

WOULD YOU LIKE A MATCH FOOTBALL? Turn to Page 9 and See How to Win One.



THE JAM WHO GOT INTO A "JAM" AT ST. JIM'S!—

The BOY from the EAST!



"You are Koumi Rao?" said Mr. Ratoliff, going forward to greet the new boy. "Yes, sir," replied the Jam of Bundelore, in perfect English. "I am your Housemaster, Mr. Ratoliff," Koumi Rao saluted. "Salaam, sahib!"

CHAPTER 1.

Goal!

FIGGINS & CO. of the New House at St. Jim's were punting a footer about the quad when Tom Merry came out of the School House.

Figgins grinned at the Co. and murmured softly:

"Pass this way! I think I can score a goal from here!"

And Kerr and Wynn chuckled, as the latter sent the ball gently to Figgins' foot.

Tom Merry was standing on the top step of the School House. He was looking for his chums, Manners and Lowther, and had no eyes just then for the New House fellows. Figgins measured the distance with his eye, and took careful aim.

He was some distance from the School House, and Tom Merry's cheerful countenance was not a large mark. But Figgins was a good shot. He calculated that shot very carefully, while the Co. stood by and grinned with anticipation. Thud!

Just as Figgins kicked, Tom Merry, having failed to spot his chums in the quadrangle, turned back into the School House.

But the shot was not wasted.

An extremely elegant junior, in whose eye gleamed a monocle, stepped out of the House at the same moment and descended one step. Before he could gain another, the football reached its destination.

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Squash!

The football had been punted about for some time in the quadrangle, and in the course of its travels it had collected a considerable quantity of mud. It made a squashy sound as it biffed upon the aristocratic countenance of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy of the Fourth Form.

"Yawwooh!"

D'Arcy gave a startled yell, and sat down suddenly on the top step.

His eyeglass jerked from his eye, and his beautiful silk topper slid off the back of his head. The football rolled down the steps, and Figgins & Co. made a rush to recover it.

Tom Merry turned round again as he heard Arthur Augustus D'Arcy sit down.

"My hat!" he ejaculated. "That's a jolly queer place to take a rest, Gussy. Somebody might come out and fall over you."

"Gwoogh! Some fwrightful ass has kicked a football at me!" gasped Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, springing to his feet. "I am smothahed with mud—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You uttah ass, there is nothin' to laugh at!" shrieked D'Arcy. "I am smothahed with mud, and have been thwown into a dweadful fluttah. Figgins, you wottah, did you kick that beastly ball at me?"

Figgins shook his head.

"No, Gussy!"

"Lucky for you, you New House boundah. I'm goin' to give the silly ass a feahful thwashin'. Did you see who kicked that wotten ball?"

"I did!"

"You? You stated that you didn't, you wottah—"

"I said I didn't kick it at you," explained Figgins politely. "I kicked it at the other chump. You came out just in time to get it. But I don't mind, not a bit. You are very welcome."

"Quite welcome!" said Kerr.

"Pleased!" said Fatty Wynn.

Arthur Augustus gazed at the New House Co., and pushed back his spotless cuffs. Then he charged at them.

"Run for your lives!" roared Figgins.

The New House trio started across the quad at top speed, punting the footer away before them. After them went Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, also at top speed.

"Stop, you uttah wottahs! You wotten funks, I ordah you to stop! I am goin' to give you a feahful thwashin'! Stop!"

"Stop!" murmured Figgins.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy was close behind, when the fugitives stopped—suddenly. Arthur Augustus ran right into Figgins' broad back. Figgins stood like a granite rock, and Arthur Augustus reeled back from the shock and sat down violently.

"Oh! Bai Jove!" gasped D'Arcy. "You wottah! Ow!"

Arthur Augustus' silk hat rolled off, but Figgins picked it up and squashed it on his head—hard!

Then the New House Co. strolled away, smiling.

—GREAT YARN, STARRING AN INDIAN PRINCE AND TOM MERRY.

By MARTIN CLIFFORD

Arthur Augustus staggered up. He had sat down in a puddle left by recent rain, and his beautiful trousers were dripping with wet mud.

"Oh, bai Jove!" he gasped, as he extracted his head from the jammed topper. "Oh, Gweat Scott! The howwible wottahs! My twousahs are wuined."

He put up his eyeglass and glared round for Figgins & Co. But the cheerful juniors had disappeared into the New House, and vengeance had to be postponed.

Arthur Augustus rushed back to the School House to change his trousers.

Figgins & Co., in the doorway of the New House, watched him go, with many chuckles.

"Poor old Gussy!" sighed Figgins. "Always up against it! He will be looking for our scalps when he's got that mud off."

"Ha, ha, ha!" Toby, the School House page, came out of the House opposite, and crossed the quadrangle.

Figgins left off chuckling. "Hallo!" he murmured. "That looks like a message for us! Now I come to think of it, Gussy sat down just in front of the Head's window!"

"Oh crumbs!" "The silly ass!" said Figgins wrathfully. "Why couldn't he find some where else to fall down? Well, Toby, what do you want?"

"You're wanted, Master Figgins," said Toby.

"Br-r-r!" "The 'Ead wants you in his study at once, Master Figgins, and 'e's sent me to tell you," said Toby.

Figgins groaned. "Well, I'm in for it. Of course, he had to see me kick that footer at Gussy! All right, Toby, go and tell the Head I wouldn't keep him waiting for worlds, and ask him to be an old sport and lay it on lightly."

Toby grinned and departed. He was not likely to deliver that message to the reverend Head of St. Jim's.

Figgins rubbed his hands in anticipation.

"We're coming with you," said Kerr. "No good. The Head's sent for me. He must have seen me kick the footer."

"But we were in it, too," said Fatty Wynn. "We're all coming!"

"Better stay here; no good three getting licked instead of one," said Figgins with a shake of the head.

To which the loyal Co. responded simultaneously:

"Rats!" And the three juniors crossed to the School House with glum countenances.

Inside the School House, Arthur Augustus was surrounded by a crowd of juniors, to whom he was unfolding his tale of woe. His eyes gleamed as he caught sight of the New House trio.

"Bai Jove, here the wottahs are!" he exclaimed. "Blake, deah boy, pway hold my jacket. Hewwies, take care of my eyeglass while I give them a feahful thwashin'."

"Pax!" said Figgins dismally.

"I wufuse to pax—I mean, I wufuse to make it pax! You have tweeked me with gwoss diswewpect. I am goin'—"

"We are going," said Kerr. "We're going to see the Head. He's sent for us

—must have seen us from his study window. Why couldn't you choose some other puddle to sit down in, you chump?"

"Oh, bai Jove; I'm sowwy! If you've got into a wov with the Head, I will let you off that thwashin'!"

"Thanks! Now I breathe again!" murmured Figgins.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Hard cheese!" said Tom Merry sympathetically. "But lucky it isn't Ratcliff—the Head never lays it on hard. If it were Ratty—"

"Yaas, there's a silvah linin' to ewevy cloud, deah boys."

But the silver lining to the cloud did not seem to console Figgins & Co. very much, as they took their way to the Head's study.

CHAPTER 2.

The Head's Request!

DR. HOLMES, the Head of St. Jim's, was certainly looking very serious as the New House juniors entered the dreaded apartment.

He glanced at them, and seemed surprised to see three of them.

"Ahem! I sent for you, Figgins," he observed.

"Yes, sir; but—"

"We were in it, too, sir," said Kerr. The Head raised his eyebrows.

"You, Kerr! I do not quite—"

"Me, too, sir," said Fatty Wynn, promptly and ungrammatically. "It was all three of us, sir."

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*Koumi Rao, a Prince of India, came to St. Jim's with a legacy of hate—hate against all the relatives of General Merry, the man who had suppressed his father's savage activities in far-off Bundelpore. So it was that Tom Merry found a deadly enemy in the boy from the East!*

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Dr. Holmes gazed at them. "I sent for Figgins—" he said.

"So we all came, sir," said Kerr.

"By my sending for Figgins, you might possibly have guessed that it was Figgins I wished to see, and not a party of the Fourth Form," said the Head dryly.

"We didn't want Figgy to stand it alone, sir."

"What?"

"We—we thought we ought to back him up, sir, and take the same as he got."

"I really do not understand you," said the Head, bewildered. "Perhaps it is my fault. I have sent for Figgins in order to speak to him about a new boy who is coming into the New House, and there was no necessity at all for you to come, Kerr and Wynn."

"Oh!" gasped the Co.

"Ha! You suppose I have sent for Figgins for some other reason—for some delinquency!" exclaimed the Head, a light breaking on him.

"Ye-es, sir. You see—"

"I—I biffed a footer at Gussy—I mean, D'Arcy of the Fourth, sir!" stammered Figgins. "It was really an accident—"

"Dear me! You should not have done

that, Figgins! But if it was an accident—"

"Oh, yes, sir! I didn't mean it for D'Arcy—"

"Then, if you did not mean it for anyone, we will not mention the matter," said the Head benevolently.

"Ahem! I—I meant it for Tom Merry," stammered Figgins.

"Well, well, I did not send for you about that, Figgins, so we will let it pass. But you must be careful in kicking footballs about. I wish to speak to you about a new boy who is coming to St. Jim's, and whom I have decided to place in the New House."

Kerr and Wynn made a move towards the door.

"You may as well stay with Figgins," said the Head, glancing at them. "The new boy will be in the study in the New House, which, I understand, you share."

Figgins, Kerr, and Wynn gazed at the Head silently. If Figgins could have had his choice he would rather have been caned for the accident to D'Arcy than have had a new boy planted in his study in the New House. For a long time Figgins & Co. had had that study to themselves, and, as Figgins elegantly expressed it, they did not want any strange dogs in the kennel.

But the Head's word was law, and he did not seem to perceive the heavy blow he was dealing at the New House Co. He went on pleasantly:

"I want you, Figgins, to listen to what I have to say very carefully."

"Yes, sir," said Figgins, in wonder.

"This new boy," pursued the Head, "is someone a little out of the common."

"Oh!" murmured Figgins.

The thought in his mind was that the Head was going to plant some giddy freak on him, and was going to ask him to deal gently with the obnoxious freak.

"The boy," resumed the Head, "comes from India. His name is Koumi Rao, and he is a Jam."

"A—a—a what, sir?" gasped Figgins & Co. in chorus.

"A Jam," said the Head, with a slight smile. "That is a great title in India. It is something like a nabob. Koumi Rao, the new boy, who is going into the Fourth Form, is the Jam of Bundelpore—a prince in his own country."

"My hat!" said Figgins. "I—I mean, yes, sir. Does he speak English or—Bundelpore?"

"He speaks English, Figgins, as well as Hindustani. Now you will understand why I have sent for you, Figgins. You have much influence among the juniors in the New House—"

"Yes, sir, I'm leader," said Figgins proudly.

"Koumi Rao will be a little new to our ways," the Head went on. "It may take him some little time to fall into the customs of the school. Also, he may have peculiar customs of his own country—religious matters and so forth—which must not be interfered with or made a subject of mockery."

"I depend upon you, Figgins, to see that the new boy is not troubled or persecuted—ragged, I think you would call it—on account of any little national peculiarities of his own country. In fact, I should like to feel that Koumi Rao is in some sense under your protection."

Figgins looked a little blue.

To have a new boy shoved into his study was not agreeable; but to have

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to act as a sort of dry-nurse towards the new boy—it was decidedly thick.

But it was impossible to decline the responsibility the Head wished to place upon him. Requests from the headmaster were like invitations from Royalty. It was not possible to refuse them.

"I am sure, Figgins, that you will oblige me in this matter," said Dr. Holmes gently.

When the Head put it like that Figgins felt that he would have done anything for him. And he replied promptly and as cheerfully as he could:

"Certainly, sir. You may rely on me. I'll jolly well look after the new kid!"

"Thank you, Figgins!"

And Figgins & Co. left the Head's study.

They moved slowly down the passage, very busy with their thoughts. Tom Merry & Co. met them at the end of the passage with sympathetic looks.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy had gone to change his muddy garments, but the rest of the School House chums were there, anxious to know how the New House fellows had fared.

"Licked?" asked a dozen voices.

Figgins shook his head.

"Lines?"

"No."

"Got right off?" asked Monty Lowther.

"Yes."

"Then what are you looking glum about?" demanded Tom Merry in surprise.

"It wasn't about Gussy," said Figgins, with a sigh. "It was about something else. I've been greatly honoured by the Head."

"It hasn't cheered you up, then?"

"How would you like to have a Jam planted on you in your study?" asked Figgins gloomily.

"It's according to the kind of jam," said Tom Merry, puzzled. "Raspberry jam, taken internally, is all right. What are you talking about?"

"I'm talking about the Jam."

"Do you mean to say that the Head has ordered jam for your study?" asked Jack Blake.

"It isn't a jam you eat, fathead!" growled Figgins. "It seems that there's a kind of prince in India called a Jam, and there's one coming here."

"By Jove!" said Tom Merry. "Yes, I've heard of such things."

"He's going to be in our study in the New House, and in the Fourth Form," said Figgins. "And the Head has asked me to look after him, and take him under my giddy wing. It will break up the happy home; but I suppose we shall have to stand it."

"It's a great honour to be asked a favour by the Head," said Manners. "All you've got to do is to play up and preserve the Jam."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

And Figgins & Co. walked away towards their own House in a thoughtful mood. They wanted to oblige the Head. They felt kindly enough disposed towards the new fellow, but they would have preferred the caning they had expected.

CHAPTER 3.

The Jam!

"HERE comes the Jam!"

There was a rush towards the New House at once.

Morning lessons were over at St. Jim's on the day following the

Head's announcement to Figgins of the Fourth.

It was known in the school that Koumi Rao was to arrive that morning, and all the fellows were naturally curious to see him.

As Blake of the Fourth remarked, it wasn't every day that a real live Jain came to St. Jim's. A fellow who was a prince in his own country, and rolling in money, was a fellow to take some interest in, Levison of the Fourth declared.

And Arthur Augustus D'Arcy had a natural leaning towards princes, as he confided to Blake, being himself of such extremely distinguished ancestry that he had a natural fellow-feeling for persons of that exalted rank. So all the fellows, in both Houses, were on the look-out for the arrival of the Jam.

Tom Merry was as keenly interested as anybody. Tom Merry's uncle was a general in India, and so Tom had a connection with that country—having been born there and brought home to England at a very early age by his old governess, Miss Priscilla Fawcett.

General Merry had been concerned at one time in some trouble in the native State of Bundelpore, of which Koumi Rao was Jam, and it increased Tom Merry's interest in the new boy. So he was among the crowd of School House fellows who flocked over to the New House when the big motor-car swung in at the school gates.

The Jam was arriving in style.

The big car had brought him down from London, with his baggage—a very considerable amount of baggage, too. As the car halted before the New House, the fellows looked for the Jam.

"There he is!"

The Jam was there, sitting bolt upright in the car, with dark, gleaming eyes in a dark brown face, looking about him.

He was a slim lad, with handsome, aquiline features.

Those of the St. Jim's fellows who had expected to see him arrive in all the native glory of a Jam—in flowing silken robes, with a blaze of jewels—were disappointed.

He was dressed in ordinary Etons, and wore a common or garden silk-hat.

The only sign of Eastern magnificence about him was the diamond that gleamed in his tie; but Levison murmured that the diamond was worth five hundred quid, at least.

Koumi Rao looked over the crowd of juniors with scintillating black eyes.

Mr. Ratcliff, the Housemaster of the New House, came out to meet him.

It was the first time "Ratty" had ever been known to bestow a mark of honour upon a new junior; but this particular new junior was a prince, and rich beyond the dreams of avarice, so perhaps that made a difference.

The chauffeur opened the door of the car, and the Jam descended.

"Ahem! You are Koumi Rao?" said Mr. Ratcliff, going forward to greet the new boy.

"Yes, sir," said the new boy, in perfect English; and again there was a sense of disappointment among the juniors, who had expected a fine flow of Eastern eloquence.

"I am your Housemaster, Mr. Ratcliff."

Koumi Rao saluted.

"Salaam, sahib!"

"Bai Jove, that's wathah gwaeful!" said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy aside. "I wathah like his mannah, deah boys."

"I don't like his chivvy," murmured Blake. "Looks like a wildcat."

"Pway don't be wuff on a new kid, Blake. He looks all wight, and his clothes are weally well cut."

"Pray come in!" said Mr. Ratcliff. "The porter will attend to your luggage."

"Thank you, sir."

The new junior followed Mr. Ratcliff into the House, without taking any notice of the crowd of fellows.

There was a haughtiness in his look that nettled some of the juniors at once. But, as Blake sagely observed, the Jam would soon get that knocked out of him at St. Jim's.

Taggles, the porter, and the chauffeur laboured with the luggage. There was more of it than even D'Arcy had brought with him when he first came to St. Jim's.

The Jam having disappeared into the House at the heels of the Housemaster, the crowd proceeded to discuss him.

Figgins, Kerr, and Wynn were summoned into the Housemaster's study, where they found the Jam.

"Koumi Rao, these boys will be your study-mates," said Mr. Ratcliff. "This is Figgins, Kerr, and Wynn of the Fourth Form."

Koumi Rao shook hands with the juniors in turn, but it was the kind of handshake that made them think of a dead fish, and it was very clear that the new boy was simply going through the ceremony, and that there was no heartiness in his greeting. All three of the juniors began to feel a certain vague dislike of the Jam growing up in their breasts.

"I am sure, Figgins," went on Mr. Ratcliff, in a very significant tone, "that you appreciate the distinction of having Koumi Rao placed in your study. I am sure that you will be careful to treat him with the respect due to his high rank."

Figgins' eyes gleamed.

It was certainly not Mr. Ratcliff's intention to make trouble for the new boy in Figgins' study; but if that had been what he wanted, he could not have chosen a more effective way.

The mere thought of being expected to toady to a new junior because he was a potentate in his own country got the juniors' "backs" up at once.

Mr. Ratcliff might be a tuft hunter of the first water; but Figgins & Co. had not the slightest desire or intention of making much of Koumi Rao because he was a prince.

If he took his place in the Form and the House as an ordinary fellow, and did not put on any side, they were prepared to be decent to him; but if he assumed airs and side, there was not the slightest doubt that the nonsense would be knocked out of him on the spot. There was not a shadow of doubt on that point.

"We intend to make Koumi Rao comfortable in our study, if we can, sir," said Figgins, as it seemed necessary to say something.

"Very well; you may go."

Figgins & Co. went, leaving the new boy with the Housemaster, to endure with what patience he could muster the great civilities of Horace Ratcliff.

In the passage the Co. looked at one another.

"Well, what do you think of him?" asked Figgins, after a long pause.

Kerr shrugged his shoulders.

"Oh, give him a chance!" said Fatty Wynn, always kind and good-natured. "He's new here. He must have been toadyed to awfully in his own country, and in this country, too, very likely. Old Ratty is sucking up to him already."

No wonder the poor chap gets a swelled head!"

"We can take out the swelling for him," observed Figgins thoughtfully.

"Of course we can!"

"Oh, we'll give him a chance!" said Kerr. "He may turn out a decent fellow enough, when he's been knocked into shape."

"Anyway, we've promised the Head to look after him," said Figgins. "I begin to understand now why he jawed me on the subject. I suppose the old bird foresaw that there would be little difficulties. Koumi Rao must feel pretty queer in a white man's country, talking a foreign language, and it's only fair to go easy with him."

And so the Co. agreed, though they were destined to discover shortly that it was by no means a simple thing to "go easy" with the Jam of Bundelpore.

CHAPTER 4.

Something Like a Scene!

ARTHUR AUGUSTUS D'ARCY had his eyes on the Jam that afternoon in class.

The swell of St. Jim's was greatly interested in the Jam.

The haughtiness of his manner was not a drawback in the eyes of Arthur Augustus, and otherwise the Jam's manners were certainly stately and graceful.

The Jam took his place with the other fellows in the Fourth Form Room that afternoon for lessons.

Mr. Lathom, the master of the Fourth,

was very kind to him; but he found that the Jam was quite equal to his Form work; and, indeed, the Form-master had the opinion before the afternoon was out that Koumi Rao would soon be at the top of the class.

The Jam learned with the parrot-like facility of an Oriental, though how deep the knowledge went was another matter.

But he succeeded in more than satisfying Mr. Lathom, and the Form-master complimented him upon his proficiency—a compliment that Koumi Rao received with a stately salaam.

When the Fourth Form were dismissed Arthur Augustus greeted the Jam in the passage.

"Pway excuse my speakin' to you without an introduction, deah boy," said D'Arcy gracefully.

The Jam looked at him.

"Oh, we'll soon remedy that!" said Figgins cheerfully. "Jam, my boy, allow me to present Arthur Augustus Adolphus Plantagenet FitzD'Arcy, direct lineal descendant of William the Conqueror's private barber—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Arthur Augustus turned his eyeglass wrathfully upon Figgins.

"You uttah ass, Figgy—"

"Haven't I got it right?" asked Figgins innocently. "Never mind—"

"I was goin' to wequest the honah of your pwesence at tea in the study, Koumi Wao," said Arthur Augustus.

"Too late," said Figgins.

"Weally, Figgins—"

"The Jam is going to have tea in our study, with us," explained Figgins.

"We're going to have a party to meet him, aren't we, Jammy?"

"My name is Koumi Rao," said the new boy.

"Jammy is good enough for me," said Figgins affably. "Come on, Jammy, old boy, and I'll show you round the football ground before tea."

"You play footer?" asked Kerr.

"I do not play any games."

"Oh, we'll give you something to cure all that," said Figgins. "The Sixth are out at practice now, and you'll be able to see Kildare play. Come on!"

And Figgins & Co. marched the Jam away.

Arthur Augustus sniffed.

"I weally do not like those New House boundahs takin' possession of the Jam in that way," he remarked.

"Well, he's their Jam!" grinned Blake.

"It was wathah a mistake of the Head to put him into the New House. The pwopah place for a pwince is in the School House. I should have been vewy happy to welcome him in our study, deah boys!"

To which Herries, Digby, and Blake, who had the distinguished honour of sharing Study No. 6 with the swell of St. Jim's, roared in chorus:

"Rats!"

"One of you is enough," Blake explained. "If we had two chaps in the study with family trees, and pedigrees and things, we should get fed up. You must remember that we're jolly near fed up with you!"

"Weally, Blake—"

"Well, how are you getting on with



As Arthur Augustus sat down with a bump in a puddle in the quad, his hat rolled off, and squashed it on his head—hard! "Ow! Bai Jove!" gasped D'Arcy. Figgins promptly picked it up and said, "You wottah! Ow!"

the Jam?" asked Tom Merry, as the Terrible Three of the Shell came down the passage from their Form-room.

"I wegard him as bein' all wight, deah boy. Those New House boundahs have walked him off in a vewy cheeky way!"

"I hear there are going to be great doings in Figgy's study," Tom Merry remarked. "Fatty Wynn thinks that the best thing they can do for the new kid is to stand him a feed. We are to have the honour of meeting the Jam at close quarters, and Figgy said you fellows would be coming."

"Yes, I've fixed that with Figgy," said Blake.

"Weally, Blake, you did not mention it to me—"

"That's all right. Whither I goest thou wilt go," Blake explained. "Figgy told me in class that the Jam wanted to stand the feed, so he can't be a bad sort. Of course, Figgy won't let him—but I dare say Fatty Wynn will let him, later, as often as he likes. I've often seen Jam sticking to Fatty Wynn, and now we shall see Fatty Wynn sticking to the Jam."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

And when tea-time arrived, quite a little army of juniors arrived in Figgy's study, in the New House.

Blake, Herries, Digby, and D'Arcy walked over with the Terrible Three, and Kangaroo, the Cornstalk, accompanied them.

Redfern, Owen, and Lawrence of the New House were also in the party, so, with Figgy & Co., the room was somewhat crowded. Junior studies were not planned for parties of upwards of a dozen. But the chums of St. Jim's were easily satisfied, and if there was a little crowding it was taken with good humour and cheerfulness.

And the sight of the feed on the table brought smiles to all faces.

"Here we are again!" said Monty Lowther. "Where's the Jam? Produce your Jam!"

"Here it is!" said Fatty Wynn, misunderstanding. "We've got strawberry, raspberry, and plum. But we were going to begin with rabbit-pie."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Better start with the solids," said Fatty Wynn, surprised by the chuckle in the study. "In a feed, as in everything else, it's always a good idea to lay a solid foundation."

"I was referring to the other Jam," explained Lowther.

"Oh! Koumi Rao will be here in a minute. Ratty's talking to him. Ratty has taken a great fancy to him."

"Bow-wow!" said Lowther.

"He seems a decent sort of chap," said Figgy. "I was talking to him about the two Houses here being at war, and he seemed to enter quite into the spirit of it. He's ready to help us keep the New House at the top."

"What?" demanded the School House fellows immediately.

"Top," said Figgy. "As the New House is Cock House."

"Rats!"

"Yaas, wathah—wats!" said Arthur Augustus. "I am weally surprised at you, Figgy, for misleadin' a new chap in this mannah!"

"Oh, don't let's have any ragging now!" said Redfern. "We've got to put on our best manners and customs in honour of the Jam."

"I jolly well wish he'd come!" said Fatty Wynn. "Tea's all ready, and I'm ready, too!"

"Might begin," suggested Lawrence, with a hungry glance at the piles of

good things on the table. "No need to stand on ceremony with a chap in your own study."

"Good egg!" said Fatty Wynn. "Might as well—"

"Order!" said Figgy sternly. "Manners first, my infants!"

"Oh, don't mind me!" said Manners of the Shell affably.

"Ass! I mean the kind of manners you don't have in the Shell!" said Figgy. "Hallo! Here he comes!"

Koumi Rao entered the study.

His dusky face was looking a little more genial. Perhaps the hearty cordiality of Figgy & Co. had had some effect upon his cold nature.

"Here you are!" said Figgy. "I've got some of the fellows to meet you and make your acquaintance, Jammy!"

"You are very kind," said Koumi Rao. "Salaam, sahibs!"

"Grand slam!" said Monty Lowther solemnly.

"Shurrup, Lowther!"

But the Jam only smiled.

"You know most of these chaps already," said Figgy. "You've met them in the Fourth. These other three belong to the Shell—Tom Merry, Manners, and Lowther."

The Jam started.

"What name did you say?" he asked. "Tom Merry," said Figgy, startled by the expression that had come over the Hindu's face. "Tom Merry, captain of the Shell—one of the best, though he's a School House bouncer!"

Tom Merry held out his hand frankly. Koumi Rao did not take it.

He drew back a pace, and put his hand behind him so deliberately that there was no mistaking his meaning.

Tom flushed red, and let his hand drop to his side.

There was an uncomfortable silence.

Figgy had intended, in his kind way, to let that little feed in his study break the ice, as it were, all round, and introduce the Jam on friendly terms with a crowd of fellows worth knowing in the Lower School.

But the Jam's peculiar conduct made Figgy's kind arrangement anything but a success.

"I—I say, what's the row, you know?" asked Figgy, blinking from the Jam to Tom Merry, in dismay and surprise. "You fellows been rowing already?"

"I've never seen him before!" said Tom Merry.

"Then—then what—"

"I refuse to take his hand!" said the Jam distinctly.

"Look here!" exclaimed Figgy, turning very red. "This isn't the way to treat a guest in my study, Jammy, and the sooner you understand it the better!"

"I did not ask him here!"

"You—you worm—I mean, what's the matter with you?" said Figgy, divided between his promise to the Head and an almost overwhelming desire to wipe up the floor with the princely new boy.

"I will not sit down to the table with him!" pursued the Jam. "I will not eat in his presence! If he remains, I go!"

Tom Merry's eyes flashed.

"You needn't bother about that!" he exclaimed. "I'm not likely to remain here in company with a cad like yourself, Koumi Rao!"

And Tom strode to the door.

If Koumi Rao had not been a study-mate of his host, Tom Merry would probably have replied to his rudeness with something more expressive than words.

"I—I say," stammered Figgy. "I—I'm sorry, Merry! Of course, we didn't

know the fellow was going to be such a pig!"

"It's all right, Figgy," said Tom. "I know you didn't mean it. But I can't stay here after what he's said."

Tom Merry quitted the study, and Manners and Lowther promptly followed him. They had no intention of remaining where their chum had been insulted. And the other fellows in the study exchanged awkward and uncomfortable glances.

CHAPTER 5.

A Queer Customer!

FIGGINS' face was a picture of dismay and concern.

His little gathering was ruined now, there was no doubt about that.

All the fellows seemed to be edging towards the door. Even Fatty Wynn's eyes no longer lingered on the good things that were piled on the table. Everybody was feeling the acutest discomfort. And the lowering face of Koumi Rao did not tend to comfort them.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy exchanged a glance with his friends, and coughed.

"I twust you will excuse us, Figgy," he remarked. "In the cirts, it seems to me that we had bettah withdraw."

"I'm not going to stay where a School House chap has been insulted for nothing!" said Jack Blake bluntly.

"Same here!" said Herries and Digby at once.

And Kangaroo chimed in:

"What-ho!"

"I—I'm sorry!" said Figgy.

"It's all wight, Figgy," said D'Arcy. "We don't blame you. But I wecomend you to teach that wottah manners before you give another party!"

And the chums of Study No. 6 walked out, followed by the Cornstalk.

Redfern, Owen, and Lawrence followed them out. Koumi Rao had said that he would not sit at the table with Tom Merry, and Redfern & Co. felt an equally strong disinclination to sit at the same table with the Jam. Redfern remarked to his chums as they went along the passage that only regard for old Figgy kept them from wiping the floor with the Jam.

Figgy & Co. remained alone in the study.

Kerr looked out of the window and whistled. Fatty Wynn, after some painful hesitation, sat down at the table and started on the pie. After all, he was hungry.

Figgy stared gloomily at the Jam.

"There goes our giddy party!" he said. "And now, Koumi Rao, I'd be glad if you'd explain what you mucked up our tea-party for?"

"I suppose you know that we don't allow manners of that kind in this study?" said Kerr, looking round from the window. "But we'll give you a chance of explaining before we bump you—if you buck up!"

The Jam's black eyes blazed.

"You—you would lay hands upon me?" he exclaimed fiercely.

Figgy's lips curled.

"Lay hands on you! Why shouldn't we?"

"I am a prince! I am the lord of a hundred thousand people! I have a salute from six guns from the generals of the British Raj!"

"I dare say you've all that in India, and you may be the Great Panjandrum of Timbuctoo and Lord High Bottle-washer of Borriwoola-Gha, for all I care!" said Figgy disdainfully. "But here at St. Jim's you're Koumi Rao of

the Fourth, and if you put on airs, they'll be bumped off you—see?"

"Hard!" said Kerr.

"And now, before we give you the licking you've been asking for, tell us what you insulted Tom Merry for," said Figgins. "What have you got against him?"

"I hate him!"

Figgins snorted.

"Oh, don't talk silly gas!" he exclaimed contemptuously. "You might dislike him—but why? Have you ever met him before you came here?"

"Never."

"How can you dislike a chap you've never seen?"

"I hate him and all his race. You do not know—perhaps he does not know—that his uncle, the Sahib General Merry, invaded my country and overthrew my father!" the Indian boy exclaimed passionately. "Where my father was an independent prince there is now a British Resident, and I—I am a prince, but when I come to my throne I must reign in apronstrings. If I command the death of him who displeases me, the Resident may countermand the order. I am a slave in the palace of my father."

Figgins whistled.

"Well, if that's the kind of use you put your power to it was high time it was taken out of your hands, I should say," he remarked.

"But what has Tom Merry to do with that?" asked Kerr.

"He is of the blood of my enemy."

Figgins stared at him.

Such talk in an English boy would have made him laugh, but he realised that Koumi Rao, Jam of Bundelpore, was very different from an English boy.

"East is east and west is west, and never the twain shall meet," as it has been said, and Koumi Rao, in spite of an English education, English language, and English clothes, was still the son of the savage old Jam of Bundelpore, whose tyranny had caused him to be deposed by the Government in India.

"Now, look here, kid," said Figgins, after a pause, more kindly, "you're not in India now; you're in England—a very different country. You're not a giddy emperor here, lord of 10,000 elephants and 50,000 spears; you're just a kid in the Fourth Form, and the sooner you get all that silly rot out of your head the better it will be for you."

"I shall always hate my enemy!"

"Oh, talk sense! Whatever General Merry did, was done under orders from his superiors. I suppose, so you're turning your giddy wrath on the wrong party. And I dare say it was all the better for Bundelpore. You belong to the British Empire now, and that's better than being independent in a hole-and-corner little state goodness knows where. Now, isn't it?"

Kerr chuckled. He did not think that argument was likely to appeal to Koumi Rao, but Figgins went on earnestly.

"You've got to get all this piffle out of your head. Tom Merry is one of the best, and everybody at St. Jim's likes him. You'd better take the first opportunity of apologising to him for your beastly conduct."

"Never!"

"If you feel up against him you can help us to make the New House Cook House of St. Jim's," said Figgins. "That's better than a lot of play-acting rot like you were spouting out just now."

"Bah! If he were in Bundelpore now, and I were there, I would command his head to be taken off!"

"Oh crumbs! It's time you had a

British regiment and a Resident there, then. I say, Kerr, what can I say to this silly ass?"

"Blessed if I know!" said Kerr. "He's too silly for me."

"Perhaps he's hungry," suggested Fatty Wynn. "Chaps often get ratty when they're hungry. Talk to him after tea."

Figgins rubbed his nose in perplexity.

"Blessed if I know what to do with him!" he murmured. "We can't have this dramatic bosh going on in our study. It makes me tired."

The Jam scowled and strode out of the study, slamming the door behind him. Figgins gazed at his chums in dismay.

"What on earth are we going to do?" he asked.

Kerr shrugged his shoulders helplessly.

"Better have tea," said Fatty Wynn; "it's getting cold."

Figgins grunted.

"Well, I suppose we may as well have tea," he said. "I'm hungry. But what a rotten end to a jolly party!"

"And all this blessed grub got in for nothing—sheer waste!" said Kerr.

"Oh, that's all right!" said Fatty Wynn cheerfully. "It won't be wasted, you can rely on that."

And it wasn't; Fatty Wynn proved quite reliable on that point.

CHAPTER 6.

Gore, the Champion!

TOM MERRY did not speak about the scene in Figgins' study; but the other fellows did, and before the day was out the whole school knew it.

Fellows in the School House and the New House talked of it with the keenest interest.

Nobody, indeed, took it seriously.

The idea of the Jam of Bundelpore nourishing a bitter hatred towards Tom Merry because Tom's uncle had been the officer appointed by the British Government to reduce the native state to order struck the fellows as funny.

Some of the fellows declared that he must have been joking; others that he was several sorts of an ass; and others that he might be a little bit rocky in the upper story.

The School House fellows concurred that it was a lucky thing that the extraordinary youth was an inmate of the New House.

The New House juniors, on the other hand, would have been very glad to see him transferred across the quadrangle.

The Jam seemed to have no understanding of the feelings of a sportsman, and that was a trait in his character the St. Jim's fellows found it hard to pardon.

That the Jam took himself seriously was certain, and the juniors wondered what he would feel like when he discovered that his conduct was simply looked upon as "queer" by the school generally.

Bundelpore was too far away and too insignificant a place for anybody at St. Jim's to have heard of it, or to care a brass button what might have happened there.

The fellows anticipated with some excitement what would happen when the Jam came into contact with Tom Merry again.

As they were in different Houses and different Forms they were not likely to meet often, but when they did—

Tom Merry had taken the Jam's insults quietly in the first place because he was a guest in Figgins' study; but if Koumi Rao repeated anything of the sort on another occasion Tom's temper was likely to break out. And the result of that, as the juniors sagaciously observed, would be very painful indeed for the Jam. Great and glorious as the Jam might be in Bundelpore, at St. Jim's he was only a junior kid who might be licked by any other junior he treated with rudeness.

Indeed, some of the fellows thought it was up to Tom Merry to take further notice of the matter, even without provocation from the Jam.

Tom Merry was chief of the School House juniors, and the Jam was a New



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House boy. Among the School House fellows, therefore, there was a keen anticipation that Tom Merry would take the first opportunity of administering a licking to Koumi Rao.

And as Tom Merry showed no signs of intending to do so some of the fellows ran him down in the Common-room that evening to question him with regard to his intentions. They were burning with curiosity, and they meant to have their curiosity satisfied.

"I hear you've had trouble with the Jam, Merry," Gore of the Shell remarked, by way of beginning.

Tom Merry was playing chess with Manners, and Lowther was helping both sides impartially with advice, so all three were busy—which was perhaps the reason why Tom did not appear to hear George Gore's remark.

"Did you have a row with the Jam over in the New House, Merry?" said Gore, in a louder voice. "I hear that he insulted you, and you took it lying down."

"Did you?" said Tom Merry calmly. "Check, Manners."

"Yes, I did," said Gore. "Is it true?"

"Find out!" said Tom Merry calmly.

"Well, that's what we're trying to do," said Levison of the Fourth. "I don't think a School House chap ought to allow himself to be insulted. It's up against the School House if he does!"

"Hear, hear!" said Mellish.

"That's my opinion, too," said Gore. "The New House chaps oughtn't to be allowed to slang us as they like. What do you think, Tom Merry?"

"I think it's hard to play chess while silly asses are jabbering in both ears," said Tom Merry.

"But are you going to have it out with the Jam?"

"No."

"You're going to let a New House kid insult you—hey—and take it quietly?" demanded Gore. "And you claim to be junior captain of the House!"

"Mind your own business!"

George Gore looked round for support.

"I think it's the business of all of us," he said. "The New House claims to be cock-House of St. Jim's; and they'll jolly well make out their claim, too, if our blessed captain let's himself be slanged without saying a word! Why, they'll put it down to funk! Have you thought of that?"

"Faith, and they might," said Reilly of the Fourth.

"Of course they will!" sneered Levison. "And my belief is that it is funk!"

Tom Merry glanced up.

"If you think so, Levison, I'm ready to prove to you that I'm not a funk," he said quietly. "Here, or in the gym, with or without gloves, just as you like!"

"Bai Jove, that's a vewy fair offah!" remarked Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

It was a fair offer, certainly; but the cad of the Fourth did not seem disposed to close with it. Levison wanted to stir up trouble among others; but he was not looking for trouble for himself.

"Oh, I don't want to fight you!" said Levison, with a shrug of the shoulders. "I've had it out with you before, and you were too much for me—I admit it. The question is, not whether you're afraid of me, but

whether you're afraid of the Jam. And it looks like it!"

And Levison walked away.

But his remark was echoed among the other fellows, and a lively discussion went on, with cheerful disregard for Tom Merry's burning ears.

Tom had thought the matter out, and he had decided to let it drop. Koumi Rao was a queer fish, and Tom did not want to hammer a new boy—especially a foreigner whose manners and customs were so different from his own. And he knew that the Jam was no match for him physically. The insult he had received made his ears tingle whenever he thought of it; but, after careful consideration, he had resolved to do nothing in the matter—so long as Koumi Rao did not repeat his action or words. He intended to avoid the new boy, and have nothing to do with him, and so avoid further trouble. And in coming to that decision, Tom Merry was undoubtedly right.

But he found that other fellows considered themselves entitled to have a say in the matter.

Tom Merry was acknowledged leader of the School House juniors. In all the alarms and excursions against the rival House, Tom was first in the field. And if he allowed himself to be insulted by a New House "kid" without an effort at retaliation, his followers considered themselves entitled to pass opinions on the matter. The New House would crow—they were sure of that. The New House would say that a School House chap had funk.

And so public opinion in the Common-room was decidedly against Tom Merry's line of conduct.

Tom heard the remarks that were made as he played on; and some of the moves in that game of chess were very erratic, and it was not surprising that Manners mated at last, only Lowther's kindly assistance to him having delayed the end so long.

"Try again?" said Manners.

Tom Merry shook his head, and rose from the chess-table.

"Too much jaw here," he said.

"Let's get out!" And the Terrible Three sauntered out of the Common-room.

"May as well get our prep done," said Lowther.

They went up to the study, Tom Merry's face clouded and worried.

His chums knew what he was thinking about, but they made no remark.

"Look here!" said Tom abruptly. "What do you chaps think? Koumi Rao was an insulting beast to me, and if it had been any other chap, I'd have punched him. But do you think I'm called upon to hammer that queer foreigner—do you?"

"Oh, rats!" said Manners. "Let him alone. He may think you are a funk, but let him rip. It needn't worry you!"

"The other fellows won't think so," said Lowther. "They know you too well. The queer ass will find enough trouble here without a hammering from you!"

"That's what I think," said Tom Merry. "If he picks a quarrel with me, of course, it will be a different matter. But—but I could knock him into bits, you know. I don't want to fight a chap who isn't anything like my match. I think that would be more funky than letting him alone."

"Let him alone," said Lowther; "and let Gore go and eat coke!"

And the Terrible Three, having come to that decision, settled down to their preparation.

But in the Common-room the talk was still going on unabated.

"Shouldn't have thought it of Tom Merry," said Gore. "But it's a case of funk—sheer, unadulterated funk!"

"Wats!" said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

"Oh, shut up!" said Kangaroo. "Why can't you let a fellow do as he likes? I don't see that it matters to you!"

"It matters to all of us—it's a question of the honour of the School House," said Gore loftily. "What we want is a new junior House captain. A leader who funks fighting with a blessed nigger isn't the kind of leader I want!"

"No fear!" said Levison.

"The New House chaps will be crowing. I hear that the nigger actually refused to take Tom Merry's fist when he held it out, and wouldn't sit at table with him. I hear that he slapped his face, too."

"I expect you heard that from Levison!" grinned Blake. "I was there, and it didn't happen!"

"Wathah not!"

"I've heard a New House chap say it," said Gore. "It was Pratt of the Fourth. He was bragging that they'd got a chap in the New House now who could handle our giddy champion, and treat him as he liked."

"Bai Jove, that's pwetty wotten!" said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "Certainly the b'own wottah was vewy wude, and Tom Mewwy was extwemely patient with him!"

"Too jolly patient, I think," said Gore. "Look here, you fellows, it's up to some of us to stand up for the House, if Tom Merry won't. We're not going to have this House called a funks' asylum—that's what Thompson of the Shell was calling it."

"Bai Jove!"

"Somebody ought to give that nigger a licking, and bring him to his senses," said Gore. "If Tom Merry declines to take it on, it's up to somebody else!"

"Well, take it on yourself," growled Blake.

"And so I will!" exclaimed Gore instantly. "I don't want to shove myself forward, but I'm willing to stand up for the House. If they've got a fellow over in the New House who punches Tom Merry's pose without getting anything back—"

"He didn't do anything of the sort."

"Well, the whole school will soon be believing that he did, which will be just as bad," said Gore. "The chap ought to be put in his place; and if our giddy leader won't do it, I'm willing to handle the nigger myself!"

"Hear, hear!" said Mellish.

"They're in the gym now," said Crooke of the Shell, who had just come into the Common-room. "Come on, Gore!"

"I'm ready!"

"Look here," said Blake, "better let him alone. He's a new chap, and you're bigger than he is; and he's a queer foreigner, too—"

"Well, I won't be hard on him," said Gore. "I'll give him a chance to say he's sorry, and to own up that the School House is cock-House of St. Jim's. Otherwise, I'll wipe up the floor with him. Come on, you fellows!"

And Gore, Crooke, Levison, and Mellish started off; and the other fellows followed them to see what would happen.

CHAPTER 7.

Gore Gets It!

FIGGINS & Co. were in the gymnasium, and Koumi Rao was with them.

In spite of what had happened in the study, and its uncomfortable consequences, Figgins did not feel that he could abandon the new boy. He had given his word to the Head, and he meant to keep it.

Koumi Rao seemed to have taken something of a liking to Figgins already; and, indeed, it was not easy to be with the frank and kind-hearted junior without liking him. And nobody else seemed to have any desire to talk much to Koumi Rao, so, without the kind attention of the Co., he would have been left very much to himself.

Kerr was on the parallel bars, and the Co. were watching him, when Gore and his friends came into the gym, with a crowd of other School House fellows at their heels.

"Here they are!" exclaimed Gore.

Figgins looked round.

"Looking for the nigger!" Gore explained.

A dull, red flush came up under Koumi Rao's dark skin.

Gore planted himself directly in front of the Indian junior, and stared him in the face. And the juniors gathered round in anticipation of the trouble that was certain to follow.

"Look here," said Figgins angrily, "you can let the new kid alone, Gore. I'm not having any of your bullying, you understand?"

"Taken him under your wing—eh?" said Gore, with a sneer.

"Yes, I have, as a matter of fact."

"Then you'd better teach him manners while you're about it," said Gore. "If you don't he'll get lessons from the School House."

"Let his manners alone," said Kerr, from the bar above. "Tom Merry's the only chap who's anything to complain of, and he hasn't complained."

"No; he's finking it, or else he's playing good little Eric," jeered Gore. "But this black bouncer isn't going to get his ears up against the School House. Tom Merry is going to take his cheek lying down, but I'm not. I'm going to give him a licking."

"Hands off!" said Figgins, with a glitter in his eyes. "If you touch him, you'll have to deal with me, Gore!"

"Is the nigger going to hide behind you?" demanded Gore scornfully. "He was swanking enough talking to a fellow who was willing to let him alone."

"Mind your own business,"

"Well, if the nigger is finking it—" sneered Gore.

Koumi Rao's answer to that remark was quick and unexpected.

He stepped rapidly forward. His open hand rang upon Gore's face with a crack like a pistol shot.

"Ow!" gasped Gore.

He reeled back and almost fell in his astonishment.

Koumi Rao stood with clenched fists and flashing eyes, facing him.

"You have insulted me!" he exclaimed. "Were we in my kingdom, I would have thrown you to the jackals!"

"Oh crumbs!" groaned Patty Wynn.

"He's on the high-horse again!"

The Indian junior evidently expected his princely words to be taken seriously. But from all the fellows who heard him there came a yell of laughter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Koumi Rao ground his teeth.

"Oh, bai Jove, this is too wick, you know!" gasped Arthur Augustus

D'Arcy. "Weally, Figgy, deah boy, you ought to teach that chap not to talk like a silly ass!"

"He can't help it," groaned Figgins. "I suppose he was born like that."

"Well," said Gore, rubbing his cheek, "you can't have me chuckled to the jackasses or jackals, or whatever they are, but you can stand up to me with the gloves on, you cheeky nigger, and the sooner the quicker."

"Bah!"

The Indian junior spat out the word with volumes of contempt in look and voice; but the Saints were not impressed. Levison, imitating the bleating of a sheep, repeated the monosyllable with ludicrous effect:

"Baa, baa!"

And the juniors yelled with laughter again.

"Are you going to put the gloves on?" asked Gore, approaching the Indian junior with his hands up. "You've smacked my face. I'm going to wallop you till you feel like a squashed orange—see?"

Figgins & Co. exchanged hopeless glances.

They did not want to see the slim Indian knocked about by the muscular, burly bully of the Shell.

Koumi Rao did not look as if he would have any chance of success. But after he had struck Gore in the face they could hardly stand between any longer. The matter had to be settled by a fight now.

And Figgins privately resolved to superintend that fight very carefully, and to stop it before Gore had had a chance of hammering the Indian over much. A mild licking, Figgins thought, might do the Indian more good than harm, and might knock some of the majestic nonsense out of him. But Figgins did not intend to allow any bullying.

"You'll have to fight Gore now, Jammy," he said.

The Jam made a gesture of angry disdain.

"I do not fight, excepting with one of my own rank," he said contemptuously.

"Do you mean to say that I'm not as good as any blessed nigger that—that ever niggered?" bellowed Gore furiously.

"Don't talk out of your hat, Jammy, old man," implored Figgins. "Try to have a little sense. You can't biff a chap on the chivvy and then say you won't fight him. Gore's going for you, anyway, so you'd better put up your hands."

"Yes, you'd better," said Gore threateningly. "Not that it will be of much use, you skinny nigger!"

"Can you box?" asked Figgins anxiously.

The Jam nodded.

"Yes; I have learned it. I can easily thrash that insolent dog!"

"Dog!" gasped Gore. "Why, the silly ass thinks he's in a play. We shall hear him swearing by the giddy halidom next."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Put the gloves on, then," said Figgins.

Redfern had obligingly brought out the boxing-gloves.

"I will not put them on."

"Let him come on without them!" grinned Gore. "He will jolly soon be sorry he didn't have the mittens on."

"The prefects will come and stop you," said Levison.

"Put 'em on, Jammy," urged Figgins. "Don't be a silly ass—not a

(Continued on the next page.)



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Foreman: "Everything here is run by electricity."

New Hand: "Yes, even the wages give you a shock!"

A football has been awarded to F. Ferry, 213, Hackney Road, Shore-ditch, London, E.2.

NOT SO TAME.

Jones: "Do you remember the tame lion Binks had that would eat off his hand?"

Bones: "Yes."

Jones: "Well it did!"

A football has been awarded to C. Taylor, The Cabin, Theddlethorpe, near Louth, Lincs.

A REMINDER.

"What's that piece of string tied round your finger for, Bill?" asked Bob.

"That's a knot," replied Bill.

"Forget-me-not is a flower. With flour you make bread, and with bread you have cheese. This is to remind me to buy some pickled onions."

A football has been awarded to B. Preston, 167, Knighton Road, Leicester.

GOT WHAT HE WANTED.

Magistrate: "What have you to say for yourself?"

Road Hog: "I wish I was in a place where there were no speed cops."

Magistrate: "Wish granted. Seven days!"

A football has been awarded to W. Johnston, 3, Balshagray Avenue, Partick West, Glasgow.

EASIER SAID THAN DONE.

The boxer's manager was giving him man advice.

"Hold yourself in for a few rounds, Sambo; then go after him."

"Dat's O.K. wid me, boss," said Sambo nervously. "But who's gonna hold de guy over dere?"

A football has been awarded to R. Platt, 46, Gaselée Street, Poplar, London, E.14.

HARD LABOUR.

De Vere (to valet): "Mugsberry, the doctor has ordered me to take more exercise, so in future I'll wind my wrist-watch up myself."

A football has been awarded to F. Hartley, 54, Cottam Terrace, Bradford, Yorkshire.

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bigger one than you can help, I mean. Put your paws here."

"And buck up!" said Gore, slipping on the gloves. "I warn you that I'm going to wipe up the floor with you."

"Bah!"

"Baa, baa!" repeated Levison.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Jam put on the gloves, with an angry frown. Then, without waiting for the call of time, he rushed furiously at George Gore.

Gore piled in at once. He did not think it worth while to have rounds. He did not expect it to take more than two minutes to knock the slim Indian into the middle of next week, or still farther along the calendar.

But the surprise of his life was waiting for the bully of the Shell.

Koumi Rao had said that he could box. But no one had dreamed that he was such a master of the manly art of self-defence as he now proved. Gore's sledgehammer blows, any one of which was heavy and hard enough to knock Koumi Rao flying if it reached him, were ward off with easy skill. The Indian's right came home on Gore's nose, and as the Shell fellow staggered back, his left followed. Gore received it in the eye, and sat down with a bump that seemed to shake the floor.

And from the excited ring came a shout of surprise and applause.

"Well hit, Jammy!"

CHAPTER 8.

The Jam's Challenge!

"HALLO! Wherefore this thussness?" ejaculated Monty Lowther.

The Terrible Three had come into the gym.

Tom Merry and his chums did not know what was going on when they came in. But they knew soon enough. They were just in time to see Gore rolling on the floor.

"A giddy scrap!" said Manners. "Come on! Gore's been looking for trouble again, and finding it."

The Terrible Three cheerfully shouldered and elbowed their way into the crowded ring to see who Gore's opponent was.

Tom Merry uttered an exclamation at the sight of the Jam, standing in his shirtsleeves, his dusky face glowing, and his eyes gleaming, and the boxing-gloves on his fists. And Tom Merry, like the rest, marvelled that that slim, lithe Indian should have been able to deal the blows that had stretched the burly Gore on the floor of the gym.

"Fighting already, hey?" asked Monty Lowther.

"Gore started it," said Figgins. "He came and picked a quarrel with the Jam for nothing."

"He was taking it up for Tom Merry," said Levison.

Tom Merry's eyes flashed.

"He might have minded his own business, then," he said. "I never asked him to do anything of the sort."

Levison and Crooke helped Gore to his feet. The bully of the Shell was looking somewhat dazed. There was a thin trickle of red from his nose. In spite of the gloves, the blows had been very hard, and Gore was damaged.

"My word, the nigger can hit!" said Levison. "But you're bigger and heavier than he is, Gore, old man. You'll lick him!"

"Of course I shall!" muttered Gore, between his teeth.

"Bitten off more than you can chew, THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 1465.

Gore, I reckon," remarked Buck Finn, the American junior.

"Oh, rats!"

Gore was not beaten yet; but he knew he had a harder task before him than he had imagined, and he was much more subdued now.

"You'd better have this in rounds," said Figgins. "It isn't exactly the giddy walk-over you thought it was, Gore. I'll keep time."

"Just as you like!" growled Gore.

"Time!" said Figgins, taking out his watch.

And Gore stepped forward to face the Indian. Koumi Rao was standing in a cool and easy attitude, not in the least flustered by what he had gone through. And all the juniors, as well as Gore, realised that the slim Oriental was "hot stuff."

Gore prided himself upon knowing how to use the mittens, but he found that he was not in the "same street" with Koumi Rao when it came to that. His blows came heavily and clumsily, and his guard seemed useless against the swift punches of the Jam. Hardly a knock touched the dusky face of the Indian, while blow after blow crashed upon Gore's flushed, furious face and his heaving chest.

"My only hat!" murmured Monty Lowther. "That kid knows how to hit. Tommy, my son, he wouldn't be such an easy mouthful even for you!"

Tom Merry nodded.

"He could stand up to me, I suppose," he said. "I don't think he could lick me—but I'll give him the chance to try if he likes."

"I'm afraid you'll have to after this. Now he's shown he's such a mustard, the fellows will really think you are funkng if you keep clear of him."

"There goes Gore!" said Manners.

"Poor old Gore!"

"Well hit!"

Figgins had been about to call "Time!" when Gore went down under a regular sledgehammer drive from the Jam's right. He crashed upon the floor, and lay there gasping. Levison ran to pick him up.

Gore staggered up and sank heavily upon the knee Crooke made for him. He was panting, and decidedly groggy.

Figgins & Co. were grinning with delight now.

They had expected to see the Jam hammered by the bully of the Shell, and had been prepared to step in and stop the fight when it had gone far enough. But it was evidently not the Jam who was destined to get the hammering. He was handling Gore as if he had been a child. It was to be a victory for the New House; and at that thought they felt their hearts warm towards the Jam.

"New House wins!" chuckled Pratt of the Fourth. "Hurrah!"

Gore grunted.

"New House hasn't won yet, hang you!" he snapped.

"Are you going on?" asked Levison.

"Of course I am, you ass!" said Gore crossly.

"Time!"

Gore simply staggered forward to meet his opponent. He was "done," as a matter of fact, but he had plenty of bulldog pluck. He would not give in to a "nigger" so long as he could stand.

But he was not able to stand very long. The Jam played with him. Gore got in one heavy blow—an uppercut on the Jam's dusky chin that sent him reeling. But before the Shell fellow could follow up his advantage, the Jam recovered himself and piled in fiercely,

and Gore was driven back under a shower of blows.

The round ended with the Shell fellow gasping on the floor again.

And this time he failed to come up to the scratch.

"I'm done!" he groaned, when Figgins called "Time!" And he moved away, leaning heavily on Crooke's arm. There was a cheer from the New House crowd.

"Bravo, Jammy!"

"New House wins! Bravo!"

Figgins slapped the Jam upon his princely back.

"Good old Jampot!" he exclaimed heartily. "Blessed if I thought you had it in you!"

"Yaas, wathah! I wegard that as a vewy good scwap," said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "I could not have handled Gore bettah myself."

"Go hon!" murmured Lowther.

"Take the mittens off," said Figgins. But the Jam shook his head.

"I am not finished yet!" he exclaimed.

"Yes, you are," said Figgins in surprise. "Gore's given you best, and it's all over. What have you got in your head now?"

"I have chastised the insolent dog!"

"Oh, come off!" exclaimed Kangaroo of the Shell. "We don't like that sort of talk here. Talk sense."

"There is another whom I shall thrash!" exclaimed the Jam, his eyes blazing. "He is here, and I challenge him to meet me!"

And with his gloved hand he pointed to Tom Merry.

Tom started a little.

"You want to fight me?" he asked.

"Yes. I have thrashed your friend, and now I shall thrash you!" said the Jam arrogantly.

Tom Merry's lip curled.

"You wouldn't find that so easy," he said. "Gore isn't my friend, as it happens, and I had no idea that he was picking a row with you on my account. He's got what he deserves!"

"Yaas, wathah!"

"You cannot escape me, whatever you may say," said Koumi Rao. "I shall make you fight me!"

"Oh, shut up!" said Figgins. "Tom Merry won't want any making."

"I'll fight you if you want me to," said Tom. "I'll meet you any time you like. Not now; you're not fit to stand up to me after Gore. To-morrow, if you like."

"Coward!"

"Shut up!" roared Figgins. "Don't mind him, Tom Merry. He's a giddy savage fresh from the wilds, and he doesn't know what he's talking about!"

"I will fight him!" cried the Jam. "What General Merry has done to my people, that I will repay to Tom Merry—if he does not fear to meet me!"

"I don't fear to meet you!" said Tom contemptuously. "But I'll meet you when you're fresh—not when you're groggy, you silly ass!"

"Then I shall strike you!"

The Jam made a forward movement, his right hand raised. But just then Figgins chipped in. He grasped the Jam by the back of his collar, swung him round, and started him off towards the door. There was a yell of laughter, and the Jam struggled furiously in the grasp of the New House leader. But he struggled in vain. Figgins had an iron grip on the back of his collar, and he ran the Jam right out of the gym by sheer force.

They disappeared amid shouts of merriment.

Kerr picked up the Jam's jacket, and followed with Fatty Wynn. Koumi



"This is Tom Merry," said Figgins. "He's one of the best, though he's a School House bouncer!" Tom Merry held out his hand frankly. Koumi Rao did not take it. He put his hand behind him so deliberately that there was no mistaking the meaning. "I refuse to take his hand!" said the Jam.

Rao was not seen in the gym again that night. Figgins & Co. were evidently successful in keeping their strange and untamed study-mate in order for once.

CHAPTER 9.

A Legacy of Hate!

K OUMI RAO gasped as Figgins plumped him down in the arm-chair in the study in the New House.

Figgins had not relaxed his grip all the way from the gym to the study, and the Jam had had no choice about coming home.

He gasped, and his eyes gleamed with rage as he sat in the chair, his hands clenching, and his features working convulsively.

"There!" panted Figgins. "There you are, and there you stay!"

"Dog! You have laid hands upon me!"

"You bet!" said Figgins cheerfully. "And I'll lay a boot on you if you have any more of your old buck-see?"

"You have defiled me with your touch! I—a prince—the lord of Bundelpore—"

"Oh, come off!" said Figgins in disgust. "Don't be funny! Don't I keep on telling you that you're not in Blundergore now?"

"My country is Bundelpore."

"Yes, I mean Bundelpore. You're at St. Jim's now, and you're Koumi Rao of the Fourth, and I'm your study mate, and chief of the juniors in your House—see? If you back up against me, you'll get it in the neck! Understand that?"

"I do not wish to punish you. I would make you my friend."

"Well, I'm willing to be your friend," said Figgins, relenting a little. "But, for goodness' sake, don't be such

a blessed wild-cat, and don't talk such piffle! Can't you see that you'll become a standing joke in the school if you keep on like that? You can't call fellows dogs and things here. That's only done on the stage in England. It's a custom in this country to talk sense."

"I would not quarrel with you," said the Jam. "I will learn your customs, if I can. But you cannot be my leader. I am a prince, and I must command!"

"That's just where you make a mistake," grinned Figgins. "You would be No. 1 if we were in your palace at Chundersnore, or whatever it is; but here, in this study, I am your leader, and don't you forget it. You can lick Gore, but you can't lick me! And even if you could, it wouldn't make any difference. I'm leader all the time. The fellows have chosen me."

"Bah! The slaves!"

"Come off!" roared Figgins. "I tell you we won't have that talk in this study! Now shut up, and pile into your prep!"

The Jam hesitated; but Figgins was not to be argued with. Prince and Oriental as he was, Koumi Rao was beginning to learn things. In the native State of Bundelpore it was death to lay hands on the noble person of the prince; but it was evidently very different in Figgins' study at St. Jim's. And Koumi Rao found that he had to learn to accommodate himself to circumstances, since circumstances would not accommodate themselves to him.

So he "piled into" his preparation, and was glad of the kindly assistance of the Co. in teaching him the ropes.

When prep was finished, good humour reigned in the study. And Fatty Wynn produced a bag of chestnuts, which he proceeded to roast at the fire.

"I suppose you want to go on with that affair of Tom Merry?" Figgins asked, as he reposed from the labours of preparation, and devoured roasted chestnuts.

The Jam's black eyes began to gleam again.

"I will beat him!" he said, between his white teeth. "I will thrash him till the blood drenches him—till—"

"Now you're beginning again!" growled Figgins. "If you fight Tom Merry, you'll fight him with the gloves on, like a decent civilised chap, and there won't be any blood, unless you get a wallop on the nose."

"I shall beat him! I shall—"

"Well," said Figgins thoughtfully, "after the way you handled Gore, think you've got a sporting chance. Tom Merry is simply mustard in a scrap. I should have all my work cut out to handle him myself. You might pull it off. I don't say you wouldn't. If you do, it will be one up for the New House, and no mistake. Tom Merry has never been licked by a New House chap."

"He is my enemy—he, and all his race! His uncle, the sahib general, crushed my people," said the Jam fiercely. "My cousin, Ahmed Dal, was corrupted by them, and he joined them—he wished to fill the throne when my father was deposed. My father is dead—he left me a legacy of hate. Even now my throne is not secure. At the will of the British, my hateful cousin may be placed upon the throne; and I am powerless to prevent it. My troops may not march at my order—unless the Resident consents. I may not command the execution of Ahmed Dal; it is forbidden. But he would slay me if he could, and take my throne by the favour of the British."

"What a happy family!" sighed Figgins. "I should like to live in Bundel-pore—I don't think! Seems to me you ought to be grateful to the Indian Government for not putting your cheerful cousin on the throne, as they might have done. It seems to me that you've got a lot to be thankful for."

"We cannot resist the British Raj," said the Jam. "That is impossible. Some day, perhaps, you British will be driven into the sea."

"And then you will start cutting one another's throats, in the good old way you had before we stopped you," said Kerr.

The Jam was silent.

Figgins rubbed his nose thoughtfully. "You aren't a bad sort altogether," he said, cocking his eye thoughtfully at the Jam. "With a bit of training, and with some British ideas knocked into you, you will make a decent chap. But do learn not to ride the high horse, and don't be theatrical. If you want to fight Tom Merry, go in and win, if you can; but do it like a sportsman! My advice to you as a friend would be to leave him alone."

"I shall fight him!"

"Then if you're determined to bang your napper against a brick wall, you can go ahead. I'll go over and arrange it with him."

And Figgins, in a very thoughtful mood, crossed the quadrangle to the School House, and looked in at Tom Merry's study.

The Terrible Three had just finished their prep.

"Just looked in for a minute," said Figgins. "I shall have to buzz off, as it's near locking-up. About that little scrap to-morrow—"

"You can arrange it," said Tom Merry.

"In the first place, I apologise for my man," said Figgins. "He's a bit of a wildcat, and not quite New House style, but you must overlook that. He's got his good points, and in the long run I think he'll turn out all right. If you licked him, that may help him on the right road."

"I'll do my best!" said Tom Merry, laughing.

"It seems there's some old family trouble," said Figgins. "Your grandfather—"

"My uncle, fathead!"

"I mean your uncle. It appears that he was the chap appointed to squash Bundelpore when squashing-time came. Koumi Rao can't get over it. It seems, too, that he's got an affectionate cousin looking for a chance to murder him and step into his shoes—in the beautiful Indian manner."

"His cousin would be Jam of Bundelpore now, but for my uncle," said Tom. "General Merry saw fair play. Ahmed Dal joined the British, hoping to be made Jam after the trouble. I had it in a letter from my uncle, but I'd forgotten all about it. I've still got the letter, and I've been looking at it again. The old Jam was deposed for being a beast, and his infant son was made a ward of the Indian Government. Blessed if I ever knew I should see the kid at St. Jim's. I suppose he can't be expected to look at the matter as we do."

"Well, no," agreed Figgins. "He's got a lovely Oriental taste for bloodshed, and he would like to have his cousin crucified or something, whatever it is that they do to 'em in Bundelpore. Family relations must be a bit strained in that delightful country. We're

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going to knock all the rubbish out of him in time, I hope. We'll try."

"About your little meeting to-morrow, though. We're playing a Form match in the afternoon, and footer can't be interfered with for the sake of scrapping. After the match, suppose you fellows stroll down to the old barn and bring some gloves in a bag?"

"Good enough!"

"Say about half-past five," said Figgins.

"We'll be there!"

"Right-ho! Good-night!"

And Figgins departed.

"I wish Figgy joy of his new study-mate!" yawned Monty Lowther. "I think I'd just as soon have Herries' bulldog in the study myself."

And the chums agreed with him.

CHAPTER 10.

The Man From India!

THE following day was a half-holiday, and the great event of the day—to the juniors—was the Form match between the Fourth and the Shell.

The First Eleven were playing a visiting team from Abbotsford, but that match loomed much less large in the eyes of the juniors.

Tom Merry and Blake, and the rest of the School House footballers, were thinking that morning about the game, and had no thoughts to spare for the Jam. But the encounter between Tom Merry and the new boy, which was to follow the football match, excited a great deal of interest.

That it was coming off that day, all the fellows knew, and they were keen to know when and where. But the particulars were not told to all.

Tom Merry did not want to have the whole Lower School crowding into the old barn when he met the Jam. A dozen fellows would be enough to witness the fight and see fair play. A large concourse might lead to suspicions on the part of the prefects, and interference. Glove fights were not generally interfered with, so long as they were not carried too far; but Tom Merry realised that his scrap with the Jam would be something out of the common.

It was not merely a House row—not merely a schoolboy quarrel. The Jam hated him personally—and was out for vengeance for imagined injuries. It would be, on the Jam's side at least, a ferocious and bitter struggle. And Tom Merry wanted it to be a fight to a finish. He did not want it to be stopped, to be renewed later—for he knew that the Indian would renew it unless he was so soundly licked that he could have no hope of success in a second try.

Tom's heart was not in it—he didn't want trouble with the Jam at all. But since Koumi Rao was determined upon it, and not to be balked, Tom wanted to finish the matter once and for all.

He felt that he was more than a match for the Indian—but even if he had expected a licking, it would have made little difference. He was a sportsman, and he was as willing to take hard knocks as to give them. He would stand up to his enemy, and do his best, and nobody could do more than that.

He was thinking very little about the matter that morning. He was to captain the Shell in the match with the

Fourth that afternoon, and that gave him plenty to think about.

Kick-off was not till three. After dinner Tom Merry and his chums strode out of the school gates. Tom did not want to meet the Jam and precipitate matters. He knew very well that Koumi Rao would not control either his tongue or his temper if they met; and a fight before the Form match was impossible.

The Terrible Three leaned against the stile in Rylcombe Lane and chatted football, to kill time before the match.

Monty Lowther turned his head suddenly, and glanced up the footpath through the wood behind him.

Then he made a grimace.

"No go!" he said.

"What's that?" asked Tom Merry.

"The blessed nigger has followed us."

Tom Merry frowned.

"I really think Figgins might keep him in hand!" he said. "I don't want to scrap with him before the match. But I'm not going to run away from the cad. I've tried to keep out of his way."

"I don't see him," said Manners.

Lowther jerked his thumb towards the thickets behind them.

"I just caught a glimpse of him," he said. "Anyway, it was a Hindu, so I suppose it was the Jam. They don't grow many Hindus in these parts."

The Terrible Three looked towards the thickets. There was no one to be seen, but a bird rose fluttering from the trees.

"He's hiding there," said Manners.

"That doesn't look as if he's come hunting for trouble."

"Perhaps it wasn't the Jam."

"It was a nigger, anyway," said Lowther. "Blessed if I see what he's skulking there for, and watching us. I'm going to have him out."

Lowther vaulted over the stile, and ran into the thickets. There was a sudden hoarse exclamation in some foreign tongue the junior did not understand.

"My hat!" came Lowther's voice. "It isn't the Jam; it's another blessed dorkie."

Tom Merry and Manners hastily joined their chum. He was facing a Hindu, who stood, with scowling face and glittering eyes, amid the trees. It certainly was not the Jam. The man was thirty-five years old at least, of a powerful frame. He was attired in English clothes, and extremely well-dressed. His sharp, gleaming, black eyes wandered from Monty Lowther to the two new arrivals with a quick, catlike look.

"Hallo!" said Manners. "Who may you happen to be? Can you speak English?"

The scowl vanished from the man's face, and he assumed a smile. He took off his hat, and bowed to the juniors.

"I am a traveller," he said, in perfect English. "I hope I did not startle you."

"Well, you did a bit," said Monty Lowther. "But never mind, I took you for another chap."

The man smiled again.

"Surely there are not many of my race in this quiet place?" he said.

"He's a kid belonging to our school," Lowther explained.

"Ah! You belong to the famous school yonder," said the Hindu. "I have come to this place to see it."

"Oh!" said Lowther. "Then I beg your pardon for jumping on you as I did. And—for calling you a nigger. No offence—just a way of speaking, you know."

The Hindu waved a hand.

"It is nothing," he said.
The information that the dark gentleman was simply a traveller, who had been drawn to that district by a desire to see their school, naturally made the juniors feel cordially disposed towards him. And yet they could not help having a strange impression that he had been trying to keep out of sight.

"You can come in and have a look at the place if you like, sir," said Tom Merry. "We'll be pleased to show you round."

The dark gentleman shook his head. "Thank you so much, but I will not trouble you. I merely wished to see the school, and from the hill yonder I shall have a good view of it. And I must take the next train back to London. But I am very much obliged to you. Do you have many boys of my country at St. Jim's?"

"Only one, and he's a new chap," said Tom Merry.

"I might know him," said the stranger musingly. "What is his name?"

"Koumi Rao."

"Ha! The Jam of Bundelpore?"

"That's the chap."

"It is a famous name in India," said the stranger. "He is a ward of the Indian Government, since his father was deposed from the throne for tyranny over his subjects."

"You know the kid?" asked Tom, with interest.

The stranger shook his head.

"Ah, no! I have never seen him. So he has come to your school?"

"Yes; he came yesterday."

"I have read much of your famous school," said the man from India, with a careless, chatty tone. "There is a 'History of Sussex,' in which it is fully described. There are two Houses—is it not so?—in which the boys are boarded?"

"That's right—School House and New House," said Tom Merry.

He was not at all averse to giving information about the school to a polite and inquiring traveller who was interested in the place. It was not an uncommon thing for foreigners and American tourists to visit St. Jim's, and prattle about the ancient buildings with deeper interest than was shown by the boys who inhabited them.

"We belong to the School House," added Manners proudly.

"And you are pleased to have an Indian prince in your House?" the stranger remarked, with a smile.

"Oh, he isn't in our House. He's in the New House."

"That is the smaller House of the two, is it not so—on the south side of the quadrangle?" said the stranger.

"I see you know all about it," Tom Merry remarked.

"Yes, I have read much of the antiquities of St. Jim's and other Public schools," said the gentleman from India. "I am deeply interested in the subject." He glanced at a big gold watch. "Thank you so much. I shall take away with me a very agreeable impression of the young gentlemen who belong to that famous school."

And he raised his hat again, and walked away down the footpath.

Tom Merry and his comrades returned to the stile. The form of the gentleman from India vanished in the wood.

"Jolly polite chap!" said Manners.

"Glad we were able to tell him something about the place," said Monty Lowther.

Tom Merry did not reply. His brow was wrinkled in thought.

JUST MY FUN

Monty Lowther
Calling!



Hallo, everybody!

They say gangsters in America and pillion riders in England are much fewer. They've all been "bumped off."

I hear spurious fifty-pound notes are being issued. So watch your change.

Pianos are very sensitive instruments, we read. "Overstrung"?

I hear Wally D'Arcy and young Gibson got too near the roadmenders in Wayland. They were tarred with the same brush.

News: Sheep are used as currency in Canada. Their I.O.Ewes.

Young Gibson invents puzzles in class. He and Mr. Selby had "cross words" the other day.

Golf courses often cost colossal sums to lay out, says a sports writer. So do heavyweight boxers. You heard about the chap who

"Penny for 'em!" said Lowther facetiously.

"I suppose he's all right," said Tom, at length. "But—but what was he keeping out of sight for in the first place? He was simply hiding there, and he was scowling like a demon when we spotted him. And—and I wonder what he wanted to know so much about Koumi Rao for?"

"Well, I suppose he would be interested to hear about one of his giddy native princes being here," Manners remarked.

"Yes, I suppose so; but"—Tom Merry paused—"I don't like him. I wonder if he was pulling our leg—piling it on about the famous school, and all that!"

"But why should he?"

Tom Merry shook his head.

"Blessed if I know. I don't like his looks, that's all. But it's time to get back to the footer match. Come on!"

And the juniors walked back to the school, but somehow or other Tom Merry could not drive from his mind the remembrance of the man from India.

CHAPTER 11.

The Form Match!

KOUMI RAO came down to the football ground with Figgins & Co. His black eyes glittered at Tom Merry among the Shell fellows, but Tom did not seem to be aware of his existence.

He had no time to think of Koumi Rao and his black looks just then.

"You watch this game, Jammy," said Figgins affably. "It will give you an idea how we play footer. To-morrow I'll give you some tips in the game. There's nothing like watching a good match for a beginner."

"You play against Tom Merry?"

asked the Jam.

"Yes, he's the captain of the Shell."

gained entrance to a house in Wayland by pretending to be a locksmith? When suspicions were aroused, he at once made a bolt for the door.

That gave me a "pane" in the neck, as the glazier said when the window fell on top of him!

"What is a Scotsman's idea of making whoopee?" asks a reader. Going to a cinema and "tipping" all the seats.

A bookmaker says he has 26 "firsts" for running. He "got away with it" each time!

"Mine is a four-figure salary," boasted the actor. "Go on—how much?" asked his friend. "£1 12s. 6d." was the reply.

Then there was the chap who was afraid of getting shot by a shooting star.

A Wayland man draws a big salary for testing scent. Paid through the nose, so to speak.

"I like to hear a man talk about his business," says a reader. How would you like to hear a dustman talking rubbish, old chap?

Glyn complains that now he has constructed a television set, his study-mates monopolise it. He simply can't get a "look-in."

Then there was the office-boy who came to work on stilts because he had been threatened with the sack if he didn't make big strides in future.

Mind your steps, lads!

"But the other boys—they are not in your House, yet they are in your team?" said Koumi Rao.

Figgins explained.

"This isn't a House match; it's a Form match—the Fourth against the Shell. There are fellows of both Forms in both Houses, of course. We have a House match on Saturday, and then those chaps will be against us."

"But you always play against Tom Merry?"

"Excepting in a school match. You see when the junior eleven plays another school, we play the best men from both Forms and both Houses. Tom Merry is captain of the junior eleven, and I'm vice-captain."

"But he is your rival?"

Figgins rubbed his nose thoughtfully. He wondered if it would ever be possible to make Koumi Rao understand that a fellow might have a rival, and yet be on the most cordial terms with him.

"Yes, in a way," he agreed. "Of course, we're up against the School House all the time. But when it's a question of standing up for St. Jim's we let all that go."

"You like one who is your rival?"

"Of course I do, if he's a decent chap."

"Bah!" said Koumi Rao. "Listen to me!" He lowered his voice. "In this game you play against him—and I have heard that there are many accidents in the game of football."

"Accidents happen sometimes," said Figgins.

"If an accident should happen to Merry you may become the captain of the junior eleven?"

"I shouldn't wonder."

"Then if I were in your place I should make it happen."

Figgins stared.

"Make it happen?" he repeated.

"It would be easy."

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"Well, you awful rascal!" said Figgins.

"What?"

"You—you—" Figgins broke off. "Perhaps you don't understand. But don't say anything like that again. I should have to punch your princely nose."

And Figgins stalked away.

"More trouble with the giddy Jam?" asked Monty Lowther, observing Figgins' expression.

Figgins snorted.

"He's been giving me advice about the footer," he replied. "I don't know whether we shall be able to knock things into him at all. What do you think was the tip he gave me?"

"Give it up!" said Tom Merry.

"Only to crook you in the match, Tommy, so as to become junior footer captain in your place," said Figgins.

"Oh crumbs!"

"Bai Jove!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I know whether to laugh or punch his nose," said Figgins. "Of course, he doesn't understand things."

"He will learn," said Tom Merry comfortingly.

"He had better," growled Figgins.

"He will find the New House a jolly warm corner if he doesn't."

And the footballers went on to the field.

The Jam stood watching the play with keen interest.

Although Piggy's methods with him were somewhat of the rough-and-ready order, the Jam seemed to like Figgins very much, and his precious advice to the New House junior had been dictated by friendship.

He watched Figgins' exploits in the Form match, and cheered and clapped as loudly as any of the New House fellows when Figgins scored the first goal.

Figgins was in great form.

The first half ended with one goal to nil for the Fourth Form, and Arthur Augustus D'Arcy patted Figgins on the back when the whistle went for the interval.

"Jolly good, deah boy!" said D'Arcy. "That was a vewy neat goal. I could not have scored that bettah myself."

Figgins put his hand on his heart and bowed, and the juniors chuckled. They had the impression that Arthur Augustus D'Arcy could not have scored that goal nearly so well.

In the second half the Shell attacked hotly, and Fatty Wynn in goal had plenty to do. But the fat Fourth Former was equal to the task.

A deadly shot from Tom Merry was just stopped, and after that the Shell did not have another chance.

They played hard right up to the finish, but the finish came without the score being changed on either side.

The Fourth Form came off the field winners by one goal to nil.

"Bettah luck next time, deah boy," said D'Arcy to Tom Merry. "I shall be playin' on your side next Saturday, you know."

Tom Merry grinned.

"Yes, I suppose that will mean another victory for Figgy," he remarked.

"Weally, Tom Mewwy, I did not mean that—"

"How do you feel, Tommy?" asked Figgins, coming up. "If you're fagged I'll make the Jam put off his little affair till to-morrow."

Tom Merry shook his head.

"That's all right; better get it over."

"He's hot stuff, you know," hinted Figgins.

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"I will try to be hotter."

"Right-ho! The old barn at half-past five, then."

"Yes."

Tom Merry walked away with Manners and Lowther after the match. The match had been a gruelling one, and he was breathing a little hard.

Lowther gave him a somewhat anxious glance.

"You don't want to risk being licked, Tom," he said. "They've licked us at footer, and we don't want two lickings in one day!"

"Can't put it off any longer," said Tom quietly. "Besides, the Jam wouldn't have it. He would pick a row with me, and we should have to have it out. Besides, I'm all right. Come and have some ginger-pop."

Soon after five the Terrible Three strolled out of gates with Kangaroo and Clifton Dane of the Shell and the chums of Study No. 6.

They reached the old barn, at some little distance from the school, and found the New House party all ready there.

Figgins & Co. and Redfern, Owen, and Lawrence were with the Jam.

The glitter came into Koumi Rao's eyes again as Tom Merry entered with his friends. Lowther put down the bag he carried, and produced a pair of boxing-gloves. Kerr produced another pair from under his coat.

The Jam uttered an exclamation:

"We are not in the school now. There is no need for gloves. I prefer to fight without gloves!"

"Shurrup!" said Figgins.

"If Tom Merry is afraid of being hurt—"

"Hold your silly tongue!" roared Figgins.

"I'll fight with or without gloves—I don't care a button!" said Tom Merry.

"You'll fight with gloves," said Figgins. "And if Koumi Rao talks any more rot, he'll fight me instead of you!"

"I'll keep time for you," said Kangaroo, taking out his watch.

Again Koumi Rao had something to say.

"I do not agree."

The Cornstalk stared at him.

"You are a friend of Tom Merry; you shall not keep time."

"Do you mean that I wouldn't give you fair play, you inky son of darkness?" demanded Kangaroo wrathfully.

"You—you worm!" said Monty Lowther. "Tommy, my son, I wouldn't soil my hands on such a chap if I were you. Take him away and bury him, Figgy."

Figgins looked worried.

"He can't help it," he said. "He was brought up in Borribhoola-Gha, and he doesn't know any better. Don't take any notice of his rot. Kangy can keep time."

"Not for that rotter," said Kangaroo, putting his watch away. "I don't want to have anything to do with him."

"Let a New House chap keep time," said Tom Merry. "It's all the same to me."

And, that having been arranged, the gloves were donned, and the adversaries faced one another. Koumi Rao declined to go through the customary ceremony of shaking hands, and Tom Merry was glad enough that he did. Kerr called time, and the first round started.

CHAPTER 12.

Fairly Licked!

ROUND the walls of the old barn the juniors stood, looking on, giving the combatants plenty of room.

Before the fight had fairly started the



Realising that he was exhausting himself in vain against Tom Merry, he flung off the gloves and threw them to the ground. Then he flung himself on the ground, clawing, screaming, and cursing.

number of onlookers increased. Fellows keen to see the "mill" had kept their eyes open, and they arrived in ones and twos.

Reilly, Kerruish, and Hammond of the Fourth rolled in, and then came Gore, Vavasour, and Thompson, and Pratt, Glyn, and several more. The old barn began to be crowded before the first round was over.

"We shall have the whole blessed school here soon," murmured Jack Blake.

"Time!"

Kerr called time, and the first round was over.

It had been warm, but, owing to the gloves, no damage was done.

But the look of the Jam showed that, gloves or no gloves, damage would be done before he had finished.

The Jam was not so tall as Tom Merry, and he was not nearly so strong; but he had a tigerish quickness and litheness that compensated for it. And in the knowledge of boxing he was evidently the equal of the Shell fellow.

The crowd of juniors looked on with great keenness as the second round started. It was likely to be a fight that would be remembered in the annals of the Lower School. Tom Merry was easily the best boxer in the Lower Forms, and at last he had met a foeman worthy of his steel.



Tom Merry's superior boxing skill, Koumi Rao dragged him with bare hands upon Tom Merry—striking, like a wild-cat!

The Jam attacked hotly, and now punishment began to be given and taken on both sides. Just at the close of the round, with a lightning upper-cut, he caught Tom Merry on the point of the chin and flung him backwards.

"My hat, Tom's down!"

"Bai Jove!"

The Jam's eyes blazed. Kerr began to count, and the Jam rushed forward, and Figgins swung him fiercely back.

"Hold on, you fool! You can't hit a man when he's down!"

"Let me go!"

"Stand back!"

Figgins fairly flung the Jam backwards.

The call of time came fortunately for

Tom Merry, though he would have been on his feet before the ten were counted. The heavy upper-cut had jarred him, and he was staggering a little as he went to the knee Lowther made for him.

Manners fanned his burning face. "That was a bad break, Tommy!" he murmured.

Tom nodded.

"Yes; he is all there."

"Look out for his upper-cut with his left—it's a daisy!" said Lowther.

"I'll look out," said Tom, with a faint smile. "It wants looking out for. He took me by surprise that time. I don't think it will happen again."

"Pile on him and squash him!" growled Kangaroo. "The black beast actually wanted to fall on you when you were down—the rotter! The New House chaps don't look proud of their giddy champion."

"Wathah not! Poor old Figgy looked awfully ashamed of the wottah."

"Time!"

Tom Merry stepped up briskly. His heart had not been in the fight. But it was in it now. Something of the bitterness of the Indian seemed to have imparted itself to Tom Merry.

The gleam in the English junior's eyes showed that he meant business, as he faced his dusky antagonist again.

Koumi Rao attacked hotly as before, and again he tried his upper-cut with his left, which had told so well once. But he did not take Tom Merry by surprise this time. His blow was stopped, and Tom Merry's right came home with stunning force right in the dusky face.

It was a sledgehammer blow, and the Jam reeled backwards and went to the ground with a crash.

And from Arthur Augustus there came a cheery chirrup: "Bwavo!"

The Jam sprang to his feet. His nose was streaming red, and there was red on Tom Merry's glove. The Indian's head was reeling from the shock, and his eyes were blazing with rage. He flung himself upon the Shell fellow like a tiger.

Hammer and tongs now—and the onlookers almost held their breath with excitement.

Blows were given and taken, but Tom Merry had the advantage all through the round. The Indian was groggy from that knockdown blow, and his ferocity did not

save him. He was knocked all round the ring, and he was on the point of collapse when time was called.

Figgins drew him to his knee to rest.

"Let me go on!" gasped the Jam. "I do not want to rest. Let me go on!"

"One minute rest," said Figgins.

"That's the rule."

"But I—I—"

"Save your breath, old chap! You'll need it all in the next round."

"I shall beat him!"

"You won't if you lose your temper, and fight like a wildcat. Try to keep your head."

"I will beat him—I will beat him!" hissed Koumi Rao.

"Save your breath, you ass!" said Fatty Wynn.

"Bah!"

"Time!" called Kerr.

The Jam had not profited by Figgins' advice, as he showed plainly enough in the fourth round. He did not keep his head. He piled in furiously, thinking only of attack, and of getting at his foe.

That was not the way to beat a cool, steady fellow, and a good boxer. In the fourth round Tom Merry simply played with him. His heavy drives came home again and again on the dusky, savage face, and the round finished with a driving right-hander that lifted the Jam fairly off his feet, and flung him into the arms of his seconds.

"I guess that finishes it," remarked Lumley-Lumley of the Fourth, who had just come in with two or three more keenly interested juniors.

"Yaas, wathah!"

"He can't go on," said Redfern.

"Time!"

Koumi Rao staggered into the ring. He had refused to listen to Figgins' advice to "chuck it." He would fight as long as he could stand; but already he was feeling that he was doomed to defeat. That thought roused all the ferocity in his nature, and he attacked Tom Merry like a tiger.

Tom Merry would willingly have spared him then, but it was impossible. He had to hit his hardest in self-defence.

Several of the Jam's blows came home, and Tom Merry's nose was streaming red now, and his mouth had a queer, crooked look. His left eye was winking and blinking incessantly, and a shade of purple was growing round it.

But the punishment he received was little as compared to that taken by Koumi Rao.

One of the Jam's eyes was quite closed, and bruises were showing all over his dark skin, and he was panting madly for breath.

Still he kept on.

"Time!"

At the call of time, Koumi Rao declined to stop—and Figgins & Co. had to drag him out of the ring, struggling.

"My hat!" said Manners. "A blessed tiger! What he wants isn't a fight, but a jolly good ragging!"

"Yaas, wathah!" said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, in utter disgust. "He hasn't the slightest idea of playin' the game. And to think that I was prepared to take that fellow up and make a friend of him!"

"Lots of pluck, though!" said Kangaroo. "He's coming on again."

The Jam reeled forward for the sixth round. It was plain to all that he was "done," but he refused to admit it. Whatever chance he might have had, he had thrown away by yielding to the savage promptings of his temper. He had no chance left now, but he meant to go on till he could go on no longer.

The sixth round finished with Koumi Rao gasping on his back.

Figgins & Co. did not have to urge him to come off then. He could not even rise to his feet.

"Time!"

"Don't let him go on, Figgins," called out Kangaroo.

"I will go on!" screamed the Jam.

"I will beat him! I will kill him!"

"Koumi Rao—"

"Let me go!"

Figgins shrugged his shoulders hopelessly.

The Jam staggered into the ring. He was swaying from side to side, and he

blinked round uncertainly for his foe through his closing eyelids. Tom Merry kept his hands down to his sides.

"He can't go on," he said. "Take him away, Figgins; I won't hit him again!"

"You shall—you shall!" hissed the Indian.

He attacked breathlessly.

Tom Merry contented himself with warding off the blind, furious blows that no longer had any strength behind them. Koumi Rao could not touch him, and he was exhausting himself in vain. He realised it, and, with a sudden snap of the teeth, he dragged off the gloves and threw them to the ground. Then he flung himself with bare hands upon Tom Merry—striking, clawing, scratching like a wildcat.

There was a shout of wrath and disgust from the juniors, and they closed into the ring.

Koumi Rao was seized by a dozen hands and dragged off.

They pitched him to the floor, and would have bumped him, too, but Tom Merry interposed.

"Let him alone! He's had enough, poor beast!"

"You'd better take your man away, Figgins!" said Monty Lowther savagely. "The beast isn't fit to be with decent chaps at all. Take the rotter home!"

And Figgins & Co. helped Koumi Rao out of the barn.

The fight was over, and Tom Merry was the victor. He was good for three or four more rounds yet, if there had been any more to face.

Koumi Rao had been licked—and among the spectators of the fight there was a general satisfaction in his licking. New House fellows as well as School House agreed upon that point—that if ever a chap deserved a thorough licking, Koumi Rao did—and they were glad that he had had it.

CHAPTER 13.

A Disgrace to the House!

KOUMI RAO sat breathing heavily in the armchair in Figgins' study.

He looked a wreck.

Figgins & Co. had done their best for him—but it was little they could do.

His dusky face had been bathed, and Figgins had obtained a raw beefsteak to put on his eyes. With the steak bound over his eyes, the Jam made a curious figure as he sat in the armchair.

Figgins & Co. were looking very grim.

They were utterly ashamed of their study-mate, and Figgins felt that he had come to the end of his tether. He had promised the Head that he would do his best for the new boy from the Far East. But what was to be done with a fellow who did not seem to understand the first principles of fair play? A fellow who wanted to pile on his adversary when he was down—who snatched off the gloves and started clawing in a fight?

Figgins felt that there was nothing to be done, and he was fed-up with the Indian—fed right up to the chin, as he gloomily confided to Kerr and Fatty Wynn.

The silence in the study was broken by a groan from the Jam.

"Feel bad?" growled Figgins.

"Yes, very bad."

"Then why couldn't you leave off when you were licked?"

"I lost my temper."

"Br-r-r-r!"

"But next time I shall beat him."

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Figgins snorted.

"There won't be any next time, Koumi Rao. Do you think any decent fellow would fight you again, after what you did?"

Koumi Rao gritted his white, glistening teeth.

"I will force him to! I will strike him!"

"You won't!" said Figgins curtly.

"If you try to get at Tom Merry any more you'll be ragged. A fellow isn't bound to fight a wildcat! You clawed at him like a tiger! Why, I saw a big scratch on his face when we left the barn!"

"I wish I'd killed him!"

"Shut up!"

"I hate him!"

"Hold your silly tongue, will you?"

The Jam gasped for breath.

"If you bother him any more, you'll get a ragging!" said Kerr. "Do you know what it is? You'll be frog-marched, and bumped and ducked in the fountain!"

"Bah!"

"And if you 'bah' at me, I'll jolly well start on you now!" said Kerr, his temper rising. "You've disgraced us, and disgraced the House! Time you shut up!"

The Jam was silent.

He did not fully understand the thoughts and feelings of the St. Jim's fellows; but he could understand the scorn and contempt he had read in every glance thrown at him since the fight in the barn.

That was painful enough to a proud nature accustomed to respect and servile attention, but there was more than that.

For the Jam had begun to entertain a sincere friendship for Figgins of the Fourth, and Figgins was precisely the fellow who seemed most utterly disgusted with him.

With a complete disregard for his feelings, the New House Co. discussed in his presence the possibility of getting him put into some other study, and mentioned, as a possibility too good to be expected, that he might be got a transfer to the School House. Indeed, they did not seem to think that he had any feelings at all now. A fellow who would not fight fairly could not claim to be sensitive on any point, according to the ideas of Figgins & Co.

"It is all the fault of Tom Merry!" the Jam muttered at last.

"It's all your fault!" snapped Figgins. "It isn't as if you were a funk. You've got plenty of pluck. Why couldn't you fight fairly?"

"It isn't in him," said Fatty Wynn, with a shake of the head. "You know what Shakespeare says—"

"Blow Shakespeare!" muttered Figgins crossly.

"East is east, and west is west, and never the twain shall meet," pursued Fatty.

"That isn't Shakespeare, fathead! That's Kipling!"

"I don't care who it is; it's true!" said the fat Fourth Former. "I suppose after this you won't want to take him under your wing, Figgy?"

"Of course not!"

"You've done enough," said Kerr.

"More than enough, I think."

"It was rotten planting him in this study at all. It wasn't fair on us," said Kerr. "Ratty seems to be awfully fond of him. Let Ratty have him, and be hanged!"

"If we could only get him put into the School House!" sighed Fatty Wynn.

"I'm ashamed of belonging to a House that's got such a wildcat in it!"

"He ought to have been put in the School House in the first place!"

growled Figgins. "They would have been willing to have him before they knew him."

"There'd be a row over there if he were planted on them now," said Kerr, with a shake of the head.

"Well, I suppose we couldn't expect 'em to stand it."

"No fear!"

"But why should we stand it?" asked Figgins.

"We've got to, I suppose."

"It's rotten, I think."

"Rotten isn't the word," said Kerr. "It's sickening! At least, we can try to get him put into some other study."

"Would that be fair on the chaps there, though?"

"Might have a study to himself, though," suggested Fatty Wynn. "The other fellows wouldn't mind crowding a bit, so as not to dig with him."

"That's a good idea!"

The Jam sprang to his feet. He could stand no more. He tore the beefsteak from his eyes, and hurled it to the floor, and turned a dark and passionate glance upon the New House juniors.

They looked at him grimly. His anger did not matter to them, and they were quite prepared to rag him if there was any outbreak of temper.

They were, as Figgins said, quite fed-up with him. They had taken him up out of kindness, and had been good to him, in spite of his queer ways, and he had repaid them by disgracing them and their House. That was the limit, and their patience was more than exhausted.

"You do not want me in this study?" the Jam asked passionately.

"Of course not!"

"You say that I disgraced you—I, a prince, the lord of a great land in India; I, whose nod is a command to a thousand slaves!"

"Oh, blow your thousand slaves! If there are slaves in your country, it's high time you got it in the neck, and had the place taken out of your hands!"

"I will not stay here to disgrace you, then!" said the Jam. "I will go!"

"Well, that's about the only decent thing you can do!" agreed Figgins.

"If you'll do that, we're willing to overlook the rest you've done, and say no more about it," said Kerr, with a breath of relief.

The Indian's features worked. Figgins, as he glanced at the bruised face, and saw the dark features twitch, felt a pang of remorse. After all, the boy was a savage. He was a prince, but by blood and breeding he was not on a level with the poorest "kid" in England. They were the heirs of a thousand years of civilisation; and was it just to judge, according to their standards, this son of a race of tyrants and shedders of blood?

"I—I didn't mean to rub it in too hard," said Figgins awkwardly. "But—but—"

"You have said that you would be my friend," said the Jam, with a break in his voice. "I have said that I will try to learn your ways—I, a prince, will try to learn of you. But you despise me!"

"I—I can't help that," said Figgins. "I suppose you don't understand. But a blessed hooligan in a slum in this country wouldn't fight as you did."

"I will not do so again."

"You'd be pretty well slaughtered if you did!" said Figgins. "You put yourself right outside the pale. And the worst of it is that you don't understand."

"I will try," said the Jam humbly.

Figgins looked dubiously at his chums.

(Continued on page 18.)



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

HALLO, Chums! "Never better than at present!" This is the general verdict of readers on the recent numbers of the GEM. "The St. Jim's and Rookwood stories are great," says one chum. "Keep it up!" "I have been taking the GEM regularly for ten years," says another, "but never have I been such an enthusiastic supporter of it as at present. The stories are so sincere and true-to-life—not like the far-fetched, impossible tales one sees in many boys' papers."

They are typical extracts from the many readers' letters I receive, and it gives me much pleasure to know that I have such a satisfied following. It is not an easy matter to satisfy everybody, for all readers have their particular likes and dislikes regarding stories. Everyone to his or her taste, and it's up to me to please everyone—as far as this is possible. I can safely say that I am achieving this, for very rarely does a letter of dissatisfaction reach me.

Another grand programme is booked to appear next Wednesday. Topping the bill is Martin Clifford's thrilling long yarn of St. Jim's, entitled:

"THE KIDNAPPED HEADMASTER!"

In this story our author has combined school frolic and fun with unusual, exciting adventure, with the Head of St. Jim's playing a leading part. The sudden and inexplicable disappearance of Dr. Holmes gives rise to alarm in the school, and there are many conjectures as to what's happened to him. But fears are dispelled when a telegram is received from the Head saying he is safe in London. But little do St. Jim's realise that the telegram is a fake—that the Head has been kidnapped by a gang of crooks, and is being held a prisoner in an old cottage on Wayland Moor, the price of his freedom being five hundred pounds!

This is a yarn that will win the highest approbation of every reader, and take a leading place among Martin Clifford's very finest efforts.

The next item is Owen Conquest's lively Rookwood story:

"MANDERS PUTS HIS FOOT IN IT!"

Of course, Mr. Manders needs no introduction to readers, and the fact that the mean-tempered master of the Modern House lands himself in trouble will bring forth more chuckles than sympathy! Mr. Manders has a perfect genius for interfering in matters that do not concern him—usually to his own regret. But never does he repent

so deeply his inquisitiveness as when, in next week's humorous yarn, he makes himself the victim of a jape intended for someone else, and becomes the laughing-stock of the school.

To conclude this grand issue, the Jester awards six more match foot-balls for readers' jokes, and Monty Lowther "keeps the pot a-boiling" with his sparkling humour. Don't forget to order your GEM early, chums.

A TRICK SENTENCE.

Who likes a puzzle? You all do? Fine! Here's a good one I came across the other day, so I'm passing it on. You can try it on your pals after you have had a go at it. The problem is to solve the meaning of this word jumble:

If the B mt put; but if the B. putting:

That's all, and if you can make sense of it, I'll take my hat off to you. It baffled me. But just a word of advice. The colons and full stop mean a lot, and are not merely put in for punctuation. If you can find out what their sound signifies, you will be very near solving the puzzle. The solution appears at the end of this chat.

LANCASHIRE'S CUP RECORDS.

"Is it true," writes J. Barnes, of Manchester, "that a football team once won the F.A. Cup without having a goal scored against them?" Yes, and it was a team in your own county, Jim—Preston North End. They performed this remarkable feat in the 1888-9 season. In addition, Preston won the League Championship the same year without conceding a goal to their opponents! Only one other club has ever accomplished the double of winning the Cup and the First Division Championship, and that was Aston Villa.

As a matter of fact, Lancashire is rich in football records. In 1903 Bury equalled Preston's performance in the Cup by winning the trophy without losing a goal. In the Final they beat Derby County by the record score of 6-0!

Preston also hold the record for the highest score in a Cup-tie. In 1887 they beat Hyde by 26-0! And to cap these famous feats of Lancashire clubs, Blackburn Rovers have won the Cup six times. Only Aston Villa can equal this. But Blackburn are the only existing club to have won the "tin-pot" three times in succession!

HIS SPARE-TIME JOB!

The Costa Rica Police were greatly perturbed. A new issue of coins had been put in circulation, and in consequence counterfeiters had promptly got busy. The country became flooded with spurious coins, and the police were helpless to put a stop to the flow. They followed up all sorts of clues, they traced counterfeit coins from one owner to another, and made endless inquiries, but they always came to a dead end.

Months went by; the spurious money continued to circulate, and the police were no nearer discovering the source of the supply. Then one day they got an important clue, and much to their astonishment it led them to the national prison! They searched the place, and it was in Cell 40, occupied by Jose Solano, that their investigations came to an end.

There in the cell Solano had all the counterfeiter's equipment, and he it was who, in the safety of the prison, had been moulding the coins and circulating them. His excuse was that prison life was rather boring, and he had occupied his time in this way. He'll have a lot more time on his hands now—a few more years in prison, in fact!

CHRISTMAS IS COMING!

No, I'm not referring to next Christmas, but the last one. You see, at the time of writing, it hadn't yet arrived for the good people of Lord Howe Island, off the Pacific Coast of Australia. Owing to a strike in Australian ports, no supplies and toys for Christmas could be shipped. So the inhabitants have had to postpone their Yuletide festivities until such time as the ship comes in. Let's hope that it has arrived by now, and that Father Christmas has paid his annual visit to the children on the island.

THRILLS IN SOUTH AMERICA!

Ever heard of Harry Wharton & Co., the cheery chums of Greyfriars? No! Well, now's your opportunity to make their acquaintance by reading the grand new series of adventure yarns now running in our tip-top companion paper—the "Magnet." These famous schoolboy chums have made the long trip to Rio to meet Jim Valentine, once their pal in the Greyfriars Remove—a journey accompanied by unexpected thrills—through which they have safely passed. But these are nothing compared with the exciting times that lie ahead of Harry Wharton & Co. in South America. Make a point of reading "SHADOWED IN SOUTH AMERICA!" You'll find it in the grand issue of the "Magnet," on sale Saturday, price 2d.

PUZZLE SOLUTION.

Did you succeed in solving the meaning of that trick sentence? Here is the answer:

If the grate be empty, put coal on (colon), but if the grate be full, stop putting coal on

Ingenious, isn't it?

TAILPIECE.

Johnny (at the Zoo): "I wonder what that tiger would say if he could talk?"

Jimmy: "He would say: 'Pardon me, but I am a leopard!'"

FEN PALS COUPON
29-2-36

THE EDITOR.

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 1,463.

Figgins had a very tender heart, and when a fellow gave in to him Figgy immediately felt inclined to take back all he had said. To be hard on a fellow who threw himself on his mercy was impossible to Figgins.

"What do you say, you chaps?" asked Figgins hesitatingly.

"I'd like to give him a chance if it would be any good," said Kerr, with equal hesitation. "But—but would it? Look here, Koumi Rao, if you don't understand how badly you've acted, you can take our word for it, I suppose?"

"Yes, yes," said the Jam.

"Then tell Tom Merry you're sorry you did it, and stop all your silly rot about hating him, and we'll call it square."

The Jam's eyes blazed.

"Never!"

"But you are sorry, aren't you?" said Figgins.

"No, I hate him!"

"That's enough for me!" said Kerr, rising. "I'm fed-up!"

Kerr left the study without another word. Fatty Wynn glanced doubtfully at Figgins, and followed him out. The Jam watched them go, and then his dark eyes turned upon the study leader. Figgins was hesitating.

"And you," said the Jam in a low voice—"you will not be my friend?"

"I can't," said Figgins honestly.

"It's impossible. I wanted to, but you won't let me. I think you ought to apologise to Tom Merry for clawing him, and you ought to stop all that stage-play rot about hatred and so on."

"I cannot."

"Well, you can't want my friendship very much if it's not worth enough to you to make you do a decent thing," said Figgins tartly.

And Figgins followed the Co.

The Jam remained alone in the study. He stood in silence for some minutes, and then threw himself into the chair in utter dejection.

But suddenly he sat upright, his eyes gleaming, his dusky hands clenched, his glistening white teeth set hard.

"It is all due to him—to Tom Merry," he muttered. He was muttering in his own language, and there was no one at St. Jim's who could have understood the wild words that followed, even if they had been heard. "He is my enemy—my enemy always! His uncle robbed my father of his kingdom; he has robbed me of my friend! Shall he live to triumph over a prince of Bundelpore?"

A terrible look came over the dusky face.

Jameson of the Third, who was passing the study, glanced in as he heard a muttering voice in a strange language, and he started and shivered at the sight of the Jam's face, and hurried away.

As he afterwards confided to his chums in the Third, the fellow's chivvy simply gave him the creeps, and he was of the opinion that Koumi Rao wasn't quite right in his head. But Jameson would have had a worse attack of the creeps if he had known the dark and terrible thoughts that were passing in the Jam's mind.

CHAPTER 14.

The Sneak!

MR. RATCLIFF, the master of the New House, half rose from the table when the Jam came into the dining-room in the New House to tea.

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His eyes were fixed upon the bruised and damaged face of the Prince of Bundelpore.

The Jam came in alone.

Figgins & Co. had gone over to tea in Study No. 6 in the School House, and they had not even thought of taking the Jam with them. They had not spoken to him since that exceedingly plain talk in Figgy's study.

The Jam, feeling lonely and miserable, and little comforted by the savage thoughts of vengeance that were in his mind, came into the dining-room. And immediately the Housemaster spotted his damaged visage, and inquired into the matter.

"You have been fighting, Koumi Rao!" he exclaimed.

"Yes, sir," said the Jam defiantly. He supposed that he was about to be punished, or at least reprimanded, and he was in a mood to be insolent to the Housemaster.

"You have been treated very badly," said Mr. Ratcliff. "It was wicked of any boy here to attack a new junior in such a savage manner. Was it Figgins?"

"No, sir."

"Point out the boy who has treated you so shamefully."

"It was not a boy of this House, sir."

The Jam's eyes were glinting now. He understood that the tuft-hunting Housemaster did not intend to punish him, but his adversary, and it did not even occur to him that the fellows expected him not to sneak. The juniors who were in the room glanced at him very expressively, but he did not understand, and he would not have cared if he had understood.

"Give me the boy's name," said Mr. Ratcliff.

"It was Tom Merry, sir."

"A bigger and older boy than yourself," said Mr. Ratcliff, who had had many a little trouble with the hero of the Shell. "It was brutal and cowardly of Merry to attack you."

"If you please, sir," spoke up Redfern, who happened to be having tea in the dining-room, funds being low in the study. "Merry didn't attack him, sir. It was a fair fight, and Koumi Rao challenged Tom Merry."

"I did not ask you to speak, Redfern."

"No, sir."

"Kindly keep silent."

Redfern bit his lip, and kindly kept silent. But his eyes gleamed with scorn at the Jam of Bundelpore.

"I shall report this matter to Merry's Housemaster," said Mr. Ratcliff. "After tea, Koumi Rao, you will come with me."

"Certainly, sir."

"Oh, you rotten sneak!" muttered Redfern in the Jam's ear, as Koumi Rao sat down to the table. "Why don't you tell him it wasn't Tom Merry's fault? Do you know that you will be getting Tom Merry into a row with his Housemaster if you don't own up that you forced him to fight you?"

"That is what I desire."

"Well, you—you—" Redfern almost choked with disgust. "Oh, there isn't a word for you! You're a disgrace to the House."

"What are you saying to Koumi Rao, Redfern?" came Mr. Ratcliff's acid voice.

"I—I was giving him some good advice, sir," stammered Redfern.

"Indeed! Kindly repeat what you said!"

Redfern's eyes met the Housemaster's fearlessly.

"I advised him to own up that he forced Tom Merry to fight him, sir. It's

only fair to Merry. He didn't want to fight."

"Is that all you said?"

"N-no, sir."

"What else did you say?"

"Rotten sneak!" said Redfern.

Some of the fellows grinned, but Mr. Ratcliff's brow was like thunder.

"Indeed? You will take a hundred lines, Redfern; and if you speak in abusive terms to Koumi Rao again I shall cane you!"

"Oh!" said Redfern.

When tea was over Mr. Ratcliff signed to the Jam to follow him, and crossed the quadrangle to the School House. A crowd of New House fellows watched them go, with feelings too deep for words.

"That's what the New House is coming to!" groaned Thompson of the Shell. "He's not satisfied with fighting unfairly; he's got to turn sneak and informer as well. What did they want to put him in this House for?"

"We'll jolly well make the House too hot for him!" growled Redfern.

Koumi Rao, careless and indifferent as to what the juniors might think of him, crossed the quadrangle at the heels of his Housemaster and entered the School House.

Mr. Railton, the master of the School House, was just coming out of the dining-room.

"A word, Mr. Railton," said the New House master, detaining him.

"Yes. What is it?" asked Mr. Railton, with a curious glance at Koumi Rao's sullen and damaged face.

"Look at that boy's face."

"Well?"

"Is that the way you consider a new boy—and a stranger from a distant country—should be treated on the second day he passes at this school?"

"I should say not, Mr. Ratcliff."

"I am glad you agree with me. I have come over to report Merry's conduct to you. I venture to suggest a severe punishment."

"I must first ascertain which was to blame," said Mr. Railton coolly. "Merry is not the boy to make an unprovoked attack, especially on a younger lad than himself. Blake, will you kindly call Merry of the Shell?"

"Certainly, sir."

Jack Blake ran up to Tom Merry's study, where the Terrible Three were at tea; he burst into the room excitedly.

"Hallo! What's wanted?" asked Tom Merry.

"You are!"

Tom Merry sighed.

"More trouble! What's the matter now?"

"Ratty's brought the nigger over to show his chivvy to Railton. Looks to me as if the beastly worm has been sneaking!"

"Might have expected it," said Lowther.

"Well, he couldn't keep the state of his face a secret," said Tom Merry indulgently. "And Ratty is just the kind of old bird to nose it all out. Come with me."

The Terrible Three went downstairs with Blake.

A crowd of fellows had collected in the hall, including Figgins & Co., who had had tea in Study No. 6.

"You have been fighting with Koumi Rao, Merry?" said Mr. Railton, scanning the face of the Shell fellow, which showed unmistakable signs of the punishment he had received in the fight in the barn.

"Yes, sir."

"It is against the rules to fight without gloves. Merry, as you know very

well; although perhaps the new boy does not."

"We had gloves on, sir."

Mr. Railton raised his eyebrows.

"Then the fight must have been a very brutal one for so much damage to be done to your faces, especially to Koumi Rao's."

"We fought it out, sir," said Tom.

"And what quarrel had you with the new boy?"

"None, sir."

"Do you mean that Koumi Rao quarrelled with you?"

"I don't want to say anything, sir. I suppose we were equally to blame," said Tom.

"That is scarcely possible," broke in the New House master unpleasantly. "You are a bigger boy than Koumi Rao, and he was new here. It was utterly cowardly of you, Merry, to attack him as you have done."

"Does Koumi Rao say that I attacked him?" asked Tom Merry very quietly.

"Yes," said Mr. Ratcliff at once.

Koumi Rao was silent, giving a tacit assent to the declaration of the House-master. His only desire was to see Tom Merry suffer, and he thought of nothing else. But there was a shout of indignation from Figgins.

"It's not true, sir!"

"Silence, Figgins!" said Mr. Ratcliff, frowning.

"But it's not true!" persisted Figgins. "A dozen fellows know all about it, and they'll tell you the same."

"Leave this House at once, Figgins!" ordered Mr. Ratcliff.

The New House junior had to go, but there were plenty of School House fellows to speak. They had nothing to fear from Mr. Ratcliff.

"It's true, all the same," said Blake.

"Koumi Rao simply forced Tom Merry into it. If he says anything different he's a liar!"

"Yaas, wathah! I was a witness of the whole mattah, sir," said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy indignantly. "Koumi Wao challenged Tom Mewwy in the first place. He insulted him first, and Tom Mewwy passed it ovah in a weally magnanimous way, but he had to accept his challenge. And Koumi Wao insisted on fightin' aftah he was beaten."

"That puts quite a different light on the matter," said Mr. Railton dryly. "Merry appears to be the injured party here."

"I do not believe gloves were used, since so much damage was done," said Mr. Ratcliff acidly. "Do you assert, Merry, that gloves were used all the time?"

Tom Merry did not answer. He had worn gloves all the time, and Koumi Rao had not, but he did not wish to say so. But Mr. Ratcliff misunderstood his silence, and persisted in his demands for explicit information.

"Answer my question, Merry!"

"I have nothing to say, sir."

"I insist!"

"You have no right to insist, sir," said Tom Merry, with a flash in his eyes. "I am answerable to my own Housemaster."

"Please reply, Merry," said Mr. Railton.

"Very well, sir. I had gloves on all the time!"

"Yaas, wathah!"

Mr. Railton gave Tom Merry a quick look.

"Does that mean that Koumi Rao did not have the gloves on all the time?" he asked.

"I'd rather not say anything, sir!"

"I must ask you to reply."

"Well, he pulled 'em off in the last

round, sir," said Tom Merry reluctantly.

"And you did not?"

"I? Certainly not, sir!"

"Very well. Koumi Rao appears to have been the aggressor all the time, and to have acted very badly," said the School House master. "I do not see any reason for punishing you, Merry. You agree with me, Mr. Ratcliff?"

"No, sir," said the New House master sharply. "I do not. I do not believe Merry's statements!"

"There are plenty of witnesses," said Blake. "There were a dozen chaps of your own House there, sir, and they will tell you the same."

"Yaas, wathah!"

"I believe every word Tom Merry has spoken," said Mr. Railton quietly. "Koumi Rao has told, or, at least, implied a falsehood. He was the aggressor, and he should have admitted it. If he belonged to my House I should punish him. You are at liberty to do as you think, Mr. Ratcliff. The matter is ended as far as I am concerned."

And Mr. Railton walked into his study as a very plain hint that the matter was indeed ended.

There was nothing left for Mr. Ratcliff to do, but to beat an inglorious retreat; and he did so. And as the sullen-faced Indian followed him out of the School House, there was a derisive howl from the whole crowd:

"Sneak!"

CHAPTER 15.

For Vengeance!

THE next day the Jam realised to the fullest possible extent the "bad break" he had made.

Even in his own House the fellows would not speak to him.

Figgins passed him by with a clouded brow.

As if what the Jam had already done was not bad enough, he had added to his iniquities by sneaking, and trying to get Tom Merry into trouble with the masters.

He had not succeeded, but that did not make any difference. He had tried, and he had in so doing earned the scorn of every fellow in the school. As Figgins said to the Co., even Levi-son and Mellich would have stopped short of doing what the Jam had done.

"He's a rotter all through!" was Kerr's comment; and Figgins had to agree with him.

After morning lessons that day the Jam lingered in the passage, in the hope that Figgins would speak to him.

But Figgins walked by without appearing to be aware of him.

The Jam followed him out into the quad, and caught him by the sleeve. His dark face was very miserable as he looked at Figgins's scornful countenance.

Figgins jerked his arm away.

"Don't touch me," he said.

"You will not speak to me?" muttered the Jam.

"No, I won't!"

"Because—because—"

"Oh, what's the good of telling you the whys and wherefores?" growled Figgins. "You wouldn't understand."

"But I—I—"

"Why did you want to sneak to Ratty for?"

"The sahib master asked me."

"Why didn't you own up it was your fault, then?" said Figgins. "Ratty wouldn't have licked you. He's too fond of titles to lick you!"

"I did not think of that."

"You were afraid of being licked."

"No, no!"

"Then what did you do it for?"

"I wanted Merry to be punished!"

Figgins surveyed him with a look of utter disgust.

"Punished! He wasn't to blame. You drove him into fighting you; he let you off first, after you insulted him, when many fellows would have wiped the floor with you. Then you worried him into fighting you, and got the licking you were asking for. And then you wanted him punished for licking you in a fair fight—fair on his side, at any rate. What are you made of?"

"I hate him!"

"Oh, shut up!"

"Then—then you will not speak to me?"

"No, I won't. You make me sick. If you want decent fellows to speak to

(Continued on the next page.)

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you, you will have to be decent. Why, you were practically telling lies to get Tom Merry punished!"

"I would do more than that!"

"The best thing you can do is to get back to India!" said Figgins scornfully. "We've no use for fellows of your sort in this country!"

"You despise me?" muttered the Jam.

"Why, of course I do," said Figgins. "Don't you know that a fellow oughtn't to tell lies and tell tales?"

"In India it is different."

"I suppose it is," grunted Figgins. "That's the only excuse there is for you. You gas a good bit about your blessed dignity as a prince. Why, there isn't a kid of the lowest possible class in this country who wouldn't be ashamed to do what you've done!"

The Jam's lips quivered.

"I am not English," he said. "But—but I admire your ways; I should like to learn to be like you, if you will be my friend."

"My hat! I wish you wouldn't put it like that!" groaned Figgins, whose tender heart was moved again. "You make me feel as if I were in the wrong to be down on you, when it's you that's in the wrong all the time. I don't want to be unfriendly. I'd like to help you. But how can a chap be chummy with a sneak?"

"I did not know—I did not understand. I will never do so again. I will be cut in pieces first."

"Well, that's better," said Figgins. "If you want to stop your blessed tricks, I'd like to help you, certainly. Look here, Tom Merry is a jolly decent sort, and anybody might be proud of knowing him. He never bears malice. I won't ask you to apologise to him, if that's so much against your giddy princely dignity. But go to him—I'll come with you—and tell him honestly you won't play the giddy goat again, and ask him to shake hands and forget all about it!"

The Jam seemed to shrink within himself.

"Take his hand—his! Never!"

"Why not?"

"I hate him!"

Figgins snorted.

"There you go again. You say you want to be better, but you always come back to that silly rot. Look here, I'm willing to be your friend, but so long as you say you hate anybody, I'm up against you. Understand that. It's rotten—it's un-British." That was the strongest term of condemnation Figgins could think of. "If you want to be on good terms with me, make up your mind to leave off hating Tom Merry. And the sooner the better."

"If he were gone," said the Jam slowly, "if he were not here, then I should hate nobody and you would be my friend."

Figgins gave a short laugh.

"I suppose Tom Merry isn't likely to leave St. Jim's to please you," he said.

"He might!"

"Oh, rats! Blessed if I don't think you're half off your silly rocker."

"But if he did—"

"But if he did, I suppose things would be different—unless you turned your confounded play-acting on to somebody else," said Figgins irritably.

"I hate nobody else. If he were not here, you would be my friend?"

"Oh, perhaps; I don't know."

The Jam walked away without speaking again. But his thoughts were very

busy. And they would have alarmed Figgins if he had been able to guess them.

The Jam did not speak to Figgins again. He seemed to have accepted his exclusion from the Co. with patience.

The Co. learned with satisfaction later in the day that Mr. Ratcliff had assigned Koumi Rao a study to himself. The Housemaster had intended to gratify Koumi Rao by that concession; but probably he gratified Figgins & Co. more than the Jam.

The Jam had his tea in the Hall, and after tea he wandered out into the quad by himself. His eyes glittered at the sight of the Terrible Three in the quadrangle. He came towards them, and the Shell fellows moved away. Their thought was that the Jam was looking for more trouble.

"Let me speak to you," said the Jam quietly.

"Well, what is it?" asked Tom Merry, as civilly as he could.

"There is something I want to say to you," said the Jam. "But I wish to say it to you alone."

"Look here, if you want more trouble, you'll have to look farther for it," said Tom Merry bluntly. "I'm not going to fight you again; I've had enough of you!"

"It is not that."

"Then what is it?"

"Will you not walk a little way with me, that I may speak to you? I am a stranger in this land, and perhaps I have done wrong. But it is not to fight you that I wish you to come with me."

Tom Merry hesitated.

But he was good-natured, and he felt that it would not be just to be so much "down" on the Jam as he would have been upon any other St. Jim's fellow who had done as Koumi Rao had done.

"If you chaps don't mind—" he began.

"Right-ho! We'll expect you on the footer ground," said Lowther, and he walked away with Manners.

"Now, what is it?" asked Tom.

"Will you not come with me where we can speak quietly?" asked the Jam. "I have something to say that is very important."

"Blessed if I know what it can be," said Tom Merry, puzzled. "But I don't mind taking a stroll, if that is what you mean."

"You are very good."

Tom Merry, puzzled and perplexed, walked with the Indian to the gates, and they took the lane towards the village. The Jam crossed the stile into the footpath, and Tom Merry paused there.

"Is there any need to go farther?" he asked.

"Yes, yes."

"But why?"

"I will explain."

Still more puzzled, the junior crossed the stile, and followed the Indian into the wood.

Koumi Rao turned from the path. There was a rustle in the trees, and a dark face looked at the juniors for a moment and vanished.

Tom Merry caught a glimpse of it, and recognised the man from India. But the face was gone in a moment.

"Is that a friend of yours?" asked Tom.

"What? Who?"

"That Hindu chap."

"I did not see him."

"He saw you, and he looked as if he knew you," said Tom Merry.

The Jam did not reply. He was evidently too busy with his thoughts, whatever they were, to think about the unknown Hindu. He led the way on, and stopped at last in a deep and dusky glade. Tom Merry was growing more and more impatient.

"Look here!" he exclaimed. "Tell me what you have brought me here for. I've got to get back for footer practice, and there isn't much time before dark."

The Jam turned and faced him. The glitter in his eyes struck Tom Merry, and he started back a little, in spite of himself.

"I will tell you," said the Jam, in a low, vibrating voice. "Stand where you are! If you attempt to flee—"

Tom Merry laughed scornfully.

"I'm not likely to run from you!" he exclaimed. "If you're not mad, tell me what you want."

The Indian laughed—a cold laugh, that made the junior start again. Koumi Rao's hand was hidden in his breast. It came out, and there was a flash of steel in the shadow of the trees.

Tom Merry's eyes opened wide. It was a knife that gleamed in the dusky hand of the Indian.

"I have brought you here," said the Jam, in a low, concentrated tone—"I have brought you here, my enemy, to your death!"

CHAPTER 16.

Good for Evil!

TOM MERRY gazed at him.

There was no fear in the Shell fellow's face, although, after one quick look, he realised that the Oriental was in deadly earnest, and that his words were not empty threats.

There was hate and murderous determination in the gleaming, black eyes now, and they looked at Tom Merry over the knife.

To run was impossible, even if Tom Merry had thought of it. He was alone in the deep wood with the Indian, and the savage Oriental was armed. To run was to invite a blow in the back. But Tom Merry did not think of running. His face had become a little pale, but there was no fear in his looks.

"I think you must be mad," said Tom, in a low, tense voice. "Don't you understand that you are in England now, not in India?"

"In India I would order you to be strangled by one of my slaves," said the Jam.

"But here—"

"Here I will slay you with my own hand."

"You madman! Put up that knife!" The Jam smiled—a fearful smile. His dark eyes scanned the junior's face, and he seemed disappointed that he did not read terror there.

"You are brave!" he muttered. "Perhaps it is better. I would not stain my hand with the blood of a coward."

"You won't find it so easy, knife and all," said Tom, watching the Jam closely, and ready for an attack. "But if you have any sense, you won't try it. Do you know what we do with murderers in England? We hang them!"

"They will not dare to hang a prince—"

"Well, as you are a kid, you may be shut up in a lunatic asylum instead," said Tom Merry.

"They cannot lay hands on me. I am a Jam—a prince of India!"

"That's where you make a mistake. One chap is as good as another in this

country," said Tom Merry coolly. "I suppose you could do a thing like this in India, and get off scot-free, though it's horrible to think that such things are possible anywhere. I think it was time my uncle jumped on Bundelpore and squashed it, if you are a good sample of the kind of chaps that grow there."

"You are an enemy, and I will kill you!"

Tom Merry could scarcely believe that the dark-skinned, savage-eyed Indian was in earnest. And yet he evidently was so.

Incredible as it seemed, the Hindu had brought him there to kill him—as he might have done with impunity under the deodars in the native State

With a sudden bound the Jam leaped at the boy he hated, and the clear steel flashed in the air.

But Tom Merry had not played football for nothing, and he knew how to avoid a charge.

A quick leap aside saved him from the Indian's rush, and the sweep of the knife cut through nothing but the foliage round him.

Koumi Rao reeled forward a little, carried over by his own impetus.

He recovered himself in an instant, and swung round. But he was not quick enough. Tom Merry knew that his life was at stake, and he did not lose a second. While the Indian was yet reeling forward, he struck out with all his strength.

and the knife fell into the grass from his relaxing fingers.

A moment more, and Tom Merry seized it, and leaped to his feet.

Koumi Rao, his dusky face convulsed with fury, rose on one elbow.

"Strike!" he hissed. "I do not fear you! I do not ask for my life! Strike!"

Tom Merry panted. Serious as the situation was, tragic as it had so nearly been, he felt a strange inclination to laugh. The idea of his using the knife—now that he had it in his possession—was ludicrous.

"You fool!" he said. "You uncivilised fool! Do you think I am going to hurt you? Lie where you are!"



Koumi Rao and the man from India were rolling in the grass in a desperate struggle as Tom Merry reached the glade. In the dusky hand of the man gleamed a dagger. The Jam had grasped his wrist to stop the deadly blow, but the junior was almost powerless in the grip of his enemy.

of Bundelpore. Koumi Rao had not yet learned the difference between his own country and the country he had come to, and, to his half-savage, half-childish Oriental mind, it would have been incomprehensible that a prince and a peasant should be regarded as exactly the same in the eyes of the law.

Tom Merry cast a quick glance round for something to use as a weapon. But there was nothing. He had only his bare hands to oppose the deadly weapon of the Hindu. Yet he did not despair.

Koumi Rao was watching him like a cat.

Tom knew that a spring was coming—a spring like that of the Indian tiger, whom in so many respects the Jam resembled.

It came!

Koumi Rao faced round with the knife upraised—just in time to get the blow full in the face, instead of on the side of the head.

Crash!

The Jam fell as if he had been shot. In a twinkling Tom Merry was upon him. As the Jam tried to rise, another crashing blow in the face levelled him with the ground. And then Tom Merry's knee was on his chest, and his grasp was on the dusky wrist.

The Indian struggled like a wildcat.

Hurt and dazed as he was, it would still have gone hard with Tom Merry if he could have released his right hand.

But Tom took care of that. His grip on the Indian's wrist was like iron. He twisted the wrist till a shriek of agony burst from Koumi Rao's lips,

He turned away.

Koumi Rao leaped to his feet. He was dazed and dizzy, and he staggered, and held on to a tree for support.

"What are you going to do?" he hissed.

Tom Merry looked at him steadily. "I've stopped you," he said. "I'm going to throw this knife into the river as I go back. And I must report what has happened at the school. I'm sorry, but you can't be allowed to stay at St. Jim's. You're not safe. The Head will have to know what you have tried to do, and he will send you away. I think you ought to be put in a lunatic asylum!"

He strode away without another word.

His face broke into a smile as he reached the footpath. He thrust the

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knife into his pocket; he did not want to be seen carrying such a weapon.

"The fool!" he muttered. "Did he think he would be allowed to stay at St. Jim's unpunished if he had struck me with that thing? He must be potty!"

Then the junior started.

Under the trees, in the growing dusk, he caught sight of the man from India, watching him. Had the man seen that curious happening in the wood, without interfering? Tom Merry wondered. He knew now that the stranger had lied the other day when he said that he was a tourist, and was returning immediately to London. He was evidently still hanging about the neighbourhood of the school—for what?

The man disappeared into the wood.

Tom Merry went on slowly towards the stile.

The Hindu had gone into the trees, in the direction of the glade where Tom Merry had left the dazed and defeated Jam.

Was he a confederate of the Indian junior? Had he been there to aid in the murderous deed? Tom dismissed the thought as it came into his mind, for the man had not lent his aid.

If he knew what was happening, he had kept clear of it.

But Tom Merry felt strangely uneasy.

The Hindu was after no good—he was sure of that. Was it possible that he meant harm to the Jam? It was about Koumi Rao that he had asked so many questions the other day.

Who was he? What did he want?

Tom Merry's steps slackened.

From the deep shadows and stillness of the wood there came a sudden ringing cry—a cry so full of terror and fury that it made the junior's blood run cold.

Tom Merry stopped dead.

He knew who had uttered that cry. It came from the lips of the Jam. He was sure of that.

But what—

In the silence of the wood, still and deserted in the falling night, there came a sound of a furious struggle.

Tom Merry did not hesitate.

He dashed into the wood, running at top speed in the direction of the sound,

breaking through thorn and thicket, careless of scratches.

In a few seconds he came out upon the glade where he had left the Jam.

Two forms were rolling in the trampled grass in a desperate struggle.

One was the Indian junior, and the other was the man from India. And in the dusky hand of the pretended tourist gleamed a dagger.

Koumi Rao had grasped his wrist—as, ten minutes before, Tom Merry had grasped Koumi Rao's own wrist to stop a deadly blow.

But the boy was almost powerless in the grip of the strong man, and his struggles could not have lasted many minutes.

At that moment Tom Merry did not think of the treachery of the Indian junior, of the dark and deadly purpose for which Koumi Rao had brought him there.

He did not stop to think at all.

He dashed into the fray, and his right fist, clenched hard, struck the man from India behind the ear, and he fell helplessly upon his victim.

In a twinkling Tom Merry had seized the dagger.

The ruffian, dazed, half-stunned by the sudden and unexpected blow, staggered to his feet. His dark face was writhing with fury. He sprang towards Tom Merry, but he reeled back as Tom raised his hand with the dagger in it.

"Keep your distance, you hound!" said Tom, between his teeth.

Koumi Rao leaped to his feet, panting.

"Give me the knife!"

"Has he hurt you, Koumi Rao?"

"No, no. Give me the knife! He is Ahmed Dal. He came here to kill me! He shall die!"

"A precious pair of you!" said Tom Merry. "I shall not give you the knife!"

"He will escape—"

The man from India settled that question as Koumi Rao was speaking by dashing into the bushes.

Tom Merry would not have struck him, but if Koumi Rao could have obtained a weapon at that moment his cousin and rival for the throne of Bundelpore would never have escaped from the wood alive. The crashing of

the thickets died away in the distance as the Hindu fled.

Koumi Rao ground his teeth.

"He has escaped!"

"Let him!" said Tom Merry. "You can inform the police, and he will be arrested. He will get five years for this, the rascal! So he is your cousin?"

"Yes; he is Ahmed Dal."

There was a pause.

The face of the Indian junior was working strangely, and Tom Merry was surprised by the change in it.

"You have saved my life!" he said, in a strained, husky voice.

Tom Merry nodded.

"I suppose I have," he assented.

"After—after what I did! I would have slain you!"

"Well?"

"Yet you come to my aid. Do you know what Ahmed Dal would have done if you had not been so quick? He would have killed you, too, rather than have allowed me to escape!"

"Yes; he looked that kind of merchant," agreed Tom Merry. "Lucky that I was too quick for him, as well as for you, Koumi Rao."

To Tom's surprise the Indian junior came towards him and knelt at his feet, and, taking the junior's right hand, placed it upon his forehead.

Tom Merry watched him in amazement.

"Look here, what's the little game?" he demanded.

And Koumi Rao replied:

"You have risked your life to save me. I am a prince of India, and I am grateful. My life, my land, and my slaves, they are all yours!"

"Oh!" murmured Tom Merry.

"I have wronged you. I have hated you, and sought to kill you!" said the Jam brokenly. "And for revenge you have helped me and saved my life. How can I reward you? Say what you will!"

"My dear chap," said Tom Merry, moved, in spite of himself, "that's all right."

In an English boy the actions of the Jam would have been ludicrous. But in the dark, passionate Oriental they seemed quite natural. And he was evidently in deadly earnest. His heart, brave and generous, in spite of the

(Continued on page 28.)



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THE JAPE THAT PREVENTED A ROOKWOOD BURGLARY!

The MIDNIGHT MARAUDER!



Mr. Poggers turned suddenly in the darkness, facing Mornington. At the same moment, Morny's uplifted arm swept forward, and the contents of the can of red paint flew! Swoosh! It came over the footpad's face in a drenching shower of fluid. "Gurrrrh!" gurgled Mr. Poggers.

By OWEN CONQUEST.

Following Manders' Footsteps!

"OLD clo'!" Mr. Manders spun round like a humming-top as he heard the sound of those disrespectful words.

The long, lean Modern master of Rookwood, with his quick, jerky strides, was going down to the gates. He passed Jimmy Silver & Co. of the Classical Fourth, who carefully refrained from smiling till he had passed.

It was a fact that Mr. Manders looked rather shabby that afternoon. He was wearing an old, grey overcoat. It was such a very old overcoat that it might almost have been an heirloom in the Manders family. Not only had it seen its best days, but it had seen the last of them a long, long time ago.

Nevertheless, it was an exaggeration to regard Roger Manders as looking like an old-clothes man, and Jimmy Silver & Co. certainly would never have dreamed of calling out "old clo'!" as he passed.

But as Mr. Manders spun round in his tracks he saw no one at hand but the chums of the Classical Fourth. He did not see Leggett of the Modern Fourth, because Albert Leggett was carefully blotted from sight behind the massive trunk of one of the ancient Rookwood beeches. So Mr. Manders had no doubts!

"Silver!" he rapped.

"Yes, sir," said Jimmy politely.

"Did you speak?"

"No, sir."

"Did you, Lovell?"

"No, sir," answered Arthur Edward Lovell cheerfully.

"One of you spoke, uttering a disrespectful expression!" said Mr. Manders, his voice trembling with anger. "Was it you, Raby?"

"No, sir," said Raby.

"Then it was you, Newcome, who called out 'old clo'!'"

"Oh, no, sir!" said Newcome. "I never spoke, sir."

Mr. Manders cast a sharp glance round. Someone had called—that was certain. Only the Fistical Four were to be seen. Jimmy Silver & Co. knew that Leggett was behind the beech-tree, because they had seen him dodge behind

Slog Poggers' latest attempt to get his thieving hands on the Head's notecase is no more successful than his previous efforts!

it. Mr. Manders did not suspect it, and they were not likely to tell him.

"If you four boys belonged to my House," said Mr. Manders bitterly, "I would cane you with the greatest severity."

"Glad we don't belong to your House, sir!" said Lovell.

"You had better not add impertinence to disrespect and untruthfulness, Lovell!" hooted Mr. Manders.

"Who's untruthful?" demanded Arthur Edward Lovell belligerently.

"It was not one of us who called out, sir," said Jimmy Silver hastily.

"I cannot believe that statement,

Silver, as there is no one else in sight," snapped Mr. Manders.

"Then you may please yourself, of course, sir," said Jimmy.

"I shall take you to your Form-master," said Mr. Manders. "Follow me at once to your House!"

"Very well, sir," said Jimmy. "But we never—"

"Silence!"

Turning back from the gates, the long-legged Modern master strode away towards the Head's House, and the chums of the Fourth followed. It was a great relief to Leggett, and as soon as they were at a safe distance he dodged away and vanished.

Across the quadrangle, at a rapid rate, went Mr. Manders. After him went Jimmy Silver, Lovell, Raby, and Newcome.

Lovell took the lead of the four, walking behind Mr. Manders, imitating his jerky stride. Jimmy, Raby, and Newcome, catching on at once to the joke, strung out in single file behind Lovell, also imitating the Modern master's jerky method of progression.

Dozens of fellows in the quadrangle stared at the absurd sight, and grinned and chuckled. Mornington cut across and joined on at the tail of the procession, also putting on an exaggerated imitation of Mr. Manders' jerky stride.

"Ha, ha, ha!" came a yell from a dozen quarters.

Oswald and Rawson, Townsend and Topham, scudded up and joined on. Then Tubby Muffin, grinning all over his fat face, attached himself to the

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tail. There were now ten Classical juniors strung out in a long file behind Mr. Manders, all jerking along in imitation of the Modern master.

"You young sweeps, what are you up to?" asked Bulkeley of the Sixth, hurrying up.

"It's all right, Bulkeley; Manders told us to do this," said Lovell.

"He's taking us for a walk, Bulkeley."

"We're following in father's footsteps!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look here!" exclaimed Bulkeley. "You jolly well stop it! You—"

Mr. Manders glanced round over a bony shoulder. Instantly the procession ceased to process, as it were. The Modern master gave Bulkeley a frown.

"Kindly do not interfere, Bulkeley," he rapped.

"But, sir—" began the Rookwood captain.

"I am taking these boys to their Form-master, to report them for insolence. I will not allow you to intervene, Bulkeley."

"Oh, very well, sir!" said Bulkeley, and he backed off.

If Manders chose to be "guyed" like that, in sight of everyone, Bulkeley had no objection.

Morny began to chant a parody of an old song:

"We're following in Manders' footsteps,

We're following the dear old lad,
He's lost his clobber from Savile Row.

And pinched a coat from an old scarecrow!

His clothes are simply horrid,

His temper's very bad;

We're following in Manders' footsteps, yes,
We're following the dear old lad!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" came a hilarious yell from a hundred fellows, at least.

Amid the howls of laughter, Mr. Manders caught a part of Morny's improvised parody. He glared round.

"Mornington!" he thundered. "I did not tell you to follow me. What are you doing?"

"I'm following in your footsteps. I'm following the dear old lad!" sang Morny in reply.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Morny, you ass, shut up!" exclaimed Erroll.

"Rats!" retorted Mornington. "Now then, you fellows, all together—chorus!"

Morny burst into song again, and a dozen fellows joined in. Mr. Manders glared at Mornington as if he could have bitten him. Then he whisked on to the Head's House, with the procession at his heels again. Nearly all Rookwood was looking on by that time, with howls of merriment. From the doorway of the House Mr. Dalton, the master of the Fourth, looked on—without merriment. Richard Dalton stared blankly at first, and then frowned.

Up the steps came Mr. Manders. Mr. Dalton stepped out to meet him. The chorus stopped at once at the sight of the Fourth Form master. Some of the fellows who had been "guying" Manders rather wished they hadn't when they realised that their own "beak" was a witness of the proceedings.

Sudden silence fell upon the whole hilarious crowd as Richard Dalton emerged from the House.

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Six for Morny!

"MR. MANDERS," said Richard Dalton, "what does this mean—this ridiculous scene?"

"I ordered four boys of your Form, sir, to follow me!" hooted Mr. Manders. "The rest, sir, followed from the irrepressible impudence that seems natural to boys of your Form and House, sir!"

"Really, Mr. Manders—"

"I demand the immediate and severe punishment of these four, for treating me with disrespectful insolence!"

"But what have they done?" asked Mr. Dalton. "Silver, is it possible that you have ventured—"

"Certainly not, sir!" answered Jimmy.

"We've done nothing, sir, except to follow Mr. Manders across the quad, as he ordered us to do," said Arthur Edward Lovell meekly.

"What have they done, Mr. Manders?"

"I will tell you, sir," thundered the Modern master. "You are probably aware, sir, that when taking a walk in Coombe Lane a day or two ago, I was robbed of my overcoat by a lawless ruffian, a man called Poggers—"

"Yes, sir; and I am aware that these boys of my Form recovered the stolen article for you," said Mr. Dalton.

"That is neither here nor there, sir. The coat was damaged—several buttons pulled off—and while it is under repair, sir, I have had to wear this old coat!" snorted Mr. Manders. "These boys, sir, seeing me in this old overcoat, had the audacity—the insolence—to call out 'Old clo'!' as I passed them!"

"We never did, sir!" exclaimed Jimmy. "It was another fellow who called out from behind a tree. Mr. Manders never saw him."

"Nonsense!" exclaimed Mr. Manders. "I saw no one else! Mr. Dalton, I demand—"

"You have heard what Silver says, sir," said Mr. Dalton quietly. "I see no reason for disbelieving his statement!"

"Who was the boy?" demanded Mr. Manders. "If Silver saw him, he knows who it was."

"It was a Modern fellow, sir," said Jimmy.

"Another false statement!" said Mr. Manders. "No boy of my House would be guilty of such bad manners, such disrespect! You need say no more, Silver! You are speaking untruthfully!"

"I'm doing nothing of the kind!" retorted Jimmy. "I'm not going to give the fellow's name; but I saw him, and it was a Modern chap—"

"Silence! Mr. Dalton, I demand the punishment of these insolent boys!"

"I can administer no punishment, sir, when I fully believe every word that Silver has spoken," answered Richard Dalton quietly.

Mr. Manders breathed hard through his long, thin nose. He was too intensely angry and irritated to believe Jimmy Silver. He felt rather like a tiger that saw its victim escaping. His gleaming eye singled out Mornington. If there was a doubt about what Jimmy Silver & Co. might or might not have said, there was no doubt about what the reckless dandy of the Fourth had sung.

"That boy, sir," said Mr. Manders, with a long, thin finger pointing at Valentine Mornington, "repeated the impudent gibe—I hardly think he will venture to deny it. That boy, sir, alluded to my coat as having been purloined from a scarecrow, sir!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Silence! Mornington, do you admit—"

"Only my fun, sir!" said Mornington. "No offence to Mr. Manders. Just clean, wholesome fun, sir!"

"Mornington, follow me to my study. I shall cane you severely for such insolence to a member of Dr. Chisholm's staff!"

Mornington did not say another word; but he winked at the crowd of fellows as he went up the steps, and left them chuckling behind him. Mr. Manders followed him into the House, no doubt with the intention of seeing that Morny was not let off too lightly.

Arrived in Mr. Dalton's study, the Fourth Form master picked up a cane, and pointed to a chair with it.

"Bend over that chair, Mornington!" he said.

"Oh, certainly, sir!" yawned Morny. He bent over the chair.

The cane came down with a swish that quite banished the grin from Morny's cheeky face. At the second swish he set his lips. At the third, he had to grit his teeth to keep back a yell. Richard Dalton did not often lay the cane on hard; but there were occasions when he considered it necessary to put some beef into it, and this was one of the occasions.

At the third stroke he paused. He was laying the cane on the table, when Mr. Manders barked:

"Mr. Dalton, it is surely not your intention to allow this impudent boy to escape so lightly?"

"Really, Mr. Manders—"

"This boy, sir, has pointed the finger of mockery at a member of Dr. Chisholm's staff in the quadrangle, under the eyes of the whole school!" snorted Mr. Manders. "I demand, sir, that this boy be adequately punished."

"If you are not satisfied, sir—"

"I am far from satisfied, Mr. Dalton! Favouritism to a boy who has insulted a master, sir—"

"Please say no more, Mr. Manders. Mornington, I have no choice but to concede what Mr. Manders requests, and you have only your own reckless impertinence to thank!"

"Oh, don't mind me, sir!" said Mornington coolly. "I should hate to disappoint Mr. Manders now he's tasted blood."

"Silence!"

Swish, swish, swish! The last three swipes would probably have been mild, but for Morny's remark. Now Dicky Dalton put plenty of his abundant beef into them, and Valentine Mornington fairly wriggled.

Mr. Dalton laid down the cane.

"I do not regard that, sir, as sufficient!" barked Mr. Manders.

"Mornington, you may go!" said Mr. Dalton, interrupting the Modern master.

Morny's face was quite pale as he rose after the infliction. He did not look at his Form-master, but he gave Mr. Manders a bitter look as he left the study. There was no doubt that Morny had exceeded the limit in "guying" Manders, but in his opinion three hefty swipes sufficed to pay off the score. He owed the additional three to Mr. Manders' bitter temper, and Morny was not the fellow to forget it.

"Had it bad?" asked Jimmy Silver, as he came out of the House into the spring sunshine.

"Oh, just a flick or two!" said Morny airily. "Nothin' to speak of! Ow! Wow!" he added involuntarily.

"That sounds like nothing to speak of," grinned Arthur Edward Lovell.



Across the quadrangle at a rapid rate went Mr. Manders. After him went Jimmy Silver, Lovell, Raby, and Newcomb, each one imitating the Modern master's jerky method of progression. "Ha, ha, ha!" came a yell from several juniors. "Following in father's footsteps!"

"It was something to squeak of, at any rate."

Mornington gave him a look. Arthur Edward Lovell's little jokes were neither grateful nor comforting at the moment.

"Manders may be doin' some squeakin' when my turn comes!" he said, between his teeth. "Dicky was goin' to give me three, and Manders insisted on six! I owe Manders three swipes."

"Better leave that debt unpaid, old bean," said Jimmy Silver dryly.

"I always pay my debts!" said Mornington, and he walked away, Jimmy glancing after him rather uneasily.

"Here's Manders," said Lovell, as the Modern master came out. "Give him a howl."

"Shut up, you blithering ass!" whispered Jimmy. "Do you want six from Dicky, too?"

"Rot!" said Lovell. Arthur Edward, as usual, knew best. "It will show the bony old bean what we think of him on the Classical side. If you fellows funk it, you can keep mum. I'm going to give him a howl!"

And as Mr. Manders jerked by, Arthur Edward opened his mouth for a derisive howl. Jimmy, Raby, and Newcomb seized him at the same moment, and hooked him over backwards.

Bump!

Arthur Edward Lovell sat down, hard! He gave a howl—not the one he had intended, but a much louder one.

"Yaroooooh!"

Mr. Manders glanced at the four, snorted, and jerked on.

"Ow!" howled Lovell. "Leggo, you silly asses! Wow!" He struggled wildly, but in vain, till Mr. Manders was gone. Then his faithful comrades released him, and Lovell scrambled up, his face red with wrath, and his trousers rather muddy.

"You silly, cheeky, blithering fat-heads!" roared Lovell. "Think you're

going to stop me? I'll jolly well go after Manders, and say— Oh, crikey! Yes, sir!" He spun round at the sound of his Form-master's voice.

"Lovell!" Mr. Dalton stood in the doorway. "Go into the House at once, and write two hundred lines!"

"Oh! Yes, sir!"

Lovell stalked into the House.

The Wrong Coat!

MR. MANDERS grunted angrily. He walked out of gates in far from a good temper, and the sight of a barrel-organ by the roadside, with a swarthy foreigner leaning on it and smoking a cigarette, seemed to annoy him. The organ-grinder was a little dark, fat Italian, with a red-spotted handkerchief wound round his dark, greasy head in place of a hat. He was not performing on his musical instrument, but seemed to be taking a rest. But as Mr. Manders came by, he stepped from the organ and held out a dusky hand that was very much in need of a wash.

"Please, one penny, sare!" he said. "If you beg from me," said Mr. Manders, "I will give you into custody! Go away at once."

The Italian stepped back without speaking again. But as Mr. Manders walked on, the Italian picked up the handles of his machine and trundled after him. Keeping pace with Mr. Manders, he trundled the barrel-organ along Coombe Lane.

Mr. Manders remained unaware of it, as he did not glance round. But the Italian's dark eyes never left the master. Out of sight of Rookwood School, he pushed the barrel-organ into a gap in the hawthorn hedge and left it there, cutting across the field himself at a rapid run.

In a few minutes he was across the

field, and entering a cattle-shed on the other side.

In that shed a burly man, blue-chinned and piggy-eyed, sat on an upturned bucket, leaning back against the wall, and smoking a short black pipe.

Jimmy Silver & Co., had they been present, would have recognised Slog Poggers, the pickpocket who had robbed the headmaster of Rookwood of a wallet containing forty-five pounds ten shillings in notes—and lost it again!

Mr. Poggers jumped up from the bucket eagerly as the dark, grinning face of the Italian looked in.

"Spotted that old bony bloke, Beppo?" he asked.

"Si, si!" grinned the organ-merchant. "I wait and I watch, and he pass—he walk on to the village."

"What coat was he wearing?" asked Mr. Poggers eagerly.

"He wear a thick grey overcoat—"

"That's it!" Mr. Poggers' eyes gleamed. "Look 'ere, Beppo, you come along and lend me a 'and with him. Last time there was a crew of school boys round, and they stopped me when I had the coat in my 'ands! You—"

Beppo shook his greasy dark head decidedly. Mendicancy and petty pilfering were in the Italian gentleman's line, but not Slog's two-fisted sort of work.

"It's a good thing!" breathed Slog. "I tell you, if I get that coat off the old bloke, it's worth a lot to me. I'll stand you a fiver!"

"Ecco!" grinned Beppo. "That coat—it is worth nothing—"

"Tain't the coat, you fool!" growled Mr. Poggers. "It's what's in it. Listen here!" He sank his voice, though there was no one to overhear. "I tell you, I got a wallet packed with banknotes off a crusty old schoolmaster a couple of weeks ago. They got arter me, and I

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hid in a room in the school, and afore they collared me, I hid the notecase in the lining of a grey overcoat 'anging up in a wardrobe—get me?"

"Ecco! What a trick!" exclaimed Beppo.

"They'd have had it off of me if I hadn't got shut of it," explained Mr. Poggers. "I thought I was hooked for quod when they got me—but I struck lucky afterwards all right. I tell you, that bony old bloke is wearing a coat with a stack of banknotes hidden in the lining. You come and lend a bloke a 'and, in case them young rips are around—"

"You lose him if you do not run," said Beppo. Evidently the music-merchant did not intend to take a hand in the robbery.

Slog gave a snort of contempt.

But he lost no more time. He cut out of the shed and streaked across the field to Coombe Lane, in the direction of the village. Beppo, at a more leisurely pace, walked back to his barrel-organ.

Mr. Manders was more than half-way to Coombe when Slog emerged from the field into the lane behind him.

Slog ran on, hard and fast, and in a few minutes sighted the tall, angular figure of the Modern master ahead.

There was no one else in sight. Mr. Manders walked onward, unsuspecting. Closer and closer came the running pick-pocket.

Slog's eyes were glittering with triumph now. Once he had got away with Mr. Manders' overcoat, and the hidden treasure therein, but Jimmy Silver & Co. had got it back before he could search the lining for the loot. This time he was not going to fail.

Naturally it did not occur to Slog that Mr. Manders was wearing a different coat. It was the same size, cut, pattern, and colour, only older and shabbier. Except that one was older than the other, the two overcoats were identical. And Mr. Manders would, in fact, have been wearing the coat that Slog wanted, but for the fact that it had been damaged in the last encounter with Mr. Poggers, and buttons needed replacing.

Slog, nothing doubting, rushed on.

Mr. Manders noticed the sound of running feet behind him, and turned his head. He gave a jump at the sight of the footpad who had attacked him in that very lane a few days since.

"Oh!" gasped Mr. Manders.

For an instant he stared at Slog in alarm. Then he spun round and flew. It was rather undignified to flee from a character like Mr. Poggers, but Mr. Manders was no pugilist, and he was no match for the ruffian.

He was still a quarter of a mile from the village. But his long legs covered the ground fast.

But Slog was the better sprinter of the two. Mr. Manders had covered about a hundred yards when the pick-pocket's hand dropped on his shoulder and dragged at him.

"Ooooh!" gasped Mr. Manders.

He went over backwards, landing in the lane, his long legs flying in the air. His hat flew off, and he gasped for breath.

Slog pounced on him like a cat on a mouse. He grabbed at the thick grey overcoat.

"Urrgh! Villain! Help! Help!" spluttered Mr. Manders.

"Old your row, you old blighter, you!" growled Slog ferociously. "I ain't going to 'urt you! I want that there coat!"

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Buttons flew to right and left as Slog, with a hefty hand, peeled the overcoat off the Modern master of Rookwood.

"Help!" yelled Mr. Manders.

"Didn't I say 'old your row?' hooted Slog. And taking Mr. Manders by the back of the neck, he rolled him over, and splashed his face into a puddle. "Pr'aps that'll keep you quiet a bit, you old bag of bones!"

"Gurrgh!"

Leaving Mr. Manders lifting a muddy face from the puddle, Slog Poggers plunged through the hedge, with the coat over his arm.

"Wurrgh!" said Mr. Manders. He sat up, dabbing at water and mud. "Gurrgh! Ooooooh!"

He staggered to his feet. Across the hedge, he had a glimpse of Slog Poggers streaking away through fields, with the stolen overcoat.

"Grooogh!" said Mr. Manders, dabbing mud. "The man is mad. Unless he is a lunatic, why should he waylay me and steal my overcoat—this is the second time—ooooh! How very fortunate that I was wearing an old coat."

Mr. Manders picked up his hat, and, still dabbing mud, tottered away coatless. He was feeling very dizzy and upset, but he was glad that he had escaped without more serious damage from the hands of a man who seemed to him an irresponsible lunatic.

Three fields away, Slog Poggers came to a halt in a hollow screened by willows, and proceeded to examine his prize. He fairly gloated over that shabby old overcoat. Not that Slog wanted the coat. It was the Head's wallet, that Slog wanted—and that he now believed to be safe in his thievish hands.

He grabbed at the overcoat pocket, and turned out the lining. To his surprise it was intact. It was the right pocket, and he remembered that he had cut a slit in the lining to push the wallet in out of sight. But there was no slit in that lining.

"Strike me pink!" breathed Mr. Poggers.

If the torn lining had since been mended, he could see no trace of the mend. Puzzled, Mr. Poggers opened a knife, and gashed the lining, and thrust his hand into the aperture.

He groped and groped. But he groped in vain!

"Strike me pink and blue!" hissed Mr. Poggers.

He turned the coat inside out. He jabbed at it, gashing the lining with his knife in a dozen places. The coat was thickly and warmly lined, from collar to tail, and very soon it was all in rags and tatters. But nothing came to light. Again Mr. Poggers appealed to space to strike him pink and blue! Never had a snapper-up of unconsidered trifles been so puzzled and perplexed and enraged.

But the truth dawned on him at last.

"The blighter!" hissed Mr. Poggers. "It ain't the same coat! What did the dotty old covey want to come out in the wrong coat for, taking a bloke in? Blow 'im!"

Mr. Manders, safe in the village, was thinking that it was fortunate that he had been wearing his old overcoat that afternoon. To Mr. Poggers, it seemed far from fortunate! Mr. Poggers very nearly turned the atmosphere blue with his remarks during the next few minutes. He regretted—too late—that he had not cracked the bony old gent's nut for him. He hurled the overcoat into the grass, and jumped on it.

Morny's Midnight Rag!

"MORNY, you ass!"
"Oh, shut up!"
"But look here—" urged Erroll.

"Do you want to wake the dorm, you silly ass? Shut up."

Jimmy Silver awoke, and peered round him in the gloom of the Classical Fourth dormitory in the Head's House. Dimly, in the starlight from the high windows, he made out Valentine Mornington standing by his bed, and finishing dressing. Kit Erroll was sitting up in the next bed. And Jimmy sat up, too.

"What's this game, Morny?" he asked.

"You've woke Silver up, Erroll, you ass!" grunted Mornington. "Better call Dicky Dalton while you're about it."

"For goodness' sake, Morny—"

"Oh, ring off!"

"You're not breaking bounds at this time of night, Morny!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver. "Why, it must be midnight."

"That's why!" answered Morny coolly. "Manders mightn't have turned in earlier."

"Manders!" gasped Jimmy.

"Didn't I tell you that I owed him three swipes?" said Mornington. "I'm paying that little debt before it slips my memory."

"You mad ass!" gasped Jimmy Silver. "Go back to bed, and don't be a silly idiot."

"Thanks for your advice, but when I want any, I'll mention it!" answered Mornington.

Three or four other fellows had awakened by that time. They sat up, staring at the dim figure of the dandy of the Fourth.

"Anybody like to come?" asked Mornington. "I'm going over to Manders' House to call on Manders!"

"Got your burgling outfit?" asked Peele, and some of the juniors laughed.

"I've fixed it with a Modern chap to slip down and leave a back passage door unlocked for me."

"So that's what you were confabbing with Leggett about!" exclaimed Erroll. "He ought to be jolly well kicked."

"Leggett's a useful tick," said Mornington. "He will do anything for anybody if it's made worth his while. Are you comin' with me, Erroll?"

"No, you silly ass! Get back to bed."

"You coming, Silver?"

"I'll watch it!" answered Jimmy.

"It will be worth seein'!" urged Mornington. "I thought of pinchin' Dicky Dalton's cane, and giving Manders the three swipes I owe him with it—but I've thought of a better one than that. I don't want Manders to recognise me—he might mention it to the Head, and make things uncomfortable all round—"

"Ha ha, ha!"

"So I've laid in a can of red paint! Think of Manders getting half a gallon of red paint on his chivvy, and waking up to find himself turned into a Red Indian—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You potty ass, Morny!" exclaimed Newcome.

"I say, though, it's some stunt!" exclaimed Arthur Edward Lovell. "I had lines to-day from Dicky, all through that tick Manders—hasn't he jolly well asked for it? I'll jolly well come, Morny."

"Good egg!" said Morny. "Get a move on then!"

"You jolly well won't, Lovell, you ass!" hooted Jimmy Silver. "Morny,

can go and ask for the sack if he likes; you're not going to!"

"I jolly well am!" said Lovell. "It's safe as houses—who's going to recognise us in the dark? If Leggett's left a back door open for Morny, we get in easily enough, and we know our way to Manders' room—"

"You're not going!" said Jimmy, Raby, and Newcome together.

Lovell snorted, and rolled out of bed. "I'd like to see anybody stop me!" he said.

"Well, if that's what you'd like, old bean, you're going to have just what you want!" said Jimmy Silver, also turning out of bed. "Turn in!"

"Rats!"

"You're in the Head's black books already, and you're not asking for more. Chuck those trousers down."

"I'm getting into them, fathead!"

"You're not! You're getting into bed! Lend a hand here, you men."

"What ho!" said Raby and Newcome. Lovell's three faithful chums jumped at him together. The trousers went to the floor, and Lovell spluttered in the grasp of his devoted friends. So far as Jimmy Silver & Co. were concerned, Morny could ask for all the trouble he wanted, but Lovell had landed enough trouble lately, and his friends were not going to let him ask for more.

Arthur Edward did not get into the trousers. He got into bed—in a sprawling, spluttering heap, resisting strenuously.

"Ow! You cheeky asses!" spluttered Lovell. "I'll jolly well—wow! Will you leggo? Will you gerrup? I'll—whoop!"

"Will you stay in bed?" demanded Jimmy.

"No!" roared Lovell.

"Then we'll sit on you!"

Lovell struggled wildly. But he was spreadeagled on his bed, and Jimmy Silver, Raby, and Newcome sat on him there. Pinned down by the three, Arthur Edward wriggled and struggled, and, in infuriated tones, told his chums what he thought of them. They did not mind. They sat on Lovell—and that was that!

Valentine Mornington did not wait for him. It was clear that Lovell was not coming. The dandy of the Fourth slipped out of the dormitory and closed the door softly behind him.

Lovell gave a frantic heave.

"Will you gerroff?" he gasped.

"Not till Morny comes back!" said Jimmy Silver cheerfully. "Keep still, you ass! You can't expect fellows to sit on you if you wriggle like that!"

"I'm going after Morny!" shrieked Lovell.

"You'll have to carry us with you, old bean! Go it!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Lovell wriggled and gurgled with wrath, sat upon by his friends, what time Mornington slipped quietly out of the House and out across in the midnight shadows to Manders' House.

Done in the Dark!

VALENTINE MORNINGTON gave a sudden start, and his heart thumped.

There was a sound in the darkness of the landing.

Everything, so far, had gone according to plan. He had found a back door unfastened, as arranged with Leggett of the Modern Fourth. He had slipped into Manders' House and crept up the dark staircases with all the stealthy caution of an enterprising burglar. At that hour every light was out; the latest master had long gone to bed; all was silent. With the can of red paint in his hand, Mornington reached the landing

on which the masters' rooms in Manders' House opened, and tiptoed across towards the door of Roger Manders' room.

All was dark, but a glimmer of light suddenly came through the dark. With quite an unpleasant jump at his heart, Morny realised that Mr. Manders' bedroom door was partly open and that a light gleamed within.

But it was a mere gleam and in motion, appearing and disappearing. It came from a flash-lamp in somebody's hand.

Morny breathed hard.

Wild and reckless fellow as he was, he had laid his plans carefully. At half-past twelve, everybody was, or should have been, fast asleep. It was utterly unexpected for Mr. Manders to be up, still more utterly unexpected for him to be moving about his room with a flash-lamp instead of turning on the electric light. Such a check was entirely unlooked-for.

Almost any fellow but Mornington would have thrown it up at that point. Such a reckless jape was risky enough, in any case, but with Mr. Manders awake and up it was doubly dangerous. Even the reckless Morny hesitated and paused.

But he set his lips obstinately. He was not going back to the Classical Fourth dormitory to confess that he had been scared off his enterprise. Morny liked to make fellows wonder at his recklessness, and he did not like the idea of appearing as a fellow who undertook a risky jape and backed out through funking it at the finish. He was going to carry on.

But he was doubly cautious now.

Noiselessly he crept to the doorway and stood beside it, in the darkness of

the landing, listening. The open can of paint was in his hand, ready for use if his chance came.

The moving light inside the room shifted and flickered. But there was no sound from the room. Mr. Manders—if it were Mr. Manders—was moving about the room as noiselessly as Morny himself outside.

What it could mean was a mystery to Mornington. He even wondered whether it was not Manders at all, but a burglar—it looked much more like it. But a burglar would hardly have headed for Manders' room—the Head's safe in the other House would have been his objective. There was nothing to reward a burglar in Manders' room in Manders' House. Mornington dismissed that idea; but he was utterly puzzled and perplexed by the strange proceedings of the unseen man inside the room.

Certainly he was not likely to guess that the man with the flash-lamp was looking for an overcoat! Slog Poggers could no more have opened the Head's safe than he could have opened a bank account. Slog was not thinking of safes.

He was thinking of an overcoat, in the lining of which he had parked a stolen wallet!

Having captured the wrong overcoat that afternoon, Mr. Poggers was now in search of the right one!

He had been lucky, for, prowling round the House at midnight, hunting for a way in, he had found a back door unlocked! For a quarter of an hour or more before Morny's arrival Slog had been rooting about Mr. Manders' room with a flash-lamp—hunting for that overcoat.

Mr. Manders, sleeping the sleep of the just, did not awaken. Perhaps it



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**THE
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FOUR**

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was fortunate that he did not, for Slog had a hefty punch, which he would have bestowed on Roger Manders without scruple had the Modern master awakened and intervened.

Slog was not interrupted. But he did not find the garment he wanted. He found no overcoat at all. Mr. Manders' old coat still lay tattered and torn in the field where Slog had danced on it. His other coat was still in the House-dame's room, for the replacement of buttons. Mr. Poggers rooted and rooted, but he had no luck.

He could only conclude that the grey overcoat which had been hanging in Mr. Manders' wardrobe on the night he concealed the stolen wallet in the lining was now hanging somewhere else—as indeed it was! And he made up his mind at last to extend his search farther. Most of the night was still before him, and it was certain that that elusive overcoat was in the House somewhere. So Slog moved to the door, shutting off his flash-lamp.

Mornington, outside, suppressed his breathing.

He heard no sound from within. Slog moved very softly. But the faintest of sounds told him that the door was being opened wider—and he saw that the light was shut off. Whoever was in the room was coming out!

Morny's eyes glittered.

Really, he could not have asked for anything better than this. He had been waiting for a chance, and now his chance had come! Mr. Manders—he still supposed that it was Mr. Manders—was walking fairly into his hands! Standing back beside the doorway, he lifted the open can of paint, and waited!

A dark figure, a mere shadow in the dimness, came through the doorway. The door was softly closed behind it.

Then the dark figure trotted away towards the stairs, passing within a few feet of the junior crouching back, silent, against the wall. Morny, on tiptoe, stopped after it.

Silent as he was, Mr. Poggers must have caught some faint sound, for he turned suddenly in the darkness, facing Mornington, peering.

At the same moment Morny's uplifted arm swept forward, and the contents of the can of red paint flew!

Swoosh! Swish!

Morny had a pint of red paint in that can, mixed very thin with oil to make it up to about two quarts. It came over Mr. Poggers' face in a drenching shower of fluid!

"Gurrh!" he gurgled, and he staggered back, stumbled over, and fell on the landing with a resounding bump. Morny jumped back.

From Mr. Manders' room came a sudden squeaky ejaculation of a man suddenly awakened and startled.

"Goodness gracious! What—what is that? Who—what—"

It was the voice of Mr. Manders! Morny, already running, stopped in a

state of paralysed surprise and dismay.

It was not Manders he had swamped with paint! Who was it?

Then, amid the gasps and gurgles, came a suffocated, infuriated howl:

"Strike me pink! Urrgh! Strike me pink and blue!"

"Oh gad!" gasped Morny.

Evidently it was not Mr. Manders! In his angriest moments Mr. Manders would never have used such expressions as that!

A door opened. A light flashed on. Puzzled, mystified, and exasperated, Morny did not linger. He flew down the staircase three steps at a time and vanished.

Mr. Manders flashed the light on and stared out of his room—at a figure that sprawled and spluttered and almost swam in red paint!

But that figure swiftly scrambled up and darted down the staircase—dropping paint at every step, spluttering and gurgling horribly as it fled.

Mr. Manders was left, shouting the alarm, what time a door below opened and shut, and then opened again, and was left open—Mornington vanishing first, and Mr. Poggers a few moments after him, Morny heading for home and Mr. Poggers for the school wall, leaving behind him a trail of red paint.

Arthur Edward Lovell was still wriggling and protesting fiercely, and his three faithful friends were still sitting on him, when Morny slipped into the Classical Fourth dormitory. Then Jimmy, Raby, and Newcome got off their human sofa.

"You've done it, you ass!" asked Ferrell.

"Blessed if I know what I've done!" said Mornington. "Somebody's got the paint—but it wasn't Manders! Goodness knows who it was!"

"You silly ass!"

"Well, somebody will be sacked for it!" said Jimmy. "There'll be a fearful row in the morning! Glad we kept you out of it, Lovell!"

Lovell's reply did not indicate that he was glad. It lasted long and was packed with uncomplimentary expressions. Jimmy, Raby, and Newcome were falling asleep by the time Lovell had exhausted his eloquence.

Meanwhile, an infuriated Mr. Poggers was shaking the dust of Rookwood from his feet as fast as he could go, still exuding red paint. In husky tones of rage Mr. Poggers invoked unknown powers to strike him pink. Really, it was unnecessary, for he had already been struck red—very red. And it was only after a long, long time, and after a most unusual amount of washing, that Mr. Poggers got rid of his rich and ruddy complexion.

(Next week: "MR. MANDERS PUTS HIS FOOT IN IT!" Look out for this ripping Rookwood yarn, telling how a jape had very unexpected results.)

THE BOY FROM THE EAST!

(Continued from page 22.)

many thoughts of race and training, was overflowing with gratitude and shame for what he had done. He seemed to wish to abase himself in the dust at the feet of Tom Merry.

"You will forgive me?" he said.

"Certainly! That's all right. Let's get back to St. Jim's," said Tom Merry, afraid that the scene, which was so solemn to the Jam, would make him burst into a laugh, which would have wounded the Jam's feelings cruelly. "It's all serene."

"Will you be my friend?"

"If you like."

The Jam rose to his feet.

"I am your friend," he said. "I, the Prince of Bundelphore, the lord of a thousand spears, swear friendship with you and yours. If you should come to Bundelphore when I am come into my kingdom, my palace shall be as your own."

They linked arms as they walked back to St. Jim's.

"Keep it dark," said Tom Merry as they came to the school gates. "You must tell the Head about your cousin. He must be hunted for by the police. But about what's happened before, not a word!"

"You wish me to be silent?"

"You must be. You'd have to leave St. Jim's if the Head knew," said Tom Merry. "I'm quite willing to forget all about it, but the Head wouldn't think of it like that. Mum's the word!"

"As you will, my friend."

Figgins & Co. met them as they came in. At the sight of Tom Merry and the Jam walking with linked arms Figgins & Co. nearly fell down.

"Is—is it a giddy miracle?" gasped Figgins.

Tom Merry laughed.

"The Jam and I have had a little explanation," he said. "We're good friends now, ain't we, Jammy?"

"For life and death!" said the Jam solemnly.

"Well, I'm jolly glad to hear it!" said Figgins, in great relief. "And I'll keep my word. I'm your champion now, Jammy, if you like. You're one of the Co.!"

"Hear, hear!" said Kerr and Wynn cordially.

And, in spite of all that had passed, from that day forward Tom Merry had no more devoted friend than the Jam of St. Jim's, the boy from the East.

THE END.

(Next Wednesday: "THE KIDNAPPED HEADMASTER!" Dr. Holmes kidnapped by crooks and held to ransom! Read all about it in this thrilling long story of St. Jim's. Order your GEM early.)



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