oh! Gr-ah!"

"There, you fat little worm!" said Bob Cherry. "If you weren't too silly to be worth licking I'd wipe up the study with you. Don't you say another word or I'll do it, anyway!"

And Bob Cherry, jamming his bag shut, strode from the study with an angry brow. Wharton, Nugent, and Hurree Singh followed him, with their packed bags, without a glance at Bunter. The latter held on to the table with a fat hand, gasping for breath. The jam was over his face, over his hair, over his spectacles. Bunter was fond of jam, but he did not like it taken externally.

"The—the beast!" he gasped. "The horrid beast! It's amazing what a beast a chap can become when he's jealous of a fellow's looks. Ow! I shall never get all this jam off! Ow!"

Bunter disconsolately left the study for the nearest bath-room, to wash that jam off. As he steamed under a hot tap, his face was red and wrathful.

"I'm jolly well not going to be left out!" he grunted. "If they've got to meet the girls near Cliff House, I shall have time to cut ahead and get in the boat."

Meanwhile, the chums of the Remove, heavily laden, went down the passage, and Nugent kicked at the door of Russell's study. In that study dwelt Wun Lung, the Chinese, who was to make a fifth in the expedition, and Mark Linley, the Lancashire junior, whom Wharton intended to ask.

Linley, the scholarship boy, was probably the

poorest fellow in the Remove—the Greyfriars Lower Fourth. For that reason the chums of the Remove had said nothing to him yet on the subject of the outing, as he would have felt called upon to contribute towards the stores, which he could not possibly have done.

When all was arranged and the stores were all purchased, it was possible to ask him as a guest. Linley, too, was very useful in a boat, and was one of the keenest members of the Junior Naval Cadet Corps, of whom Wharton was captain.

That May afternoon, while most of the Greyfriars fellows were at cricket or up the river, Linley was in his study. He was busy with Xenophon when the chums of the Remove looked in.

Wun Lung, the Chinese, was folding up his wonderful umbrella—a "gamp" of amazing dimensions and unique design. Wun Lung seldom went out without his umbrella. He grinned cheerfully at the Famous Four.

"Me leady," he remarked.

"Come on, then!" said Wharton. "I say, Linley, are you busy this afternoon?"

Mark Linley looked up, with a cheerful smile.

"Not very," he said. "I thought I'd have a go at this."

Bob Cherry, who did not take Greek, looked at the Anabasis, and blinked expressively.

"You're welcome to it!" he yawned. "My hat, fancy digging at Greek on a half-holiday!"

"We're going out on the bay, Linley," said Harry Wharton. "Will you come?"

"Yes, rather! It's a glorious afternoon, though it looks like bad weather presently," said Linley, as he rose and closed his Xenophon with a snap.

"Stuff!" said Bob Cherry. "It's ripping weather! We're going to have a fine afternoon and a fine evening."

Linley did not contradict him. He only smiled and took down his cap. The six juniors went on, and Hazeldene joined them in the passage. This made up the whole of the party.

In the Close a burst of sunshine greeted them, which certainly seemed to give the lie to Linley's prediction of foul weather to come.

Wharton glanced up at the sky as they left the gates of Greyfriars behind and took the road round the Black Pike towards the sea.

"It looks all right, Linley," he said half-interrogatively. "I was thinking we might have a run out as far as Seagull Island."

Mark nodded.

"I dare say it will be all right," he said. "I don't like that little mist over the top of the Black Pike, that's all. But it may be nothing."

"Oh, the weather's all right!" said Bob Cherry. "It's the best afternoon we've had this year."

And the juniors, chatting cheerfully, tramped down the road to the sea. Outside Cliff House School two girls were waiting, and the chums broke into a run as they spotted Marjorie Hazeldene and Clara.

The Stowaway!

THE bay was rolling wide and blue in the bright afternoon, and a gentle breeze fanned the waves. At the end of the bay rose the giant Shoulder, the scene of many a wreck in a storm. From the summit of the Shoulder from nine

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days could be seen a rock jutting up from the wide blue of the sea. It was called Seagull Island, and parties from Pegg sometimes picnicked there. It was too far out for a row, but a sailing-boat covered the distance easily when the wind was favourable.

The schooner in which the naval cadets of Greyfriars did their sea training was anchored in the bay. Closer in shore was the boat in which the chums of the Remove intended to sail that afternoon. A wooden-legged seaman was in charge of it, and he looked up the path towards Cliff House.

Captain Stump was a thirsty man, and the afternoon was warm, and the Anchor Inn was inviting. The old seaman was employed to look after the training schooner, and to help the juniors generally in their trips. He had been instructed to have the sailing-boat ready this afternoon, and he had it ready, and was waiting for the juniors from Greyfriars.

A fat schoolboy came into view on the rugged path, and the old seaman gave a grunt of satisfaction. He recognised Billy Bunter, and naturally thought that he was the first of the juniors to arrive.

Bunter was warm and perspiring as he came down to the boat. He meant to go on that afternoon's sail, and he had hurried from Greyfriars to make sure of being first in the field. He started as he saw the old seaman on guard. He had not counted on Captain Stump.

The captain touched his cap.

"Warm and dry to-day, sir," he said.

"Yes, isn't it?" said Bunter, taking his cue at once. "Is everything quite ready, Stump?"

"Ay, ay, sir! Everythin' all ataunto! I've put in the extry canvas for rigging up a tent, in case the young gents get to the island. It's awfully dry weather, sir."

"It's all right. I'll stay with the boat now," said Bunter. "You go to the Anchor and have a drink."

"Thanks, sir!"

"Tell them to chalk it up, as Wharton will settle afterwards," said Bunter. "He—he forgot to give me the money. Don't stint yourself, Stump. You can have as much as you like!"

"Much obliged, sir!" said the delighted captain.

And the wooden-legged seaman stumped away up the shore and disappeared into the Anchor Inn.

Bunter blinked after him, grinned, and stepped into the boat. It was a big, roomy, old-fashioned craft, with extensive lockers. The mast was already stepped. In the stern of the boat was the canvas Captain Stump had placed there for the juniors, and as Bunter saw it his eyes glimmered. "Just the thing!" he murmured.

He looked landward. A group of juniors and two girls appeared on the path from Cliff House. They were coming!

Bunter dived under the canvas and drew it over him. There was plenty of it, and the fat junior was easily concealed. Chuckling to himself, the fat stowaway lay in darkness, waiting the turn of events.

If, as he expected, the Greyfriars sailors cast off as soon as they were in the boat, it would be too late to put him ashore when they discovered him. They could not very well throw him into the sea, though they might be inclined to do so. If all went well, Billy Bunter was booked for the voyage.

There was nothing in the appearance of the canvas to indicate that the fat junior was hidden.

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there when the chums of the Remove reached the boat.

The juniors were chatting, and Marjorie and Clara looked very bright as they came down the sands. There was a stretch of wet sand between the boat and terra firma, and the water, washing round the moored craft, ran over the pebbles and made it necessary to jump to get into the boat dryshod.

Bob Cherry wanted very much to help Marjorie in, but the big, sturdy junior was strangely diffident in the presence of the fair sex. As he turned to the smiling Marjorie his face was very ruddy.

Marjorie would have preferred a surer aid, but she would not have declined Bob Cherry's assistance for anything. As he felt the girl's hand in his own, Bob Cherry blushed more than ever, and that was what did it.

His foot slipped as he was wondering whether Marjorie noticed that he was turning red, instead of thinking about what he was doing. Marjorie would have fallen on the wet sand, but Harry Wharton was on the look-out. He knew what Bob Cherry was like on such occasions. His arm caught Marjorie and saved her from the fall. Bob Cherry himself sat down, but that did not matter.

"Oh, I'm sorry!" gasped Bob.

Marjorie smiled with an effort.

"It's all right," she said. "I'm so sorry you've fallen down!"

Bob Cherry jumped up. He was wet, but he didn't care. It was curious that something always went wrong when he wanted to be nice to Marjorie.

Harry Wharton helped the girl into the boat, and Clara, who was laughing, followed her in. The girls took their seats in the stern, and Bob Cherry hid his blushes by being very busy about the boat. The juniors were quickly aboard, Wun Lung bringing his umbrella carefully into the boat, and giving it to Marjorie to mind while he helped with the sails. Hazeldene cast off, and the boat glided out into deep water.

The Greyfriars sailors were very good hands with a boat by this time, and they handled the craft well, big and heavy as it was. The mainsail and topsail were shaken out, and as the wind was brisk off the shore the boat was soon well under way. Right out to sea she ran at a good speed.

"By Jove," said Clara, "this is ripping!"

Mark Linley was looking back towards the land, where the summit of the Black Pike showed to the left of the Shoulder, and there was a slight shade on his face. The Lancashire junior knew much more of the weather signs than the others, but he felt a natural diffidence about impressing his views on his friends, especially as he was not sure.

To the rest the day seemed ideal. Out on the waters the wind seemed much stronger than on shore, but the ocean was rolling peacefully, and the sky was intensely blue, save where that patch of mist hung over the Pike, and for a pale stretch of sky over the far-off open sea.

"We shall make the island all right," said Bob Cherry. "Look, you can see it from here!"

He pointed to the distant isle, rising like a bare rock from the English Channel. Clara rose to look, stepped on the pile of canvas, and gave a shriek.

"What's the matter?" exclaimed half a dozen voices.

"Oh, there's something alive under the canvas!"

Foul Weather!

CLARA was looking quite pale. As she stepped on the canvas she had felt something move under it, and it had naturally startled her. The juniors for the moment were inclined to attribute the matter to feminine imagination, but Nugent pointed to the canvas. It was moving, as if something wriggled underneath.

"Oh dear!" gasped Clara. "It's—it's something alive!"

"Don't be afraid!" exclaimed Bob Cherry, seizing a boathook. "I'll smash the brute, whatever it is!"

"Hold on!" came a gasping voice from under the canvas. "Ow! Don't let that dangerous maniac start, you fellows!"

"It's Bunter!"

The canvas was pushed aside, and the red, perspiring face and glimmering spectacles of Billy Bunter came into view. Bob Cherry dropped the boathook in his amazement. They all stared at Bunter blankly, and he blinked at them in return.

"I say, you fellows—"

"How did you get here?" demanded Wharton.

"I—I came on first," said Bunter. "I—I got under the canvas as—as a little joke. Ha, ha, ha!"

A chilling silence greeted Bunter's laugh, and it died away somewhat feebly. The Removites stared at him grimly.

"It—it was a jo-joke!" stammered the fat junior. "Awfully funny, wasn't it? I thought you would be surprised. Ha, ha, ha!"

But no one laughed besides Bunter.

The fat junior rose unsteadily to his feet and put his spectacles straight. He was somewhat dusty, and very rumpled and red and breathless.

"Of course, I knew you wouldn't like to go without me," he said. "You want me to cook for you on the island. Ha, ha, ha!"

"What are you making that row about?" asked Bob Cherry.

"Oh, really, Cherry! What row?"

"That row like a hen with the croup."

"I—I was laughing!"

"What were you laughing at?"

"Well, it's funny, isn't it?"

"What's funny?"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"There's no room for stowaways on board this craft," said Nugent. "Chuck him overboard!"

"Oh, really, Nugent—"

"Over he goes!"

"Ow!" gasped Bunter, as two or three pairs of hands laid hold of him. "Ow! Don't! You may make my glasses fall into the water, and if they get lost you'll have to pay for them. Oh, really, you fellows—"

"You young boulder!" said Wharton. "I never thought of this. Mind your p's and q's, that's all, or you'll get warmed!"

"Of course, I knew you fellows were only joking," said Bunter, beaming round upon the Removites. "It's all right."

"Is it?" murmured Bob Cherry. "If there weren't any ladies present I'd jolly soon show you whether it was all right!"

"I say, you fellows, where's the grub? I may as well begin to get lunch ready, and if you don't mind I'll take just a snack to go on with."

"You'll go overboard if you go near those bags, Bunter! We're going to have the grub on the island. 'Nuff said!"

And Bunter grumbled and was silent. He sat

down in the stern with the two girls, and proceeded to make himself agreeable. Strange to say, his agreeable manners only had the effect of making Marjorie and Clara desirous of helping with the ropes, and Bunter was left alone on the stern seat.

Mark Linley was steering, and after a while Bunter offered to relieve him, an offer which was declined without thanks. The wind was growing stronger off shore now, and Mark uttered an exclamation as a drop of rain fell on his face.

"Rain!"

There were dismayed exclamations from the girls, and dark frowns from the juniors. Not one of them had brought an umbrella, excepting Wun Lung.

"It's rotten!" said Bob Cherry. "If it comes on worse we'll rig up the canvas to shelter Marjorie and Clara, and—"

"Allee light!" said Wun Lung.

He picked up his famous umbrella and proceeded to open it. Wun Lung's umbrella was a triumph of Chinese workmanship. It spread out to a huge size, as if intended for the use of a whole family, as, perhaps, it was.

The Chinese grinned from under the shelter of the huge umbrella.

"Loom for two more," he said, in his pidgin English. "You comee under."

The rain was coming down more heavily, and Marjorie and Clara gladly accepted the shelter of the umbrella. Wun Lung sat down, with a girl on either side of him, and the Chinese umbrella effectively kept off the rain. There was plenty of room for the three, but no more, and the juniors turned their collars up and stood the rain.

Bunter squirmed under the canvas again, and was accidentally trodden on by all the juniors in turn till he squirmed out again. There seemed to be no rest for Bunter that afternoon. But little jokes at the fat junior's expense soon gave place to more serious considerations.

With the rain, as was frequently the case, the mist thickened over the Black Pike and the towering Shoulder, and swept down upon the sea. When the juniors, through the blinding sheets of rain, thought of looking shoreward, they were startled to find that the land had disappeared.

Instead of the gleaming sands and the rugged rocks they had seen in the distance five minutes before, a blanket of wet mist filled the view. Shore and village, boats and cliffs, had vanished. But for the knowledge that they were scarcely a mile from the land, the juniors might have believed themselves alone in the heart of the great ocean, so lonely and desolate was the aspect of the sea.

Bob Cherry whistled softly.

Right or Wrong?

Here are the answers to the Spelling Bee:

EXISTENCE
CRINGING
JUDGMENT
PUTREFY
PURVIEW
ACCEPTABLE

More word-teasers to test you next week!
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"Hallo, hallo, hallo! That looks a bit thick, Harry."

"It does, Linley was right, after all."

Wharton's face was serious. The rain might not last long, and it seemed absurd to turn back for a shower. But the veiling of the land in that wet mist might easily mean danger. And the wind was changing, too. It was blowing more and more directly off-shore, and bringing rain and mist with its gusts.

Linley had given the tiller to Hazeldene. He came along to Wharton and tapped him on the arm.

"I don't want to chip in, Wharton, but—"

"Go on," said Harry quietly. "You knew better than we did, as it turns out."

"I felt sure," said Linley. "But it looks black now. It won't be easy to get into the bay, with the wind chopping round like that."

"No, I suppose not."

"You can run before it and get a landing down the coast," said Linley. "The boat's a pretty good sailer, and will stand some knocking about."

"Hallo! Look out!" cried Frank Nugent. "Hold on!"

A sudden, sharp gust caught the boat, and it rocked violently on the waves. There was a rending, snapping sound, and the topsail went down with the wind like a rag. As the boat oscillated, a splash of water came over the gunwale and swamped over the feet of the juniors. There was a slight cry from Clara, but Marjorie was silent, though the colour had wavered for a moment in her cheeks.

Caught in the Squall!

HARRY WHARTON set his teeth hard. The Greyfriars juniors were in for it, there was no doubt about that now. The pleasure sail had turned into a serious matter!

Wharton thought of the two girls. If only Marjorie and Clara had been safe ashore, then he would have faced the difficulty with a stout heart. But the thought that the girls were in danger rather worried him.

But there was no time to think of that. The mainsail was swelling, and threatening every moment to follow the topsail into tatters, if it did not first plunge the boat bows under.

From the wet mist the wind was blowing hard. It was no shower, this—no temporary storm, that would blow over and leave sunshine behind it. It was real bad weather.

Mark Linley put his mouth close to Harry Wharton's ear, to speak in the howling of the gusts.

"We're blowing out to sea, Wharton!"

Wharton nodded.

"We can't beat up the coast, as I was thinking. It's too rough. It's as sudden a squall as I've seen. I—"

Crack!

"The sail's gone!"

What was left of it was blowing out in tatters. With the canvas blown to shreds, the attempt to beat to the southward had to be abandoned. With her bare mast swaying and groaning, the boat ran on before the wind, and to save her from being swamped the juniors were forced to allow her to run free. With the bows pointing almost directly seaward, the boat plunged through the curling waves, that seemed like monsters seeking to devour her.

There was little rain now, but the wind was
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growing stronger every moment. Wun Lung had folded up his umbrella, and put it into a place of safety.

The two girls were wrapped in their coats now, and bending their heads to the furious wind. Marjorie looked up as Wharton came towards her, clinging to a rope to keep his footing in the rocking boat.

"Are we in danger?" she murmured.

"I'm afraid so," he said.

"We are being blown out to sea?"

"Yes."

Marjorie was silent.

"I'm sorry," said Harry quietly. "We did not foresee this."

"It cannot be helped. It was so sudden, and—" Her words were drowned in a roaring gust that swept down on the boat and sent it heeling.

Harry threw his arm round Marjorie, clinging to the mast with the other. Bob Cherry was holding Clara, who was far less able to look after herself than Marjorie was. Clara's face was very pale, and she was obviously frightened.

All the crew were holding on fast now, or they would have been hurled into the foaming waters. The mist, becoming thicker and thicker, shut off the land like a curtain. The boat drove out to sea, and as they left the bay behind, the waves became larger round them—higher and wilder, and more threatening.

In the bottom of the boat Billy Bunter lay moaning and clutching at a rope. The fat junior was very frightened, and very sick. But no one had eyes for Bunter then. They clung to rope, and thwart, and mast, and watched the wild sea. How was it to end?

Under a bare pole, the boat plunged on. Hazeldene, at the tiller, was keeping the boat before the wind, but the force of the gusts almost stunned him, and once or twice he let the tiller sag, with the result that the boat was almost swamped.

Harry scrambled aft and took it from his hand, and the exhausted junior reeled away amidships and clung on.

Bob Cherry had caught up a bowl, and, holding on with one hand, was baling with the other, tossing the spraying water back whence it came. The other juniors followed his example, and only their activity prevented the boat from being swamped.

Harry Wharton started suddenly, and listened.

Amid the wild wash of the waves a deeper roar came from seaward. It was the sound of water beating on hard rocks, and the junior remembered the islet for which they had set sail that afternoon. The boat had been blown out to sea at such a speed that they must be near the rocky isle now.

As near as he could judge, they were making directly for Seagull Island, and the booming of the breakers sent a chill to his heart.

The sound, in the midst of the roaring wind, was little of a guide, and the mist shut out all view of the island.

If they escaped the rocks they would be blown out into the heart of the Channel; otherwise, the boat must be hurled upon the isle, with a result he could guess. Wreck—and what chance of life in the wild waters?

Better the open sea than such a risk, and Harry steered, as far as he could rely upon his judgment, to pass the isle to the south.

But now it seemed only a choice of doom.

For as they sped farther and farther to sea the

waves rolled round them like foam-capped mountains, huge and threatening to the view from the boat, and the little craft plunged into the trough of the sea as if it were shooting down illimitable precipices into gulfs from which it could never emerge.

Bob Cherry scrambled aft to Harry. He put his mouth close to the Remove captain's ear to bawl out the words, to make them audible in the whistling roar of the wind.

"The island's ahead, Harry!"

"Yes, I know it."

"Better go ashore than be swamped!"

"It's too dangerous!"

"But we can't bale out for long. The boat's being swamped. That last wave almost had us."

"Look out!" shrieked Hazeldene.

A huge wave was surging down upon the boat. If it had struck her broadside, the boat would have gone under like a smashed straw. Wharton jammed the tiller round, and the wave came thundering down on the stern.

It swamped over him, and for some moments he was blind with sea-water. It surged past, leaving the boat half-swamped and the juniors struggling in the water, clinging to the boat and to each other. They baled away furiously, but it was evidently useless.

The boat was going under. In that terrible moment the louder roar of breakers on the isle sounded like a promise of hope in their ears. Through the mist a black shape loomed up ahead.

"The island! Look out!"

It was too late to look out. The boat was rushing headlong to destruction, and no power on earth could have saved it now. The waves were swamping it on all sides.

Harry Wharton fought his way through wind and water to Marjorie, and took hold of her in a strong grip. Bob Cherry had his arm round Clara. From the girl came neither sound nor movement. She had fainted, and Bob was glad of it. There was no danger now of her struggling, and she was unconscious of the awful danger of the moment.

Crash! The boat, hurled like a stone from a giant's hand, crashed hard into soft, swamping sand, and the mast was whipped over the side like a stick. The next second the juniors were struggling in the foaming waters.

Shipwrecked!

HARRY WHARTON'S grasp tightened upon Marjorie as the wild waters swept round them and the wet sand lashed up under his feet. He half-swam, half-scrambled ashore, driven on by the force of the water behind them, and with Marjorie in his arms, he staggered blindly on to firmer land.

He almost fell as he reeled from the reach of the water. Marjorie struggled loose; she had not fainted, and her eyes were strangely bright through the tangle of her wet, loose hair.

"Clara!" she exclaimed. "My brother!"

Wharton could not hear the words, but he understood what she meant.

"I'll help them," he said.

He left her there, partly sheltered from the wind by a great rock, and rushed back to the water.

The boat was firmly fixed, its bows jammed deep into the soft, yielding sand, and the billows roaring over its uplifted stern.

Some of the juniors were still clinging blindly

to it, but Bob Cherry was staggering up the shore with Clara in his arms.

Wharton rushed to his aid.

In a few moments Clara was carried to Marjorie. Wun Lung and Hurree Singh had scrambled to terra firma, and Hazeldene staggered out of the reach of the waters.

But where was Nugent? Where was Billy Bunter and Mark Linley?

Nugent came fighting through the billows, and Harry and Bob grasped him as he was about to be torn away by the receding waves, and dragged him to safety. Nugent sank on the ground, breathless.

"Bunter!" he gasped. "Save him!"

They rushed into the water again. Through the swirl of the waves and the thickening dusk they



"I'll smash the brute, whatever it is!" exclaimed Bob Cherry, seizing a boathook. "Hold on!" came a gasping voice under the canvas. "Don't let that dangerous maniac start!" The canvas was pushed aside and the red face of Billy Bunter came into view!

could see Mark Linley clinging to the half-submerged boat, and he was holding something—which could only be Bunter.

As Wharton and Bob rushed to his aid a furious billow came sweeping in. It caught them with terrific force, and they were hurled back upon the shore, half-stunned by the shock. The wave receded, and Wharton staggered up, dashed the water from his eyes with his hand, and looked towards the boat, with horror in his heart.

That wave had covered the boat and covered the two who were clinging to it. The wrecked craft was wholly under water now. But a head was visible among the foam, and then another. Linley was fighting for his life, and he was still holding Bunter.

Wharton dashed through the swirling water and grasped Bunter. The fat junior was almost unconscious. Linley was almost at his last gasp. How he got Bunter ashore Wharton never knew, but he landed again at last, and, as he sank down exhausted, he saw Bob Cherry helping Linley out.

Bob gave a feeble shout:

"All saved!"

Wharton called back, but the pounding of the wild waves on the sand drowned his voice. He sank upon the ground barely beyond the reach of the waters, the foam curling over his feet as he lay there utterly spent.

His senses were reeling, and he was only dimly conscious that he was seized and pulled farther back up the shelving beach. He opened his eyes; the pale face of Marjorie was bending over him. It was the girl who was dragging him from the waters. Then for a time he knew no more.

Through a short, fitful unconsciousness Wharton was dimly aware of the beating of the wind, the roaring of the sea on the sand. Gradually he came back to himself. His first clear consciousness was of cold—cold and wet. He started up into a sitting posture, and for a moment he thought he was dreaming. All was dark around him, save for the glimmer of the foam on the wild sea.

But recollection came in a flash. He staggered to his feet and looked round for his friends. It was dark; night had set in while he was unconscious. The squall had almost passed away, but the sea was wild and boisterous. In the gloom he could see nothing, and a terrible fear was at his heart. Had all been saved?

"Marjorie!"

"I am here, Harry!"

It was a soft voice. In the shelter of the big rock the two girls were crouched, shivering.

"You are safe! And Clara?"

"She is here."

"All you fellows safe?"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" came Bob Cherry's voice, still cheery. "I'm all right, and here's Nugent and Hazeldene. Where are you, Inky? Can't expect to see you after dark, you know! Here's Linley, safe and sound, but I can't see Inky."

The soft voice of the nabob replied:

"My worthy self is here, my esteemed chum, and perfectly secureful. The alive and kickingfulness is terrific!"

"Wun Lung?" called out Wharton.

"Me allee light!"

"Good! Where's Bunter?"

"I say, you fellows——"

"Hallo, Bunter! You're all right?"

"No, I'm not, Wharton!" groaned Bunter.

"What's the matter?" asked Harry, in alarm.

"Hurt?"

"Ye-es!"

"I thought he bumped hard on the tiller when I collared him," said Mark Linley. "I did my best for him."

Billy Bunter groaned, as if his injuries had taken encouragement from Mark Linley's words. Wharton made his way towards him. Bunter was sitting on the sand with his back against the rock, and he groaned again in a heartrending way.

"What is it, old chap?" asked Harry. "Bones broken?"

"Oh, I'm hurt!"

"Where is it—the leg?"

"N-no. I don't think it's the leg."

"In your arm, then?"

"N-no. It—it isn't any particular spot. I—I feel very bad all over!"

"You young ass! Do you think we don't all feel bad? I thought you had some bones broken!"

"You seem to wish I had some bones broken, Wharton!" said Billy Bunter peevishly. "I must say I think it's heartless of you! I've lost my spectacles, and I'm fearfully hungry!"

"Br-r-r-r!"

"It's all very well for you to say 'Br-r-r-r'!" grunted Bunter. "But I'm perishing of hunger! You've brought me into this!"

"Well, I like that!" said Bob Cherry.

"You've let me in for this!" said Bunter. "I only came with you because I felt that you needed somebody to look after the grub. I wish I hadn't come now!"

"I wished that long ago!"

"Oh, really, Cherry! But, as I was saying, I'm hungry, and some of the bags must have come ashore with the grub. Can't you fellows look for them and get me a snack?"

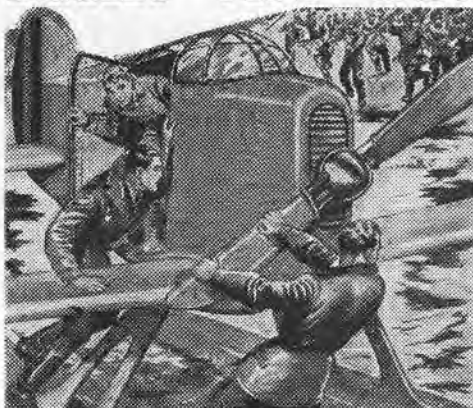
"Why on earth can't you look for them yourself?"

"I'm too exhausted. Unless I have food pretty soon, I feel that I shall not recover from this! A snack may be the means of saving my life!"

"Then I'm jolly sure I'm not going to get you that one!" said Bob Cherry. "Give us a rest, and if you're going to perish, for goodness' sake perish quietly!"

Bunter's suggestion was not of much use. The night was intensely dark, with no glimmer of a star in the sky. The shipwrecked juniors, with

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as much patience as they could muster, waited for the dawn.

Cruoes!

THE night had never seemed so long. Sleep was impossible. If the tired juniors dozed off for a few minutes, it was only to wake up again, cold and shivering. They waited for the dawn, and glad enough were they when a glimmer in the sky announced that it was coming.

The sea was still very rough, and the big breakers rolled on to the sand with a dull roar. The wind whistled among the rocks of the little island, though the worst of its violence had gone. In the strengthening light of the morning the Greyfriars juniors stretched their cramped limbs and looked about them.

As the sun rose higher, greater warmth came, and the wind sank more and more. The blaze of the morning sun seemed to put new life into them. Far away to the west rose a dim, dark mass against the horizon, and Harry Wharton knew it was the Shoulder. But the coast and the bay were out of sight, and not a single ship could be seen upon the waters.

When he looked seaward he saw the English Channel rolling and shining in the morning sun. Far off, the smoke of a steamer could be seen on the horizon.

"My hat!" said Nugent, in a low voice. "This is a ghastly fix, Harry. What on earth will they be thinking at Greyfriars?"

"They will think we went down in the gale," And Nugent nodded gloomily.

No one had been told that it was their intention to reach the isle and camp upon it. Indeed, it was only by a miracle that they had succeeded in getting ashore. The natural assumption at Greyfriars would be that they had gone down, and they could imagine the consternation it would cause.

"It's a serious situation, and no mistake," said Bob Cherry. "There's no blinking that. We may be here for days—"

"Or weeks!" said Nugent.

"Boats never come to this island," said Hazeldene gloomily, "except sometimes camping parties, in the summer."

"Looks lively, doesn't it?" remarked Bob Cherry, with an attempt at humour. "We shall have to settle down here as Robinson Crusoes."

"We may have to, for a good long time," said Harry seriously. "We must make the best of it, that's all."

Mark Linley had gone down to the water's edge, and was looking at the wreck of the boat. It still lay with the bows jammed deep in the sand, and the water washing over it.

On the shore were strewn various loose articles—the mast, which had been snapped off like a stick, the boom, and jibboom, rugs and coats, and canvas. The stern of the boat was badly smashed, but the bows were intact, and the forward locker seemed to be uninjured. And as it was water-tight, it occurred to Mark that the provisions stacked in it were probably uninjured, also.

But as the bows were jammed in the sand, it was no light task to get at the locker. The sand could be scraped away; but then the water would rush in, and the bows, as well as the stern, would be under.

"We shall have to dig it out," said Linley.

"Everybody lend a hand!"

"Right you are, Linley!"

Marjorie and Clara were still shivering under the shelter of the rock, too dazed by the shock, by their fatigue, and by want of sleep, to think clearly of what was passing. Wharton came towards them, and the girls looked up, with pale and worn faces. Harry's look was very troubled.

"I needn't say how sorry I am for this," he said. "I brought you out yesterday, and I suppose it's my fault, but—"

"It isn't your fault," said Marjorie, trying to smile. "You couldn't possibly foresee this. Nonsense!"

"Bosh!" said Clara.

And that word showed that she was beginning to recover.

"But what are we going to do?" asked Marjorie. "I suppose the boat is too damaged to take us back to Pegg Bay?"

"It's smashed nearly in half. The stern was broken in like an eggshell by the waves. We may be able to mend it—or to build another. Meanwhile—"

He paused.

"We must stay here?"

"Yes. It may be for a few days. I know it's rotten for you. We shouldn't mind it for ourselves—we can rough it. But you—"

"Stuff!" said Clara. "Girls can rough it as well as boys."

Wharton smiled.

"I'm glad to see you getting cheerful again," he said. "After all, it mayn't be so bad. We're going to get the boat out of the sand, and get some grub, but it looks like being a tough job. While we're doing it you could take some exercise in the sun, and get warm again."

The girls took Wharton's advice, and a walk in the sun, already growing warmer, restored the circulation to their limbs.

It was necessary for the juniors to get into the water to move the embedded boat, and as their clothes were already half-dried, they did not want to wet them again. When the girls were gone they removed their things and plunged into the sea and commenced work on the boat.

The task was a hard one. The bows were jammed deep in sand, and it had to be scraped away with the hands, and then the heavy timber had to be dragged and shoved up the shore. But the work was invigorating, and the juniors felt the benefit of the exercise when it was at last done. And by that time, too, their clothes had dried in the sun, and they were able to don them again with more comfort.

The locker was opened, and most of the provisions brought from Greyfriars the previous day were found there, intact. Glad enough were the juniors to see the good things. Billy Bunter's eyes seemed almost to start from his head as he beheld bread and cheese, and butter, and cold ham, and sausages in abundance. He rubbed his fat hands.

"This is all right!" he exclaimed. "There's enough here to last us all day, if you fellows are careful."

"The carefulness will be terrific."

"I'll begin with the sausages—"

"You'll begin on half a sausage," said Harry Wharton quietly, "and you'll finish with it, and some bread."

"I say, Wharton—"

"We've got to be careful with the grub, you young-ass. Do you realise we may be here for a week, or longer, and that there's nothing to eat on the island?"

"Oh, there'll be sea birds' eggs, and shellfish,

and things," said Bunter. "It's no good starving ourselves the first day. That's sheer rot!"

"My worthy chum, if the hungerfulness should grow terrific, and we should be last resourcefully driven to eat an esteemed member of the party, the fattest person will be the first to go, and therefore—"

Billy Bunter turned quite pale.

"Oh, really, Inky—"

"Therefore, it is wise to make the grub last longfully," said the nabob solemnly. "Matter of factfully, the worthy Bunter would make rippingful cutlets, if we had some means of cooking his esteemed carcass."

"Me cookee," said Wun Lung eagerly. "Me cookee Bunter allee samee labbit."

"You—you Chinese 'cannibal!'" gasped Bunter. "I—I—"

"Allee light. Me no cookee unless Whalton give order."

Harry Wharton laughed.

"Of course, in case of necessity, Bunter will have to go first," he said. "He'll last as long as any two others—"

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"So you'd better be careful with the grub, Bunter, that's all. I say, Hazeldene, get on the rock and call the girls."

Hazeldene clambered on a rock and shouted to Marjorie and Clara, who returned, quite dry now, and with colour in their cheeks. They sat down on the beach and joined in the meal, and it was a very cheerful one, in the circumstances. In the bright sunshine, the scene around them was very cheery, and there were enough of them to banish any feeling of loneliness.

The breakfast finished amid merry talk and laughter, and they rose at last in a cheery mood.

But as Wun Lung rose, something on the rocks inland of the isle caught his eyes, and he uttered an exclamation of amazement.

"Lookie!"

"What is it?"

Wun Lung pointed, and the juniors followed the direction of his finger. Standing on a rocky ridge, not fifty yards away, and staring towards the group on the beach, was a foreign-looking seaman!

(Who is the stranger on the island and what is he doing there? Don't miss next week's sensational developments in this gripping yarn).



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