

The **GEM** 2^d

TWO TIP-TOP SCHOOL TALES

THE RAGGING OF REGGIE!

By MARTIN CLIFFORD.

WUN LUNG'S WILY WHEEZE!

By FRANK RICHARDS.

and

★ YOUR FORTUNE FROM THE
STARS, STAMP ARTICLE,
★ ILLUSTRATED JOKES, FUN
COLUMN, PEN PALS, ETC.



The **RAGGING of REGGIE!**



HOW'S YOUR LUCK THIS WEEK?

Read what the stars foretell,
by PROFESSOR ZARRO.

EVERY reader's horoscope for this week will be found in the sections below. Your luck is governed by the stars under which you were born; you will see what they forecast for you during the next seven days by looking for the section in which your birthday falls.

January 21st to February 19th.—Everything comes right for you this week, but unfortunately only trivial matters are likely to be concerned, and nothing of real importance. You must try to co-operate with others, or you will find yourself feeling rather like the selfish wing-forward to whom nobody passes the ball. To-day, Wednesday, is luckiest for you this week.

February 20th to March 21st.—Those born early in March should look out for squalls! Nothing very serious, but squabbles with relatives, and possibilities of punishment for something you imagined forgotten. Heavy luck is first-rate for all you Pisces folk this week; anything to do with the number 7 brings good fortune. Working periods seem likely to be connected with more luck than those devoted to sport or pleasure.

March 22nd to April 20th.—A tendency to widen the scope of your interests—to take up new hobbies, new friends, and so on. There are signs that you have a grouse against someone—get it off your chest now! Unexpected, really good news is coming to you this week-end from a source which you least anticipate. The colour black brings you a certain amount of luck.

April 21st to May 21st.—You were born under Taurus, which means that a measure of success is bound to come to you eventually, despite setbacks. This week, you will see some of the setbacks of the past righted. Advancement in your work is indicated, but the really big luck with which you will be connected this week comes to another member of your family, or one of your close friends.

May 22nd to June 21st.—Sharp wits will be needed this week, to deal with minor problems. A letter or other communication—or even something told you—will give you cause for much thought. Seek advice before dealing with this matter. Otherwise, a "joking" week; plenty of laughs and happy times. Sunday a particularly enjoyable day.

June 22nd to July 23rd.—Something you have been expecting will turn out to be a "Bunter's postal order"—it won't arrive! It is not clear whether this is something you have been looking forward to, or otherwise. Luck and good times in anything outdoors,

not necessarily sporting matters. You will find yourself showing up best when other people—and maybe even yourself—least expect you to.

July 24th to August 23rd.—This week's best indications. Concentrate on the methods of doing things—which is your strong point—and you will find everything coming out at its best for you. Several good opportunities are coming to you—grab 'em! News of coming changes; prepare for them. Your best day of the week will be Thursday.

August 24th to September 23rd.—Ever noticed how you are one of those people who "never forget a face," though names often elude you? You are going to meet again one of these semi-strangers whom you recognise, and lively times will result from the meeting. Mainly, this is a week for "he-men"—sport, adventure, taking chances in the right sort of direction. Watch your step on Monday!

September 24th to October 23rd.—The stars give with one hand, and take away with the other this week! What seems to be luck, turns out to be much less than you expected, and what is apparently bad luck becomes useful after all! Teachers, employers, and similar people prove their good will towards you. Seek out your friends this week; they'll bring you your happiest times.

October 24th to November 22nd.—A wonderful week for sporting interests, whether you are player or on-looker, so look out for a dazzling display from your favourite football team! There are indications, however, that you are liable to lose your temper, never very easy to control, so watch that you don't give the real reason for sending you off! Between Sunday and Tuesday of next week you will receive a present.

November 23rd to December 22nd.—You were born under the sign of Sagittarius, the Archer—and this is a week to shoot your arrows straight to the mark. You will get new ideas, and they will be the right ones; adopt them! Plans that have seemed to be going astray will right themselves. Purple and blue are your lucky colours; Wednesday your lucky day.

December 23rd to January 20th.—Better for girls than boys, but, in any case, a rather headstrong week. The only excitement seems to be coming from entertainments—maybe a thrilling film at your local cinema! You will receive news which will lead to important developments later. A friend of the Libra period, September 24th to October 23rd, will help you in a minor difficulty. Someone going to do your homework for you, maybe!

BIRTHDAY INDICATIONS.

WEDNESDAY, January 26th.—An eventful year lies ahead, bringing such rapid changes that you will look back on it rather "out of breath," as it were. A prosperous time of steady all-round improvement, but none of those exciting slices of luck we all hope for.

THURSDAY, January 27th.—Good luck in the things you have been used to, rather than in new ventures. An excellent period for anything connected with study, and for general health. Dark people will bring good fortune—dark-haired, I mean, not niggers!

FRIDAY, January 28th.—Money will be plentiful in the coming year, and all matters concerning relatives will be good. There are even signs that "rich uncles" may turn up trumps! Over-confidence is the one danger.

SATURDAY, January 29th.—You will probably

find yourself becoming increasingly restless as the year draws on. This will be due to a feeling that you are in a groove. Just as you feel you can't stick it any more, an important change will put you "on top of the world!"

SUNDAY, January 30th.—Fortune smiles on this birthday, but because everything will seem to come so easily, you must not let things slide. There are prizes to be won in all spheres of your life if you go out for them this year.

MONDAY, January 31st.—No worries for you this year. Chances of travel. Discussion of your future will settle your plans. September is your best month; you will hear then of a big surprise.

TUESDAY, February 1st.—The stay-at-homes will miss the best fun, but, for the others, a year to which to look forward. Don't make hasty decisions; stick to the things you are confident you can do.

PROFESSOR ZARRO.

MANNERS MINOR—WILFUL, WAYWARD, AND A SNEAK—PROVES A BIG HANDFUL FOR HIS MAJOR AT ST. JIM'S!

The RAGGING of REGGIE!



Reggie struggled in vain as the fags collared him. He shrieked and yelled, but he had to be frog-marched round the Form-room, bumping on the floor at every step.

CHAPTER 1.

A Pleasant Prospect!

THERE was deep silence in Tom Merry's study in the School House at St. Jim's. Manners was reading a letter. Tom Merry and Monty Lowther were watching him.

It was a letter from home. Tom had brought it up to the study for Manners, and he had noticed that it was addressed in the hand of Manners' pater.

Letters from home were often welcome. Sometimes, indeed, they contained good advice which, as Lowther had remarked, was quite superfluous in the case of such really nice boys as themselves.

But sometimes they contained remittances. Sometimes they contained both, and then the bad could be taken cheerfully with the good.

As it was tea-time, a certain amount of general interest centered in Manners' letter from home.

But, as Manners read it, it became clear, from the expression on his face, that it was not a case of a remittance.

Manners' face grew grave, and then he looked perplexed.

"Well, I'm blowed!" he exclaimed. "Nothing wrong, old chap?" asked Tom. "Well, that depends on how you look at it," said Manners, staring at the letter.

"I mean, nothing wrong at home?"

"Well, no. Things are going to be a bit better at home, judging by this letter."

"Pater come into a fortune?" asked Monty Lowther. "If he has, drop him a line about little us. We want a new carpet in this study."

"Fathead!" said Manners.

"Tisn't anything of that sort. I expect things will be a bit better at home after Wednesday. They won't be so jolly comfy here—at least, for me."

"What on earth's happened?" asked Tom Merry.

"Nothing as yet. It's going to happen on Wednesday."

"The House match happens on Wednesday," said Tom. "We're going to lick Figgins & Co."

"You'll have to leave me out of the team," said Manners.

"What rot!" said Tom warmly.

"You can stand out of all the school matches if you want to go mucking about with that dashed camera, but you're not cutting the House matches."

"It isn't that, fathead!"

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By

MARTIN CLIFFORD.

The spoilt darling of over-indulgent parents, Reggie Manners comes to St. Jim's with false ideas of his own importance. But his ideas are rudely shattered by the inky tribe of the Third!

"Well, what is it?" demanded Lowther. "Tell your Uncle Monty."

There was a tap at the door, and an eyeglass gleamed into the study, with the aristocratic countenance of D'Arcy of the Fourth behind it.

"Tea weady, deah boys?"

Tom Merry jumped up.

"In a jiffy, Gussy! Manners has something to explain."

"I twust I am not too early," said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "Pway allow me to lend a hand. Bai Jove, you are lookin' wowwied, Mannahs."

"I'm feeling rather worried," growled Manners.

"Pway tell me what is the mattah! If you are in need of advice—"

"I'm not!"

"Weally, Mannahs, you couldn't do bettah than wely on a fellow of tact and judgment," said D'Arcy gently. "I have no doubt that I could get you wight out of the difficulty. Pway confide in me!"

Manners grinned at last.

"There's nothing the matter," he said. "It's all right!"

"You're making a jolly long face about nothing, then," remarked Monty Lowther.

"Well, it's a bit of a worry. Do you remember seeing my brother one vac—young Reggie, you know?"

"Yes—a cheeky young bounder!"

"These minahs are all the same," said D'Arcy, with a wise shake of the head. "Look at my young bwothah Wally—he nevah weally tweats me with the pwopah respect due to an eldah bwothah!"

"He's coming to St. Jim's," said Manners.

"Well, that won't hurt you. He'll be in a fag Form, and you won't see him once in a blue moon!"

"No such luck!" said Manners. "I'm requested to keep a very special eye on him, and look after

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him, and all that. He'll go into the Third."

"No good mollycoddling him," said Tom Merry. "It would set the other fags against him, too!"

"I know that. But—but that isn't all! You'd better read the letter, you chaps."

The chums of the School House read the letter together. They all looked rather grave, as Manners had done, as they read it.

It ran:

"Dear Henry,—I have decided to send your brother Reginald to St. Jim's. I have already been in communication with the Head on the matter, and it is arranged that Reggie shall go

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into the Third Form. I am sure that you will keep an eye on him, and assist him in every way in your power. You are aware that he has been somewhat petted at home, and is a little wilful and headstrong, but I know you will be very patient with him, my boy.

"There is another circumstance I do not like referring to, but which I must mention. I have discovered, with a great shock, as you may guess, that Reggie has formed some very undesirable acquaintances, and acquired some very bad habits. I must tell you this, so that you will know what to expect; but you must not judge Reggie too harsh. His boyish simplicity has been taken advantage of by unscrupulous lads older than himself.

"I have found that he smokes, and have found a pack of cards in his possession, and extorted from him a confession that he plays cards for money. His going to school will make a complete break between him and his worthless friends, and I trust, especially with your example before him, he will show you the real good that is in his character. Above all, my dear boy, I ask you to be very patient with him at first, and make the change for him from home to school as easy as possible. He will reach the school on Wednesday afternoon.—Your affectionate father,

"JOHN MANNERS."

"Oh!" said Tom Merry; and Monty Lowther whistled softly.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy contracted his brows over his eyeglass.

Manners looked at them glumly.

"He isn't really a bad little chap," he said. "He's good-natured, and has plenty of pluck. But—but my sisters have petted him a lot, and the mater makes rather a pet of him, and he's generally had his own way. I've got into rows in the vac for licking him—for his own good, really."

Tom Merry grinned.

"Your pater seems afraid you may try the same method here," he remarked. "Better not begin with a licking, anyway."

"I dare say he'll turn out all right," said Monty Lowther. "Don't worry. No good meeting troubles half-way."

"It's all wight, Mannahs. Young Weggie is goin' into the Third. Well, my minah is in the Third. I will wequest young Wally to look aftah him a bit, and bwing him up in the way he should go."

"And suppose young Wally tells you to go and chop chips?" asked Manners.

"Wats! He will natuualy do as I tell him, bein' my minah. I assuah you it will be all wight."

"I'm rather nervous for him in the Third," said Manners uneasily. "The fags will take him for a mammy's darling, and they'll make his life not worth living if he comes any of his rot—and he's sure to."

"All the more weason why Wally should look aftah him," said Arthur Augustus. "With Wally to look aftah him, he will get thwough all wight. My ideah is to—"

"To have tea," said Monty Lowther. "It's past tea-time."

"Pway be sewious, Lowthah. My ideah is to put it to young Wally and intewest him in Weggie, and make him chummy fwom the start. When Weggie comes we will have him to tea in Study No. 6, and have Wally there, too, and be him bwing in his pals of the Third—young

Fwayne, and Jameson, and Gibson—and make them all friently with Weggie. Nothin' like a stunnin' good feed to make those young wascals feel friently!"

The Terrible Three looked at Arthur Augustus D'Arcy in great admiration. It was really a stunning idea.

"By Jove, there's something in that!" said Manners. "Much obliged to you, Gussy!"

"Not at all, deah boy! Don't mensh!" said Gussy gracefully. "You can always wely on a fellow of tact and judgment."

And the Terrible Three grinned, and assured the noble Gussy that they were quite sure they always could!

CHAPTER 2.

Herrings for Tea!

TOM MERRY and Monty Lowther were very patient with their chum during the next few days.

Manners was frequently in a thoughtful mood, and frequently he wore a worried look.

It was the advent of his minor that worried him.

His chums could not understand why the forthcoming arrival of the youthful Reggie should bother old Manners so much. Neither of them had a minor, and so, perhaps, they didn't know what it was like.

But Tom Merry and Lowther thought they could quite see wherein the trouble lay, and sympathised with Manners, who evidently was troubled.

Possibly Reggie Manners was a greater young scapegrace than they suspected.

At all events, all Manners' chums were prepared to back him up. His own friends of the Shell, and Blake & Co. of Study No. 6, were prepared to "take up" young Reggie and make the best of him.

But it was clear that what would do the new fag most good was a friend of his own age in his own Form, and therefore Wally D'Arcy was invaluable, and was much to be conciliated.

Wally was a reckless young rascal, but he had a heart of gold. And Wally was acknowledged cock of the walk in the Third, and looked up to with great admiration by Jameson, Frayne, Curly Gibson, and Hobbs, and the rest.

Wherever Wally led, the Third Form would follow; and if Wally's friendship could be secured for Manners minor—why, then, Manners minor would find things made very easy for him in the Third Form at St. Jim's.

Therefore, during the two or three days that elapsed after the receipt by Manners of that letter from home, Wally of the Third was subjected to a series of surprises. He had been accustomed to his major taking a fatherly interest in him—quite unappreciated on his part. D'Arcy's friends considered him a young rascal, and liked him none the less, perhaps. But they never showed any special yearning for his society.

Now they cultivated Wally in a way that was astounding to Wally.

The very day that letter came, Tom Merry met him outside the Third Form Room, and clapped him cheerily on the shoulder.

"Not had your tea yet, kid?" he asked.

Wally stared

"We don't usually have tea during lessons," he replied.



"I saw it first!"

Half-a-crown has been awarded to P. Martin, 25, Thompson Street, Langley Mill, nr. Nottingham.

"Ahem! No, of course not," said Tom hastily. "It's a long time since you've fed in my study, though, isn't it? You've been neglecting your old pals."

"What's the game?" asked Wally, with charming frankness.

Tom Merry laughed.

"Come along to tea," he said. "Half-past five."

Wally paused and considered. He ought really to have jumped at such a flattering invitation from the captain of the Shell, but he didn't.

"Well, Hobbs has been buying herrings," he said. "I've promised to cook them for him over the Form-room fire when old Selby's clear."

"Bring Hobbs," said Tom.

"Frayne and Jameson were going to whack out the herrings"

"Bring Frayne and Jameson."

"Anything special on?"

"Yes; three kinds of jam."

"Good! We'll come. And I'll tell you what," said Wally, in a burst of friendship. "We'll bring the herrings and cook them in your study."

"Oh!"

"We'll stand them towards the feed," said Wally generously.

"All right! Half-past five, then," said Tom, concealing his dismay.

Wally nodded, and walked away with his hands in his pockets.

It happened that there was light enough for footer practice, and the Terrible Three did not come in till somewhat later than they intended.

But Wally & Co. were not late. As they approached their study, Tom Merry, Manners, and Lowther became aware of a terrific smell of fish and burning.

"Great Scott!" exclaimed Lowther in astonishment. "That's in our study! My hat! Is it a New House jape?"

"What a niff!" said Manners. "Somebody's been putting herrings into our fire, or something."

"Hold on!" said Tom

But Manners and Lowther were already dashing into the study.

The atmosphere was a little thick. Four Third Formers were gathered round the fire, which was blazing high. Their faces were very ruddy, and they were cooking herrings.

Wally's herring had slipped off the toasting-fork into the blazing embers, and when rescued it was in a sadly charred state.

"You young sweeps!" roared Lowther indignantly. "What are you making that fearful muck in our study for?"

Wally spun round wrathfully.

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"Hallo! What are you burbling about?" he demanded.

"You horrid little fishy beasts!"

"The awful nerve," exclaimed Manners, "to come and cook their filthy fish in our study!"

"Shut up, you chaps!" exclaimed Tom.

"That's a nice way to speak to our guests!"

"Guests!" ejaculated Manners and Lowther.

"I've asked these kids to tea."

"Oh!"

"Not so much of your kids!" said Wally resentfully.

"And we're jolly well not staying to tea after that! I don't like your manners. Come on, you fellows! Let's get out of this!"

"Hold on!" said Tom Merry, in dismay.

"Yes, hold on," said Manners, remembering his minor was shortly due at St. Jim's. "Don't go. I—I—I'm sorry I spoke!"

"I trust," said Monty Lowther, in the best manner of D'Arcy of the Fourth—"I trust our young friends will not take notice of a hasty remark, made on the spur of the moment."

"Oh, come off!" growled Wally. "Not so much younger than you if you come to that!"

"It was—was awfully good of you to bring the herrings, Wally," said Tom Merry. "I—I—I'm jolly glad you didn't forget them!"

"We all know how Wally cooks herrings," added Lowther gracefully.

"Huh!" said Wally.

Hobbs twitched his sleeve and whispered:

"Don't be a mug, Wally—three kinds of jam, you know."

Wally's face cleared. He allowed himself to be mollified.

"You chaps get on with the cooking while we get the tea," said Tom Merry. "It—it makes me feel awfully hungry, that—that appetising smell."

"Same here," said Lowther solemnly. "Are there any herrings done, Wally? I'd like to take a snack while I'm getting the table ready."

"They'll be done soon," said Wally, quite restored to good humour. "You fellows buck up and lay the table. Better leave them to me, Jameson—I'm a better cook than you are."

And the cooking proceeded.

The Terrible Three laid the table, producing three pots of jam of different varieties, a large currant cake, a tin of pineapple, and several other good things.

There was always ham in large quantities to lay a solid foundation to begin with.

The herrings were done at last—not to say overdone.

Then the goodly viands were set out.

Four extra chairs had been brought in, and the seven juniors found room somehow round the study table. The fags surveyed the festive board with considerable satisfaction.

Six herrings lay on a dish, looking as if they had been rescued rather late from a serious conflagration.

"There won't be enough herrings to go round, owing to Wally burning that one," Jameson remarked.

"That's all right," said Tom Merry hastily. "You kids pile into the herrings—"

"No; we'll start on the ham," said D'Arcy minor. "You have the herrings. I hope you'll like the way they're cooked."

"Yes, pile in!" said Jameson. "We often have herrings ourselves—they're cheap, you know, and we're dabs at cooking 'em. Pass the ham!"

The Terrible Three looked at the charred and greasy herrings, and looked at one another. Then

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they helped themselves. They could not appear to turn up their noses at the dainty morsels. That would not be the way to propitiate D'Arcy minor & Co.

The hungry fags piled in at a great rate, and the ham soon disappeared, and the tongue along with it.

The Shell fellows were making much slower progress with the herrings. A good deal of debris remained on their plates when they were through.

"Go it!" said Wally. "There's three more!"

"These herrings are awfully filling," said Lowther in a casual sort of way. "I'll get on with the cake, I think."

And he did, and Tom Merry and Manners followed his example.

Wally looked at them suspiciously.

"If you don't like those herrings—"

"Ripping!" said Lowther. "I—I was thinking we'd have them cold for supper if you fellows don't care for them. Gussy will be here to supper, and I'm sure he would—ahem!—like one."

"Oh, all right!"

The three kinds of jam were duly disposed of, so completely that hardly a trace was left of any kind of jam. The cake disappeared, and the biscuits and the pineapple. Then Wally & Co. rose to go.

"Thanks awfully!" said Wally. "You fellows must come to a feed in the Form-room some time."

"Delighted!"

"We'll have some more herrings—"

"Oh! I—I mean, do."

"Those 'errings were 'orrid, Wally," said Joe Frayne, with a shake of the head. "You burnt them."

"Did you come out specially for a thick ear this evening, young Frayne?" asked Wally pleasantly.

"Well, they were burnt!" said Jameson.

"Those you did were horrid, and there's no getting out of that, young D'Arcy."

"And what about those you did?" demanded Wally. "You New House fathead!"

"You School House dummy—"

"You Shell fellows must excuse me for bringing a New House hooligan to tea," said Wally crushingly. "Yarrah!"

Jameson's reply to that remark was given with his knuckles.

The next moment Wally was affectionately embracing the New House junior round the neck and hammering him with his left.

The two struggling fags bumped into the table and set the crockery rocking, and then staggered into the passage, still pommelling.

Frayne and Hobbs followed, cheering them on.

"Go it, Wally!"

"Go it, Jamey!"

Tom Merry gasped and shut the door.

"Oh, my hat!" ejaculated Lowther.

"Oh crumbs!" said Manners.

"Never mind; it's all on account of Manners' minor," said Tom Merry, laughing.

The sounds of the conflict died away down the passage.

Then the Terrible Three set to work clearing up the study.

The whole room was fishy; the grate and fender reeked of fish; there were traces of herrings everywhere.

Tom Merry opened the window and waved a newspaper; Monty Lowther seized the remaining herrings and hurled them forth from the window as far as he could, reckless of what happened to them afterwards.

"My hat!" murmured Lowther. "Your minor ought to be much obliged to us, Manners. This is going to be our self-denial week, and no mistake!"

CHAPTER 3.

Soft Sawder!

D'ARCY MINOR, when he came to think of it, was a little puzzled by that sudden burst of hospitality on the part of the Terrible Three.

He was still more puzzled on Sunday morning when the chums of the Shell bore down on him after morning service.

"Coming?" asked Tom Merry affably.

"Coming where?" asked Wally.

"Oh, just for a stroll, you know!"

Wally shook his head decidedly.

"I don't care for strolls with a gang of old fogies, thanks!" he replied. "I'm going with Frayne and Jameson!"

"Ahem!"

"What's the little game?" asked Wally.

"Game!" repeated Tom Merry vaguely.

"Yes. Why are you so fond of me all of a sudden for?"

Tom Merry coughed.

"Well, you're such an entertaining chap," he said.

"Oh, come off!" said Wally.

And he walked away whistling.

"No go!" grinned Lowther. "N. blessed G.!"

And Wally's beginning to smell a rat, and when we spring Manners' minor on him he'll put two and two together."

"Well, he's bound to be decent to young Manners after we've been decent to him," said Tom Merry. "One good turn deserves another."

"I hope he'll get on with my minor," said Manners, wrinkling his brows. "As a matter of fact, Wally is just the chap who's most likely to be down on young Reggie."

"Well, we're disarming him beforehand," said Tom. "What about lending him your camera?"

"My camera?" ejaculated Manners.

"Yes—why not?"

"Well, there's about a thousand reasons why not," said Manners crossly. "But one will do. I'll see him blowed first, and young Reggie, too!"

But Manners thought it over, and the next day after morning lessons, he asked Wally if he would care to come with him and take some snaps.

Wally closed one eye, and looked at Manners very sharply with the other.

"Can I use the camera?" he asked.

Manners made a noble effort, and nodded.

"Right-ho! I'm on!"

And they wandered forth together with the camera.

Wally was very active as a photographer, and he used up a whole roll of films. His skill did not equal his activity, however.



Mr. Smiley's face assumed an expression of horror as he stopped before Manners and his minor. "What is this?" said the vicar. "I am surprised at you, Manners!" Manners turned crimson, raising his cap awkwardly.

Later in the day, being keen on developing his own films, he accompanied Manners to his dark-room.

Manners gave him exact instructions; but the films turned out very remarkable. So did Wally, for that matter, being greatly adorned with pyro when he came out of the dark-room. His Form-master, Mr. Selby, spotted him in that state, and gave him a hundred lines.

The next morning the negatives were printed, and showed a beautiful series of blotches, which bore no resemblance to anything in the earth, in the air, or in the waters under the earth.

Wally snorted at the sight of them.

"That's a pretty rocky camera of yours, Manners," he said despairingly.

"Why, you young fathead!" said Manners warmly. "That's my presentation camera."

"Then they might have presented you with a decent one. If you want me to come photographing with you again, Manners, you'll have to get a new camera, that's all. I'm not going to waste my time," said Wally severely. And he left Manners gasping.

But for the consideration that Manners minor was due on Wednesday afternoon, and would then be at the mercy of Wally, the cheerful fag would certainly not have escaped without a thick ear. But Manners exercised heroic self-restraint.

That evening Wally was invited into Study No. 6 to help dispose of baked chestnuts.

Blake Herries, Digby, and D'Arcy were all very cordial with the invitation, and they smiled as sweetly as possible when Wally brought Frayne, Jameson, Hobbs, and Curly Gibson with him.

The fags cleared off the chestnuts in record

time, and Hobbs asked if there was a cake; and, as there wasn't, Wally & Co. departed.

Wally looked very perplexed as he departed with his chums.

"There's something or other on," he told them. "I can't catch on to it. What have those old fogies taken such a fancy to me for?"

"Because you're so nice," grinned Jameson.

"Well, that might apply to us," said Curly Gibson; "but it's Wally they've taken a fancy to. They only put up with us on Wally's account. What on earth have they taken a fancy to Wally for?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Further discussion on that point was interrupted by Curly Gibson's curly head being taken into chancery.

But the series of surprises were not over yet. On Wednesday Arthur Augustus D'Arcy looked for his minor after morning lessons.

Wally stared at him as he came up.

"Any more of it?" he asked.

"Any more of what, deah boy?" asked Arthur Augustus, in his stately way.

"Kindness to animals, Wally means," said Hobbs.

"Don't talk out of your neck, Hobbs!" said Wally. "I mean any more of your soft sawder, Gussy."

"Weally, Wally——"

"Is it baked chestnuts this time?" asked Wally, with a grin.

"Somethin' wathah bettah than that, deah boy. We want you to come to a little party in Study No. 6 at tea-time."

"These chaps as well?" asked Wally, loyal to his inky brigade.

"Yaas, wathah—any friend you care to bwing."

"We'll come," said Hobbs at once.

"Wotto!" chuckled Joe Frayne.

"I'll come," said Wally, "and I'll bring my friends. Anybody else coming?"

"Yaas; Tom Mewwy, Mannahs, and Lowthab, and a new chap."

"Not that chap Trimble of the Fourth?" asked Wally. "I can't stand him."

"Certainly not Twimble. A new kid, who is comin' to-day."

"Friend of yours," said Wally considerably. "If he is we'll be nice to him, considering that you are standing the feed."

"Yaas, in a way—Mannahs minor, you know."

Wally jumped.

"Manners minor? I didn't know Manners had a minor."

"Yaas; a—aw vewy nice boy," said Arthur Augustus. "He is comin' to St. Jim's this aftahnoon, and he's goin' in the Third."

Wally gave a prolonged, expressive whistle. He winked at his major.

"Oh!" he said comprehendingly.

"It will be a good opportunity of intwoducin' you chaps to the new kid, you know," remarked Arthur Augustus.

"Blessed if I care a button for a new kid!" said Jameson.

"No fear!" remarked Hobbs. "Is he anything like Manners? If he is, he will get his nose punched in the Third, I can tell you!"

Arthur Augustus coughed.

"I twust you youngstahs will be on wathah good terms with Mannahs minah," he said. "We are goin' to have a first-class spweed."

"Rely on us," said Wally. "Don't worry, old

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son, we'll come. As for Manners minor, we won't eat him!"

Wally grinned at his comrades as the great Arthur Augustus quitted them.

"The deadly secret's out now," he remarked. "That's what the bounders have been buttering us up for. Manners has got a minor coming into the Third, and old Manners wants us to spare his life."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I can see why they should take all that trouble," said Jameson. "We don't massacre new kids in the Third. We might lick him if he's cheeky, and toss him in a blanket, but we shouldn't hurt the kid. I don't see why they should bother."

Wally chuckled.

"I expect there's something fishy about the kid," he said. "Perhaps a cheeky little beast, and Manners major doesn't want him hammered for his cheek."

"He'll jolly well get hammered if there's any rot," said Jameson warmly. "I believe in keeping new kids in their places."

"They're standing us a feed," said Wally—"don't forget that. After all, if he's some spoony little beast, we can go easy with him. I dare say I shall have to lick him, of course. But you fellows are not going to rag him."

"Look here, I'll rag him if I like!" roared Jameson.

"You jolly well won't!" said Wally. "If he wants licking, I'll lick him! Come down to the footer and don't jaw, Jamey! You're always jawing."

Jameson snorted. "So far as Jameson was concerned, Manners minor's prospects in the Third were not rosy, but—if all went well, at least—the great spread in Study No. 6 would smooth over all difficulties, and all would be calm and bright."

If Manners minor was anything like decent Wally was prepared to take him under his wing—in return for benefits received. It all depended on Manners minor.

CHAPTER 4.

Manners Minor!

TOM MERRY & CO. went down cheerfully to Little Side for the House match.

Manners went with the footballers, though not to play.

He had to go to the station at Rylcombe to meet his brother soon after the match was started.

Julian of the Fourth had taken his place in the team very willingly.

Manners stood with his hands in his overcoat pockets to watch the beginning of the match, with a thoughtful wrinkle on his brow.

Figgins kicked off for the New House, and the football match was soon going hot and strong.

Manners hardly noted it. After a few minutes he turned away and walked down to the gates.

The day of Reggie's arrival had come at last, and Manners was in an anxious mood. Manners was not a demonstrative fellow, but he was proud of his young brother—though there was sometimes civil war when they were at home together. Reggie was really lord of all he surveyed at home. A fond mother, an indulgent father, and kind, elder sisters had petted him and spoiled him. He had never roughed it in any way; he had always been coaxed rather than commanded.

Manners had often thought that a turn at St.



"I believe our load has grown heavier!"

Half-a-crown has been awarded to B. Nicholson, 16, Barnstaple Street, South Molton, North Devon.

Jim's would do Reggie no end of good, by knocking a great deal of nonsense out of him.

But such a process would have been very hard on the petted boy. Now that the time had come, Manners realised how very hard it would be, and he was very anxious about the lad. The airs and graces Reggie sported at home, and which were conceded to there, would hardly serve him in a fag Form at St. Jim's. Anything like "putting on side" would put the backs of the fags up at once.

Complaints over small hardships would earn him scorn and contempt. And the bad habits to which his father had referred—hardly surprising in a boy who had been so thoroughly spoiled—would be against him, too.

True, there were fellows in the Third—Piggott, for example—who aped the manners and customs of certain doggish "blades" in the Upper Forms, and Reggie might find kindred spirits among them.

But the mere idea of Reggie chumming with an utter cad like Piggott was dismaying. A fellow like Wally D'Arcy was what he needed for a friend; but, unfortunately, Wally was likeliest of all to be irritated and disgusted by any nonsense on Reggie's part.

However, Manners had done his best, with the aid of his loyal chums, to propitiate Wally, and he could only hope for the best.

But his brow was very thoughtful as he walked down to Rylcombe.

He was in good time for the train, and he waited on the platform till it came in.

A lad of about thirteen stepped out of the train and looked about him. He was a slim, graceful lad, with a very handsome face—very like Manners' own, but very much more good-looking—and he was extremely well-dressed. But the handsome face was very petulant in expression, and the well-cut lips had a discontented droop. He looked impatiently up and down the platform, and Manners ran towards him.

"Hallo, Reggie!"

"Hallo!" said Reggie. "You're here, then."

"Yes. I came to meet you," said Manners.

"Nothing wrong, is there?"

"No; not specially."

"You're looking rather down."

"I'm feeling rather down!" snapped Reggie.

"What the pater has sent me here for I don't know. I didn't want to come. I was comfortable enough at home. I've had a rotten journey."

"Sorry!" said Manners.

"I jolly nearly missed the train at Wayland."

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I don't see why you couldn't have met me at the junction," said Reggie sullenly.

"Well, it's a jolly long way," said Manners mildly. "And you only had to walk across the bridge from one platform to the other."

"I stopped to get some cigarettes from an automatic machine, and jolly nearly missed it."

"Cigarettes?" said Manners.

Reggie grunted discontentedly.

"Yes. The pater's been awfully down on my fags! He took jolly good care I hadn't any with me when he saw me off."

"I should say he did!" snapped Manners. "And you'd no right to buy any more, you know that!"

Reggie's eyes glistened.

"Now, look here, Harry, we'll have this out before we go any farther," he said. "You've preached at me in the holidays, and you've talked rot about the school doing me good if I came here. I shouldn't wonder if you put it in the pater's head. I've been told till I'm sick of the subject that you're going to look after me at St. Jim's, and I'm to take your advice, and do as you tell me, and that kind of rot. Now, I want you to understand, at the start, that I'm not going to stand any of your elder-brother business!"

"Oh!" said Manners.

"I shall be glad of some tips, as you know the ropes and I don't," said Reggie. "That's all right. But none of your blessed sermons. I can't stand 'em, and I won't. That's flat!"

Manners seemed to gulp something down.

"I won't give you any sermons, Reggie," he said.

"Well, that's all right," said Reggie, more civilly. "Don't, that's all."

"I'll look after your box," said Manners.

After the Shell fellow had seen to the box the brothers left the station together.

"Walking?" asked Reggie.

"Yes, it isn't much of a walk."

"What about my box?"

"That will be sent on. You've got your bag?"

"Yes, all right."

"I'll carry it, if you like."

Reggie handed over the bag at once, and they walked out of Rylcombe. Reggie was still looking sulky and discontented, and he showed signs of shortness of breath as they came to the rise in the road.

Manners understood very well that the foolish lad had been smoking in the train, but Reggie was evidently not in a mood for "sermons," so he was silent.

Reggie halted when they came to the stile.

"Rotten fagging walk!" he said. "Let's have a rest. I don't see why we couldn't have taken a cab."

"It isn't much of a walk, and it wasn't worth the tin."

"It seems miles to me. And I've got plenty of tin. I shouldn't have asked you to pay for the cab."

Reggie sat on the stile and took a packet out of his pocket, and selected a cigarette.

Manners stared at him. He had determined that his minor should have no sermons; at least, not to begin with. But this was a little too much.

"You're not going to smoke here, Reggie?" he said.

"Why shouldn't I?"

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Manners felt his anger rising.

"There's a lot of reasons why you shouldn't!" he exclaimed hotly. "It's pretty mean to begin as soon as you get out of father's sight, when you know he objects to it."

"Rot!"

"You know it's bad for you, too, a growing kid."

"That's my business, I suppose."

"Well, it isn't," said Manners. "There's a strict rule against it at St. Jim's, and if you're caught it means a caning."

"What a school for whitewashed cherubs," sneered Reggie. "Doesn't anybody smoke there?"

"Well, yes," Manners had to admit. "But it's done secretly, and only by rotten sort of chaps. It's considered bad form."

"I don't consider it's bad form."

"Do you think you're old enough to have positive opinions about that?" asked Manners.

"Quite!" said Reggie calmly, and he blew out a cloud of smoke.

"Look here, Reggie, it won't do," said Manners. "Anybody belonging to St. Jim's might see you. Then I should be supposed to be encouraging you."

"If you're afraid you can trot along."

"I'm not afraid of the cane, if that's what you mean, but I'm afraid of being thought a black-guard!" said Manners savagely.

"Oh, rats!"

"Put that cigarette away, Reggie!"

"I won't!"

A gentleman in black with a clerical collar and a fat face turned out of a side lane, and stopped as he saw the two boys.

It was Mr. Smiley, the vicar. Mr. Smiley's fat face assumed an expression of horror.

"Manners!" he exclaimed. "What is this? I am surprised at you!"

Manners turned crimson. He raised his cap awkwardly.

Reggie stared coolly at the clerical gentleman.

"Who's the old sport, Harry?" he asked, loud enough for Mr. Smiley to hear.

Then Mr. Smiley became as crimson as Manners.

"That is, I suppose, a new boy for the school," said Mr. Smiley.

"It's my young brother, sir," said Manners.

"And you are encouraging him in bad habits? I shall mention this to Dr. Holmes when I see your headmaster again, Manners!"

And, with a glance of angry contempt, Mr. Smiley passed on before the unfortunate Manners could reply.

CHAPTER 5.

Bad Blood!

MANNERS stood crimson, angry, and ashamed.

He could not correct the reverend gentleman's mistake, neither did Mr. Smiley give him time to do so.

Reggie looked after the vicar curiously.

"Cheeky old beggar!" he said. "No business of his what you do, is it?"

"No; but—"

"Then what the dickens was he chipping in for? Cheek, I call it!"

"Well, as a clergyman, he has a right to chip in," said Manners. "Anyway, he'll mention this to the Head, and it means a row for me."

"What rot! You can tell the Head you weren't smoking, and that you were preaching at me about it."

"Well, I can't!" said Manners angrily. "Besides, the Head would think I ought to stop you if you won't stop for telling."

"What rot!"

"Are you coming along?" asked Manners impatiently.

"Oh, all right!"

Reggie slipped from the stile and paused to light a second cigarette.

Manners was glaring now.

"Look here, Reggie, you've got to chuck it!" he said resolutely. "Why, we might meet your Form-master, old Selby, on the road; he often trots along here on a half-holiday! Haven't you any sense?"

"I told you I wouldn't have any sermons! If you're afraid of being seen with a chap smoking, hook it!"

"What precious rascal taught you to smoke, you young idiot?"

"I learned it from Joey Pike. He was my best pal; but the pater had an awful row when he found I knew him!" growled Reggie. "Joey taught me to play billiards, too. His father doesn't mind him smoking; he's only seventeen. He taught me to play poker, too."

"And fleeced you, I dare say!" growled Manners. "He wouldn't take the trouble to bother with a silly little fool for nothing."

Reggie's eyes blazed.

"If you're going on in that strain we'd better part here!" he said. "I've warned you I won't stand it, and I won't!"

"Oh, come on!" growled Manners.

He was greatly inclined to take the wilful young rascal at his word; but his sense of duty was strong. He had not expected to find much pleasure in the hopeful Reggie's company.

Reggie walked on, smoking. That he found much pleasure in the cigarette was hardly probable, but he certainly found a great deal of pleasure in asserting his lofty independence and irritating his elder brother.

Manners felt that he was on pins and needles. He was keenly conscious of the absurdity of Reggie's nonsense, and the mannish airs of a boy of thirteen made him feel ashamed and uncomfortable.

The sight of two St. Jim's caps on the road brought the matter to a head.

Levison and Mellish of the Fourth came in sight. They were the last fellows in the world whom Manners wished to meet at that moment. They were young blackguards themselves, and Manners had never concealed his contempt for their doggish ways.

"Look here, Reggie—" he began fiercely.

"Oh, shut up!" said Reggie.

"Hallo!" exclaimed Levison. "Manners, I'm shocked at you! Teaching the young idea how to smoke in this way! Oh, Manners!"

"What would Tom Merry say?" said Mellish solemnly. "The good, stainless Thomas, what would he say? Oh, Manners!"

Manners flushed with rage.

"Kid," said Levison, wagging his finger at the astonished Reggie, "I don't know who you are, but I must warn you against Manners! Manners is a bad boy!"

"He, he, he!" cackled Mellish.

"Sheer off, confound you!" exclaimed Manners. "I'd wipe up the road with both of you for two pins!"

And Manners looked so dangerous that the cads

(Continued on next page.)

LAUGH THESE OFF!

—with Monty Lowther.



Hallo, Everybody!

Gore says he likes plenty of amusement at the films. He should try sitting at the end of a row.

What is the shortest day, asks Pratt. The shortest day was the last day of the Christmas holidays.

News: The Normandie reached port with one of her propellers missing. The appetites of these deep-sea fish get bigger and bigger.

Have you ever noticed that when a chap starts to forgive his enemies, he usually begins with the big fellows?

To Blake, who asks which would be the best day to teach Skimpole to play football, I can only say: Which is your luckiest day for falling off ladders?

Gore says he was picked from over 200 amateur applicants who wanted to go on the stage, last vac. Yes, he was the first to be shown the door!

"And this," said Skimpole, indicating an old sundial, "is a scientific instrument for measuring time by means of the motion of the sun's shadow cast by the style erected on its surface." "My!" exclaimed his aunt in amazement. "I wonder what they will be thinking of next?"

Story: "Hi, Joe!" yelled the foreman, as he saw his workmate slip off the scaffolding. "When you come up again, you might bring up a few of them bricks with you!"

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy is doubtful about going on as first turn at a charity concert. The early turn so often gets the bird!

Then there was the sentry who found it dull, so he had a wireless set fixed inside his busby. The sergeant was "superhet" up!

Stop Press: Many people, we read, are eager for proof of the existence of fairies. Gnome news is good news.

Story goes that Mr. Ratcliff went to a fancy-dress ball attired as an egg-cup. The illusion was complete, as Mr. Ratcliff is nearly bald! (Well, very nearly, sir!)

An international outside-right has been taking driving lessons. Wonder if he will put his hand out now when taking a corner?

All the best, chaps!

of the Fourth thought it better to sheer off, and they strode along the road, chuckling.

"Who are they?" asked Reggie.

"Levison and Mellish, two rotten outsiders in the Fourth Form!" growled Manners. "This will be all over St. Jim's as soon as they find out that you're my minor. I shall never hear the end of it!"

"Who's the Thomas they were speaking about?"

"Eh? Oh, that's Tom Merry!"

"Some goody-goody prig, I suppose?" sneered Reggie.

"A fellow who is worth fifty times as much as you will ever be!" said Manners.

Manners was getting into a state of intense irritation, and he did not measure his words now. Reggie sneered.

"Well, I don't choose to be a prig, so that's all right!" he said.

"Put that cigarette away, Reggie!"

"Oh, cheese it!"

Manners' look became resolute.

"We're close to the school now," he said. "If you won't do the sensible thing, I shall have to make you. Throw it away!"

"I won't!"

"Then I shall take it!"

Reggie backed away, a dangerous gleam in his eyes.

"So you're beginning bullying already, are you?" he said. "I knew that was coming! Well, I'm not going to stand it!"

"I mean what I say!" said Manners. "I'm not going to have you hauled up before the beaks the first day at St. Jim's! Throw that cigarette away, and give me the packet, or I'll take them by force!"

"You'd better keep your hands off me!"

"Will you do as I ask you?"

"No, I won't!"

Manners said no more; he grasped Reggie by the collar and jerked his cigarette away, and threw it over the hedge.

Reggie yelled and struggled.

Manners gave a howl as a boot clumped on his shin.

"Let go!" yelled Reggie. "Confound you, let go! Let me alone!"

"You young cad!" panted Manners. "I've a jolly good mind to give you the licking of your life!"

"You rotten bully, let me go!"

Manners thrust his hand into Reggie's pocket and snatched out the packet of cigarettes. Then he released him. He twisted the packet and the cigarettes it contained into pieces, and tossed them into the field.

Reggie looked at him with burning eyes. He was not able to save his precious smokes, and his brother's action, which he regarded as high-handed and meddlesome, exasperated him beyond measure.

"Now come on!" said Manners, panting.

"I won't come with you!" said Reggie savagely. "I won't speak to you! Touch me again, and I'll kick you, you beast! Let me alone!"

"You've got to come to the school!"

"I won't come with you! Give me my bag!"

"Look here, Reggie—"

"Oh, shut up! Can't you leave me alone when I ask you? I tell you I won't walk a step with you!" said Reggie shrilly.

Manners stood undecided. He had dropped the

bag, and, as he made a movement to pick it up, Reggie snatched it away.

Manners regarded him doubtfully. It had turned out worse than he had expected in his blackest moments of anticipation. What was to be done now?

"Reggie, old man," he said at last, "don't be a young ass! Come with me!"

"I won't go a step with you!"

"We—we've got a little party in D'Arcy's study to meet you," said Manners. "All my friends will be there."

"The good and stainless Thomas and the rest!" sneered Reggie. "Well, I don't want to meet your friends! They can go to the dickens!"

"Reggie, you don't know a soul at St. Jim's, and—"

"I can look after myself! I'm fed-up with you, anyway! I won't come a step with you, and I won't speak to you at the school, either! I don't move from this spot till you've gone!"

Reggie Manners sat down on his bag, with an expression of passionate and obstinate determination.

Manners' major regarded him silently for some moments. He had a choice of alternatives—to give his young brother the licking he badly needed, and march him along by the ear, or to leave him to his own devices. His inclination was strongly for the first alternative, but he adopted the second.

Without another word, he turned away and walked on to the school—alone.

Reggie watched him with savagely lowering brows till he was out of sight.

CHAPTER 6.

The Spread in Study No. 6!

"GOAL!"

The House match was just finishing as Manners came on Little Side. Manners' face was grim and gloomy.

"Goal!"

"Well kicked, Tommy!"

"School House wins!"

Tom Merry came off the field looking very cheerful. The match had been a hard one, neither side breaking its duck till right at the finish, and then Tom Merry had beaten Patty Wynn at last.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy patted the captain of the Shell on the back.

"Wippin', deah boy!" he said. "I couldn't have kicked that goal bettah myself."

"Perhaps not even so well!" grinned Monty Lowther.

"Weally, Lowthah—"

"Hallo! Here's Manners!" exclaimed Tom Merry. "We've beaten the New House, Manners, right at the finish. Where's your minor?"

"I don't know!" said Manners grimly.

"Didn't he come?"

"Oh, yes, he came—"

"Bai Jove! I twust you haven't lost him, Mannahs? Didn't you meet him at the station?"

"Yes, I met him," said Manners briefly.

Tom Merry looked at him curiously, but he asked no more questions. He could see that there had been trouble. Manners went indoors moodily enough, and the footballers proceeded to change, and then made their way to Study No. 6.

The match had given them a keen appetite, and they were quite ready for the magnificent spread planned by the great D'Arcy.



There was a shout of rage as Wally opened the box-room door, and Manners minor came rushing out. His clenched fist smote Wally full on the nose, and the leader of the Third went down on the landing with a bump and a roar.

Manners was in the study laying the table ready. But he did not look cheerful.

Tom Merry and Lowther could not help wondering. Blake, Herries, Digby, and D'Arcy, who were prepared to do the honours to a "gang" of fags for the sake of Manners minor, naturally wanted to know where he was.

There was nothing for it but to explain.

"The fags will be here soon," said Blake. "Buck up with the cooking, Dig—you're cook! Poach all the eggs!"

"Right-ho!" said Dig.

"Your minor all right, Manners?"

"I hope he is," said Manners.

Blake stared.

"You hope he is!" he repeated. "Don't you know?"

"Well, I don't, as a matter of fact."

"Oh!" said Blake, scenting trouble.

But Arthur Augustus D'Arcy turned his eyeglass somewhat severely upon Manners.

"I twist, Mannahs, that you have not been havin' twouble with your minah already? I weally must wemark that that shows a lack of tact and judgment."

"What about the giddy reception?" said Herries. "Isn't it coming off? Are we going to be invaded by a gang of the Third for nix?"

Manners coloured.

"I'm sorry!" he said. "I suppose I'd better tell you fellows. My minor is a young rascal, and he insisted on smoking all the way to the school."

"Bai Jove!"

"I took his cigarettes away at last, not till old Smiley had seen him smoking, and threatened to report me to the Head—as if it was my fault!"

"I'd have given him a hiding, too," said Herries. "That's what he wanted—a hiding. Didn't you give him one?"

"No," said Manners, with a faint grin.

"That's where you made a mistake," said Herries sagely. "What he wanted was a thundering good hiding!"

"I dare say he did, but I didn't want to lick him his first day at school. Besides, he—he might write home and put it rottenly for me, and the pater wouldn't understand," said Manners, flushing. "And—and lickings won't do Reggie much good—from me. He calls it bullying. He'll get lickings enough without me handing out any."

"But where is he now, old scout?" asked Lowther.

"He wouldn't come with me after I chucked his smokes away, and I had to leave him in the road," said Manners reluctantly.

"Well, he'll come on all right," said Tom Merry. "But what about the feed?"

"Oh, bother him!" said Manners peevishly. "You chaps have taken too much trouble already. Let him go and eat coke!"

"I am not surprised that you are watty, Mannahs, deah boy," said Arthur Augustus sympathetically. "I know what a wowwy these minahs are. But I weally think the young donkey ought to be given a chance. If he's watty with

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you, I will go and look for him, if you like. He must have awaked before this."

Manners nodded, and D'Arcy quitted the study.

Tom Merry & Co. went on with their preparation for the spread. They were feeling a little concerned for Manners, and considerably irritated with his minor. In fact, every fellow in the study felt quite prepared to administer the thrashing Reggie Manners was evidently badly in need of.

There was a tramp of feet in the passage, and Wally & Co. came in.

D'Arcy minor gave the juniors a cool nod, and marshalled his followers into the study.

D'Arcy had told him to bring his friends, without making any specification of the number, and Wally was too hospitable to leave a friend out. Besides Frayne, Hobbs, Jameson, and Curly Gibson, three other fags of the Third trotted in, all looking very anticipative. The addition of eight to the party put a somewhat severe strain upon the accommodation.

"Not crowding you out—what?" asked Wally affably. "Hallo, Manners! Where's that new kid—your minor?"

"He—he's coming," said Manners awkwardly.

"Not here yet—what? Never mind, it isn't a bit important," said Wally candidly. "Let me help you with the cooking, Dig."

"Just done," said Digby hastily.

"Not waiting for Manners minor, I suppose?" said Jameson. "If you fellows don't mind my mentioning it, I'm rather sharp set."

"Waiting for Manners minor," said Wally. "Well, I like that! Likely to wait for a new kid!"

"N-no," said Blake; "not at all. Sit down, gentlemen! You don't mind going two to a seat, do you? Space is limited."

"Don't mensh!" said Wally gracefully. "Right as rain! Now, then, young Jameson, don't shove a chap off the chair!"

"Well, give me half, young D'Arcy!"

"You've got half, and if you shove me again you go under the table, napper first, so I warn you," said Wally darkly. "I don't want any of your New House manners when I take you out to tea with my distinguished friends in the Upper Forms."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, this is a jolly good spread," said Hobbs. "You can have a minor come every day, if you like, Manners."

"Tuck in, you Shellfish!" said Wally. "Don't wait for Manners minor. Where's old Gus got to—gone to change his necktie? Good old Gus! Pile in—you won't have much chance later!"

Tom Merry & Co. sat down to tea.

Manners joined them, looking as cheerful as he could, though he was evidently troubled in mind about his minor.

The spread in Study No. 6 was having its intended effect of putting Wally & Co. in high good-humour. But the project of introducing Manners minor under those favourable conditions, and starting him on good terms with the chiefs of the Third, seemed likely to fall through.

The feed proceeded, but Arthur Augustus did not put in an appearance. Evidently the generous Gussy was searching for Manners minor, and Manners minor, apparently, was not to be found.

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CHAPTER 7.

On His Own!

REGGIE MANNERS tramped on towards the school after his brother had disappeared in an extremely bad temper.

His handsome, somewhat weak face was puckered into a peevish and discontented frown. He bitterly resented his brother's interference with him, and though he had driven his major away, he unreasonably resented the desertion. So this was the way Harry was looking after him on his first day at school! That was how Reggie put it to himself.

He reached the school gates at last. The school had been in sight when his brother had parted with him.

Taggles was standing in the doorway of his lodge, and Reggie called to him:

"Is this St. Jim's?"

"Yes," said Taggles.

"Where is the School House, please?"

Taggles pointed to the School House.

Without troubling to thank him, Reggie tramped away across the quadrangle.

There was a sound of cheering from the direction of the football ground, where the junior match had just ended.

Manners minor did not look in that direction, however. He went in at the big open doorway of the School House, and stared about him.

A boy in buttons came along, and Reggie hailed him.

"Hallo, you!"

Toby, the page, stopped.

"Can you tell me where to find the House dame? I've got to give this bag to her," said Reggie.

"Yes, sir; follow me, sir!" said Toby, in cheery expectation of a tip from the new boy.

"Let me carry the bag, sir."

Reggie willingly handed him the bag and followed him.

Mrs. Mimms received the bag, and spoke a kind word or two to Reggie, and told him to go and report himself to his Form-master.

The obliging Toby guided Reggie to Mr. Selby's study.

"Shall I tell Master Manners you're here?" asked Toby, who had caught the new boy's name in the House dame's room.

"No!" said Reggie curtly.

"I thought Master Manners might be a relation, sir."

"He's my brother."

"Then I'll tell him," said the puzzled Toby.

"You needn't trouble."

Reggie knocked at Mr. Selby's door and went in.

Toby blinked after him, and returned to the regions below, murmuring remarks to himself that were not at all complimentary to Master Reginald Manners.

The master of the Third was reading a newspaper, and he looked up crossly at Reggie as the latter came in.

Mr. Selby generally looked cross.

"Well, what do you want?" he said, in an acid voice. "Ah, I suppose you are the new boy, Manners minor?"

"Yes, sir," said Reggie. "The House dame told me to report to you, sir."

"Quite right. As your Form is already arranged, however, I need not detain you. You had better find your brother, and he will tell you anything you need to know. You may go."

STAMP SYMBOLS

An interesting article containing many little-known facts which will help you to identify stamps.

HAS it ever struck you as strange that, while almost every other country without exception puts its name on its stamps, our own stamps are titleless? Here's why:

As you doubtless know, Britain was first in the field in issuing adhesive stamps, and in the early eighteen-forties, when there were no other countries' stamps to be confused with them, there was obviously no need to title ours. Ever since, and that's close on a century, we have paid a silent tribute in this way to our pioneer efforts.

BY ROYAL APPROVAL.

Another invariable feature of our stamps—at least, those prepaying postage—has been the monarch's head on them. Do you know why we've had this? It's not as a compliment to the reigning head of our State, though, of course, this does partly apply. The portrait shows that our stamps are issued by Royal approval and authority.



There's no need to title this stamp—everyone knows it's British.

Harking back again to the eighteen-forties, many people then were wholly unable to read or write, but they could at least understand the significance of a picture.

Even in these enlightened days the pictorial message is popular. Look, for instance, at the number of air-mail stamps issued by various countries whose sole reference to their special postal purpose is an aeroplane or similar pictorial device.

Talking of devices, have you been puzzled by the rather unusual double-armed cross which has been featured on several countries' stamps, notably those of Belgium? This patriarchal cross, to give

Manners minor left the study with a sinking heart.

The short and snappish manner of the Form-master was not gratifying, especially after what Reggie had been accustomed to at home.

The moment he was outside the door Mr. Selby returned to his paper, and forgot the boy's existence.

Reggie was quite aware of that. He was nobody, nothing—less than nothing here—and at home he had been the darling of all, indulged in every petty caprice; his complaints listened to with gravity and attention; his every wish anticipated. It was a sudden and chilling change.

He had anticipated an unpleasant change from home, but nothing quite like this. His utter unimportance in all eyes but his own struck him forcibly. Had his Form-master been kind and considerate like Mr. Railton or Mr. Lathom, however, Reggie would certainly have taken every kindness as a matter of course, and no more than his due.

He stood in the passage, looking about him, feeling lonely and miserable.

this device its correct name, is actually nothing more than a glorified and easily recognisable picture symbol. Just as medical workers generally have adopted the Red Cross as their pictorial standard, so all those engaged in fighting against tuberculosis have for their banner the patriarchal cross.



The famous Menin Gate, Ypres. Note the cross in the top left corner, showing that this stamp was intended to help the tuberculosis fighters.

PICTURE WRITING.

In short, these various pictorial signs are a return to the beginnings of our alphabets. Centuries ago, for instance, when the Cretans wanted to represent the letter E they drew a picture of a window (their word for window started with an E sound), which looks like an E on its side. The Greeks later borrowed the symbol, but turned it its present way up, calling it epsilon, and upright it has remained ever since.

The Chinese have always been great believers in picture-writing. Indeed, to this day a very large portion of their immense alphabet consists of symbolised pictures, known as *hsiang hsing*.

While experts can trace the development of many Chinese letters from pictures pure and simple to devices comparable to letters in our own modern alphabet, the Chinese believe that it was a dragon that was responsible for their invention!

More than four thousand years ago the Emperor Fu Hsi, when out walking alone one day, met a fearsome dragon. Instead of making short work of the emperor, this unusual creature taught the monarch how to write and how to think. To honour this service, the emperor adopted the dragon as his symbol—a symbol which, forty centuries later, has appeared on many Chinese stamps.

He was not in the least inclined to search for his brother, however. He felt a fierce resentment that his brother was not searching for him. What to do with himself he did not know.

He was tired and hungry, but he did not know his way to the dining-room or the times of the meals there. Everybody seemed to be out of doors, and the boy in buttons had disappeared.

A fog of about his own age, with a pasty complexion and very sharp eyes, came along the passage and stopped to stare at him.

It was Piggott of the Third, the most thorough young rascal the School House contained.

Piggott stared at him, and grinned.

"New kid?" he asked.

"Yes," said Reggie, glad of someone to speak to, though Piggott's manner and looks were not prepossessing. "I'm Manners minor."

"Oh, you're that cad Manners' brother, are you?" jeered Piggott. "Well, if you weren't just outside old Selby's door, I'd give you a thick ear, you spoony-faced young nincompoop!"

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Reggie stared at him helplessly. Was this how he was going to be talked to at St. Jim's?

At the same time, he felt a curious satisfaction at hearing his brother ill-spoken of. It seemed a justification, somehow, of his own angry resentment and unreasonableness.

"What Form are you going into?" continued Piggott.

"Third," faltered Reggie.

"My Form!" Piggott chuckled. "I promise you we'll give you a high old time, then, spoony-face! You won't have nurse-nurse to put you to bed to-night!"

"I'm never put to bed by a nurse!" said Reggie indignantly. "And you're a cad!"

"Eh—what's that?"

"You're a cad, and jolly ill-bred!" said Reggie undauntedly.

Manners minor had plenty of faults, but he had quite a full allowance of pluck.

"If you weren't just outside old Selby's door I'd—" said Piggott, breathing hard.

"I'll come down the passage with you, if you like!" sneered Reggie. "I'm not afraid of you!"

Piggott looked at him hard, and his manner changed. Reggie had clenched his hands, and his eyes were gleaming.

Piggott had no liking for clenched hands.

"Oh, don't be ratty!" he said, with a grin.

"Only joking, you know! Look here, would you like me to show you to your brother's study?"

"No, thanks!"

"Like to have a feed?" asked Piggott. "Tea's just ready."

"Yes; I'd be jolly glad!"

"This way, then!"

Piggott mounted the stairs, and Reggie Manners followed. They went up another flight, and then another, to Reggie's astonishment.

"Do you have tea in the top of the House?" he exclaimed.

"There's a special tea-room for new boys," said Piggott calmly. "Here it is! Trot in!"

He threw open the door, and Reggie, as he hesitated on the threshold, wondering, received a rough push, and went staggering into the room.

The door closed, and the lock clicked as the key was turned outside.

Manners minor reeled against a box, and then spun round to the door furiously. He could see now that he was in a box-room, and he knew that he was locked in.

He hammered savagely at the door.

"Let me out, you beast! Let me out!"

There was a chuckle outside and a sound of departing footsteps.

Piggott of the Third was gone.

Reggie, panting with rage, hammered on the door till his hands ached, breathing fury.

"Oh, the rotter!" he panted. "It's all Harry's fault, too, for leaving me alone! Oh dear! Oh!"

The unfortunate fag hammered on the door in the hope that his entrapper would return.

But Piggott did not return. He was retailing the joke to some choice spirits in the Third Form Room, amid shouts of laughter.

CHAPTER 8.

D'Arcy Does His Best!

"**B**AI Jove! It is weally vewy remarkable!" Arthur Augustus D'Arcy was feeling perplexed.

He had looked round the quadrangle for THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 1,563.

Manners minor; he had asked fellows right and left; he had even gone over to the New House to inquire whether Manners minor had wandered in there by mistake.

But he could not find the new fag.

That he had arrived was certain, for he had learned from Toby that the page had taken him to Mr. Selby's study and left him there. He was not likely to be there all this time, Arthur Augustus had passed the door several times, and, as there was no sound of voices, it was pretty certain that Reggie was not there. However, at length, the swell of St. Jim's had knocked at the door, and looked in to make sure. Mr. Selby glanced at him irritably.

"Pway excuse me, sir!" said Arthur Augustus apologetically. "I am lookin' for Mannahs minah."

"Kindly close that door at once!"

Arthur Augustus closed the door at once. Manners minor was not there, and that was all he wished to know.

He stood in the passage, puzzled and perplexed, wondering what had become of the new fag. It was really very remarkable.

"Pewwaps I had bettah look in the Form-woom," murmured Arthur Augustus. "Pewwaps some of the fags have seen him and taken him there. I weally do not see where else he can be."

And Arthur Augustus made his way to the Third Form Room.

Sounds of laughter greeted him as he approached. He looked in, wondering whether the fags were already ragging Manners minor.

Piggott was there, with four or five fags. They were all laughing loudly, apparently over some good joke. But there was no sign of a new boy.

"Hallo!" said Piggott, as D'Arcy's eyeglass gleamed in. "Looking for somebody?"

"Yaas. I am lookin' for Mannahs minah."

"Who's that?" asked Piggott innocently.

And his comrades chortled.

"Mannahs' young bwothah, you know."

"Has Manners got a young brother?" asked Piggott. "My hat! So there are two of them."

"Yaas!"

"How rotten for their people!" said Piggott.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Weally, Piggott, you are a cheeky little ass! Have you seen Mannahs minah? I am searchin' for him everywhere."

Piggott winked at his friends. It was quite in accordance with his peculiar sense of humour to send the noble Gussy on a wild-geese chase.

"Why, it must be that new kid you're speaking about!" he exclaimed, as if suddenly remembering.

"Yaas. Have you seen him?"

"A spoony-looking kid—looks just as if he's got away from his nurse!" said Piggott.

"Yaas, possibly. Where is he?"

"I saw him come out of old Selby's study," said Piggott.

"Thank goodness! He seems to have disappeared. But pewwaps you know where he is, Piggott?"

"I can tell you where he's gone, if that's what you mean," said Piggott, closing his eye at his grinning comrades.

"Pway buck up, deah boy!"

"I don't know whether I ought, though," said Piggott. "If the kid wants to clear off home, it's his own business, I suppose."

Arthur Augustus jumped.

"Cleared off home!" he ejaculated. "Bai

Jove! You don't mean to say he's wun away, Piggott?"

"I think he wasn't satisfied with Selby," explained Piggott. "Anyway, he asked me what was the next train at Rylcombe, and I told him, and he's cut off. He's catching the six train."

"You ought to have stopped him, you young wascal!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus indignantly. "Wasn't my business," said Piggott sulkily. "Stop him yourself!"

D'Arcy looked quickly at his watch. It was turned half-past five.

"Bai Jove! I shall catch him if I huvwwy!"

He rushed out of the Form-room.

"Oh, my aunt!" ejaculated Sturt of the Third. "Is he ass enough to go down to the station after him?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The young rascals yelled with delight.

"Come and watch him!" gasped Piggott.

They crowded to the window. In a few minutes Arthur Augustus came in sight, hastily wheeling his bicycle down to the gates. It was evident that he was going to the station without losing a second—to look for Manners minor.

Piggott & Co. watched him from the window, almost in hysterics.

Arthur Augustus had no suspicion. As a matter of fact, Reggie's supposed action in bolting home after an interview with an unpleasant master was quite what might have been expected of him, according to Manners' description of his petted and wilful nature.

D'Arcy was very anxious to save the foolish fag from the consequences of such an escapade.

He mounted in the road and pedalled away at a record speed for Rylcombe.

With his topper on the back of his head, and his monocle flying at the end of its ribbon, Arthur Augustus fairly scorched.

The ground flew under the whizzing wheels, and Rylcombe Station very soon came in sight.

Arthur Augustus, panting, jumped off his machine and ran into the station.

He caught old Trumble, the porter, by the shoulder. The old man was seated on a trolley, sucking a straw.

"Is there a St. Jim's chap here, Twumble?" asked D'Arcy hurriedly.

"Ain't seed him, Master D'Arcy."

"Bai Jove!"

D'Arcy rushed to the booking office and discovered that no St. Jim's boy had taken a ticket there. He ran on the platform, but the platform and the waiting-room were tenanted only by an old lady. There was no sign of anyone who could possibly have been Manners minor.

"Bai Jove! It is vewy odd!" murmured Arthur Augustus. "Pewwaps the young wascal is keepin' out of sight till the twain goes."

And he waited for the train.

But when the six o'clock train steamed in it was not boarded by a boy of any sort. Certainly Manners minor did not take it.

Arthur Augustus stared after the departing train in deep perplexity.

A frown came over his face and deepened, and his eye gleamed behind his eyeglass. It began to dawn upon him that the cheerful Piggott had been pulling his leg.

"The uttah young wottah!" said Arthur Augustus, his face crimsoning. "I have come here for nothin'! The young wascal was tellin' whoppahs! Oh cwumbahs!"

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He left the station and pedalled back to St. Jim's.

Half a dozen fags of the Third were waiting for him in the gateway and they greeted him with a howl.

"Have you found him?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Arthur Augustus made a wrathful rush at the fags, and they scattered in various directions, howling with laughter.

With a very pink face Arthur Augustus put up his bike and went into the School House.

He had hoped that Manners minor might have turned up in his absence and made his way to Study No. 6. There was evidently nothing more to be done.

CHAPTER 9.

Wally to the Rescue!

"Gussy, where on earth have you been?"

The great spread in Study No. 6 was at its finish. Wally & Co. of the Third were looking very cheery and good-humoured.

The table had been almost cleared of its imposing array of good things.

Arthur Augustus looked quite red and warm as he came in, breathing hard.

"Hasn't Mannahs minah turned up?" he asked.



"Why is this number tattooed on your back?"

"That's not tattooed, doctor. My wife ran into me with the car when I was opening the gates!"

Half-a-crown has been awarded to H. Backler, 5331, Jeanne Mance Street, Montreal, Canada.

"No," said Manners, looking at him quickly. "You haven't been searching for him all this time, have you, surely?"

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Sorry! He wasn't worth the trouble."

"But why haven't you found him, then?" said Tom Merry, puzzled. "I suppose he's come, hasn't he?"

"Yaas, he has come all wight. Toby took him to Mr. Selby afaah he had seen the House dame. But he has disappeared. I have been down to the station to look for him."

"To the station?" ejaculated Blake.

"Yaas. That young wascal Piggott told me he had bolted, and I wished afaah him to bring him back, but—but he wasn't there."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Weally, deah boys, I fail to see anythin' to cackle at!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Wally. "My only Aunt Jane! You go about begging people to pull your leg, Gussy!"

"You cheeky young monkey!"

"Sorry you've had the trouble!" said Manners,

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trying not to grin—which he felt would be ungrateful. "But it's jolly queer what's become of Reggie."

"I'll bet he didn't know there was a feed like this on!" grinned Wally.

"Bai Jove! Didn't you tell him we were killin' the fatted calf, Mannahs?"

"Yes, I told him," said Manners awkwardly.

"And he didn't come!" said Wally. "Well, I must say your minor doesn't seem to have much sense, Manners. P'r'aps some of the kids have been playing japes on him, though. It would be just like Piggott."

"Yes, he's a 'orrid little beast!" said Frayne. "Let's go and look for 'im, Master Wally. We'll make Piggott own up if he's been playing tricks!"

Wally nodded.

The feast was over, and the fags were preparing to depart.

"Well, I suppose we'd better be moving," said Wally regretfully. "This has been a ripping feed, and we shan't forget it. Next time we have herrings in the Form-room, we want all you chaps to come."

"Bai Jove!"

"Stop putting those biscuits in your pocket, young Hobbs. Well, ta-ta, you chaps! We'll look for your minor, Manners."

And Wally & Co. departed.

The chums of the School House looked at one another queerly.

Arthur Augustus sat down to a late tea—of fragments. The spread in Study No. 6 had been an immense success—as a spread. But its object had been a miserable failure.

Manners minor had not been there, and those exceedingly favourable circumstances in which he was to make the acquaintance of his Form-fellows had passed away. From that point of view, the spread could only be considered a frost.

"Well," said Tom Merry, "it's rather unfortunate. I wonder what has become of the young bounder?"

"Keeping away, that's all," said Manners savagely. "Perhaps it's just as well he wasn't here. He's in one of his dashed sulky tempers, and very likely he would have quarrelled with the fags."

"Bai Jove!"

"It looks to me as if you're going to have your hands full with your minor," Herries remarked thoughtfully. "I should recommend a good hiding. I'll lend you my dogwhip, if you like."

Manners grinned faintly, but did not accept that generous offer.

The Terrible Three quitted the study and returned to their own quarters.

Manners was thoughtful and moody.

Tom Merry and Lowther were silent, too; they hardly knew what to say to their chum. After all the trouble they had taken to secure a good reception for Reggie, it seemed that all was to be spoiled by the foolish lad's temper. They were strongly inclined to share Herries' opinion, that the dogwhip was the best resource in the circumstances. But it would not have been comforting to Manners to tell him so.

Meanwhile, Wally & Co. were looking for Manners minor.

Wally was in an excellent humour, and quite prepared to be very genial indeed to the as yet unknown Reggie. He impressed upon his comrades that there was to be no ragging, even if the new kid was a green duffer, and the Co., softened

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by that magnificent spread in Study No. 6, assented.

If Manners minor was a fellow anybody could get on with, there was a friendly circle all ready for him in the Third Form at St. Jim's.

"Seen a new fag knocking about?" Wally asked, as he met Sturt of the Third in the passage.

Sturt chuckled.

"Piggott's locked him up in the top box-room," he explained. "Piggott says he's a cheeky, sneery young rotter."

"Rotten trick on a new kid!" said Wally



"If the boy who shut you up in the box-room is here, sir!"
"That is the boy, sir!" said

severely. "Jolly good mind to punch Piggott's head. Still, Manners minor can do that. Come on, you chaps, we'll get the poor beggar out."

"Must be a green ass, to be shut up in the box-room!" giggled Hobbs.

"Well, a new kid doesn't know the ropes," said Wally. "I dare say Piggott told him some lies to get him there, too."

Wally started for the stairs, and Jameson and Joe Frayne went with him. Hobbs and Curly Gibson did not think a new fag worth the trouble of negotiating several flights of stairs.

There was a sound of hammering above, as the three fags came up, and they grinned.

"Sounds as if he's getting rather impatient," remarked Wally. "Why, he must have been there nearly two hours."

"Ha, ha, ha! The duffer!"

Through the thick door of the box-room a voice could be heard faintly.

"Let me out! You hound! Let me out!"

Thump, thump, thump, thump!

The top box-room was too far removed from the inhabited quarters for the noise to be heard. Piggott might have left the unfortunate Reggie there till bed-time if rescue had not arrived. The key was in the outside of the lock, and Wally turned it and threw the door open.

There was a shout of rage in the dusky room, and a figure came rushing out.

A clenched fist smote Wally full on the nose, and he went down on the landing with a crash and a roar.



"Manners, you may point him out to me," said Mr. Selby. Reggie, pointing to Piggott.

CHAPTER 10. Not Popular!

"YAROOOOH!" roared Wally.

It had been a fierce blow, but it would not have knocked the tough and muscular fag over if he had not been taken by surprise.

As it was, however, Wally was floored.

Jameson and Frayne started back, putting up their hands defensively.

Wally sat up on the floor, blinking. Night had fallen, and it was very dusky on the landing.

"What the—the thunder—" howled Wally.

"You rotter! You lying rotter!" yelled Manners minor. "I'll give you some more!"

"He's dotty!" exclaimed Jameson.

Wally jumped up.

"You silly ass!" he shouted. "What are you going for me for? Do you want me to mop up the floor with you?"

Manners minor peered at him in the dark.

"Oh! You're not the fellow!" he exclaimed, taken aback. "I—I thought it was that beast coming back to let me out!"

"You silly little fool, you might have made sure first!" said Wally, rubbing his nose ruefully.

It had been a mistake, but that would not have saved Manners minor from a licking but for other considerations. Certainly he had had no right to be so hasty. But Wally held his hand.

"I'm sorry I hit you!" said Reggie, not looking very sorry, however. It had been a relief to his pent-up feelings to hit someone. "A rotten beast told me lies about this being the tea-room, and brought me up here!"

Wally's face relaxed into a grin, and Frayne and Jameson chuckled.

"Well, you must have been green to swallow a yarn like that," said Wally. "Never mind; no harm done. Just you be a bit more careful how you land out with your fists again, that's all! You might have hurt me!"

In point of fact, Wally was hurt, but he did not choose to admit it.

"I've said I'm sorry!" growled Reggie. "I thought it was that cad! Did you come up to let me out?"

"Yes."

"Then you jolly well knew I was here," said Reggie angrily.

Wally stared at him.

"We've just found out you were here," he said. "But do you think it's our special business to worry about silly new kids who are green enough to get locked up in a box-room?"

"I'll make that rotter sit up for it!" snarled Reggie. "I'm going straight to the Head!"

"You're whatting?"

Reggie Manners thrust past the fags to go down the stairs.

Wally caught him by the shoulder and stopped him.

"Let me go! What do you want?"

"Where are you going?" asked Wally quietly.

"I'm going to the Head!"

"What for?"

"To tell him I've been locked up in a box-room for two hours," said Reggie, his voice trembling with anger.

"Hold on!" said Wally. "There's a Housemaster in this House. Chaps have to go to the Housemaster with complaints. It's against the rules to sneak to the Head."

"You see," said Jameson contemptuously, "the Head hasn't the time to attend to sneaking cads!"

Reggie flushed crimson.

"Where is the Housemaster's room, then?" he asked angrily. "I don't care who I go to, so long as that beast is punished!"

"I shan't tell you where it is," said Wally quietly. "I'm not going to help you to sneak. Wait a minute, Manners minor. As you're new here, you are rather in want of some advice."

"I don't want your advice," said Manners minor. "And take your hand off my shoulder, or—"

"Or what?" asked Wally, with deadly quietness.

"Or I'll knock it off!" growled Reggie.

"My 'at!" murmured Frayne.

Jameson giggled.

Both the fags expected Wally to take the new fag by the neck and make an example of him.

Wally, to his credit be it said, did nothing of

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the kind. He had an inward struggle, and then he removed his hand from Reggie's shoulder.

"Cut!" he said briefly.

Reggie sneered—a sneer that very nearly made Wally change his mind—and went downstairs. Jameson started after him, but Wally jerked him back.

"Don't stop me, you fathead!" growled Jameson. "He wants a thick ear, and I'm going to give him one!"

"Let him off this time, Jamey."

Jameson snorted.

"What for?" he demanded.

"He's a 'orrid little beast!" said Frayne.

"I know he is. But those chaps stood us a stunning feed, and they've been very decent to us lately," said D'Arcy minor. "Of course, you can see now what they were up to. Manners knew his minor was a cad and a rotter, and he wanted him to be let down easy. Well, let's let him down easy. We've had the feed."

"That's all right," said Jameson, after a pause. "But I suppose we're not going to let the cad go on like this?"

"No jolly fear!" said Wally promptly. "We're letting him off this once, and that makes us square—see?"

"Ear, 'ear!" said Frayne.

"But he's going to sneak about Piggott," said Jameson.

"That's his look out, and Piggott's," said Wally. "Piggy oughtn't to have played that trick on him. It's more than a joke to be shut up in a box-room for nearly two hours."

"I dare say he cheeked him, same as he did us," growled Jameson.

"Shouldn't wonder!"

"If he sneaks to Railton——"

"If he does, he will have a high-old time in the dormitory to-night," said Wally grimly. "I'm sorry for Manners major. He's a decent sort, though he's rather an old frump. But if his minor's a sneak, as well as a cheeky little reptile, his minor won't find life worth living in the Third."

"And we came up 'ere to be friendly to 'im," said Joe Frayne, in a tone more of sorrow than of anger.

Wally shrugged his shoulders. His friendly intentions towards Manners minor had come to a sudden end, which was not surprising.

The three fags went downstairs. Manners of the Shell met them in the lower passage. They looked at him grimly.

"Have you seen my minor?" the Shell fellow asked.

"We've let him out. A kid locked him in the box-room for a lark."

"Oh, where is he now?"

"Gone to look for a master to sneak to," said Jameson.

Manners started, and frowned.

"Shut up, Jameson!" muttered Wally.

"Well, he has," said Jameson.

Manners stood still as the fags went down the passage. His face was dark and troubled. Everything seemed to be going wrong. The looks of Wally & Co. showed what kind of an impression Reggie had made on them—all labour in that direction had evidently been wasted.

Tom Merry came out of his study.

"What's wrong?" he asked. "Hasn't the kid turned up yet?"

Manners explained.

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"The young ass!" said Tom anxiously. "He's making about the worst start he could make. Perhaps there's still time to stop him. I suppose he's gone to Railton. Let's see."

Manners nodded, and they descended the stairs. They were in time to see Reggie entering the Housemaster's study.

"I oughtn't to have left him alone," muttered Manners. "I ought to have made him come with me, if I had to take him by the neck! The sneaking young cad! Why, the fags will make his life a misery for this!"

"Can't be helped, old chap; you've done your best!"

Manners nodded gloomily, and went down the passage to wait for his minor to come out.

Tom Merry waited with him.

CHAPTER 11.

Manners Minor Goes His Own Way!

MR. RAILTON, the Housemaster of the School House, greeted Manners minor with a kind smile.

He guessed at once who the boy was.

"Ah, you are Manners' brother?" he asked.

Mr. Railton had a high opinion of Manners of the Shell.

"Yes, sir," said Reggie. "Are you the Housemaster? I was told by the page that this was the Housemaster's study."

"Yes, I am Mr. Railton."

"I've been shut up in a box-room," said Reggie.

Mr. Railton's genial expression changed a little, and he looked hard at the new boy. The petulant, passionate face told its own story, and Mr. Railton did not need further information as to Reggie's nature, and his variety of home training.

"Indeed," said Mr. Railton. "I hope you have not come to me to make a complaint, Manners minor, your first day at the school."

"Yes, I have," said Reggie sullenly. "I've been shut up in a box-room for two hours, and I was hungry, and—the rotter——"

"The what?"

"The fellow told me lies about the box-room being a tea-room for new boys, and shoved me in, and locked the door, and——"

Mr. Railton smiled slightly.

"It was an unfeeling joke," he said. "I disapprove of such a thing very strongly. But you are out of the box-room now, Manners minor, and you must forget all about it. You had better go and see your brother."

Reggie stared at him. The unfortunate darling of the home circle was not accustomed to having his wrongs and grievances brushed aside in this manner. At home such a grievance would almost have caused a family council.

"But isn't he going to be punished?" Reggie blurted out.

"The boy who shut you in the box-room?"

"Yes, of course!"

Mr. Railton paused before he replied.

"If you make a complaint to a master, Manners minor, the matter will certainly be investigated, and the delinquent punished," he said. "I recommend you, however, to do nothing of the kind. Dismiss the matter from your mind, and take it good-humouredly. You will find that much better in the long run, my boy. A lad who bears malice is not liked."

WHO'S WHO at ST. JIM'S

(More About Martin Clifford's Principal Characters.)



George Kerr, the canny Scot of the New House.



George Herries, owner of the celebrated Towser.

GUNN, WILLIAM.—A sturdy Shell fellow who backs up Grundy through thick and thin, and, in consequence, is more in the limelight than he would otherwise be. Patient and long-suffering—as he needs to be with a studymate like George Alfred! Fair at sport. Study No. 3, School House. Age 15 years 5 months.

HAMMOND, HARRY.—Son of a man who made his fortune in the hat trade—hence he is often chipped with "Arry Ammond's 'Igh-class 'Ats." Though shunned at first on account of his Cockney dialect and mannerisms, he has now firmly established himself in the good graces of his schoolfellows. A plucky and good-hearted chap, and sometimes gets his place in the House football team. Is particularly friendly with Arthur Augustus, whose cousin, Ethel Cleveland, he saved from drowning when he first came to St. Jim's. Form, Fourth. Study No. 5, School House. Age 15 years.

HERRIES, GEORGE.—A member of Study No. 6 in the Fourth, and known to posterity by his famous cornet, upon which he performs hideous noises. Is very direct in his manner and point-blank in his speech. Deeply devoted to his bulldog, Towser, and has great faith in the animal's powers in following a scent—which is the cause of much amusement to his chums, Blake, Gussy, and Dig. Plays for St. Jim's junior eleven at football and cricket. Age 15 years 6 months.

JAMESON, ERNEST.—An enthusiastic supporter of Wally D'Arcy of the Third Form—though there are often rows between them on account of the fact that Jameson is a New House fellow. Popular with his Form, and plays for the Third at football and cricket. Age 13 years 3 months.

JONES, HORACE.—A genial Sixth Former of the School House, and a good sportsman. Age 17 years 3 months.

JULIAN, DICK.—The Jewish sheep and bully of the Sixth, bitterly disliked by Monty

Lowther on his arrival at the school. But he proved himself the right sort when he saved Lowther's life. Now a popular chap, and sometimes plays football for the School House. His uncle, who lives in Wayland, keeps him well supplied with pocket-money, but Dick is quite unostentatious about it. Form, Fourth. Study No. 5. Age 15 years 5 months.

KERR, GEORGE.—A shrewd and clever son of Scotland, and noted for his marvellous impersonations. Known as the "brains" of Study No. 4 in the New House, which he shares with his inseparable chums, Figgins and Fatty Wynn. Is an expert at solving problems and thinking up great japes. Naturally, being a Scotsman, he is a fine footballer, and usually plays at back for St. Jim's. He is also a good cricketer. Form, Fourth. Age 15 years 5 months.

KERRUISH, ERIC.—A cheery junior from the celebrated Isle of Man. Shares Study No. 5 in the School House with Reilly, Julian, and Hammond. A fair player at football and cricket, and sometimes gets his place in House matches. Form, Fourth. Age 14 years 10 months.

KILDARE, ERIC.—The good-natured, athletic captain of St. Jim's, and a great favourite with juniors and seniors alike. Generous to a fault, he is yet stern enough in maintaining school discipline. He is an all-round sportsman, being a first-class centre-forward and a brilliant bat. Hails from the Emerald Isle. Age 17 years 8 months. School House.

KNOX, GERALD.—A dissolute waster of the Sixth, and second to none in bullying and blackguardly conduct. In his position of prefect he never fails to make it warm for all juniors who cross his path—especially Tom Merry & Co., who are his enemies. Age 17 years 5 months. School House.

LANGTON, HERBERT.—A prefect and a leading light in the Sixth Form. At one time he was mixed up with shady associates outside the school, but has since fully redeemed his past conduct, and is now quite popular. Plays for St. Jim's at footer and cricket; shines as a fast bowler. Age 17 years 4 months. School House.

(To be continued.)

"I came here to complain, sir," said Reggie obstinately. "I wanted the fellow to be punished for telling me lies and shutting me up in the box-room."

"If you persist, Manners minor, your complaint must be listened to; but I again advise you to let the matter drop!"

That would have been more than enough for anybody, but Reggie did not budge an inch. He stood still, looking sullen.

"Does that mean that you persist in your complaint, Manners minor?" asked the Form-master fairly.

"Yes, sir."

"Very well. Who was the boy who locked you in the box-room?"

"I don't know his name, sir."

"Does he belong to your Form?"

"I—I think so."

"You had better ascertain," said Mr. Railton dryly. "If it is a boy of your own Form the matter is one for your Form-master to deal with, and you must go to Mr. Selby. I advise you to see your brother, and take his advice upon the matter first. You may go."

Reggie went sullenly. As he closed the door he found Tom Merry and Manners waiting for him. He knew his way to Mr. Selby's study, and he was brushing past them when Manners caught his arm.

"Let me go!" growled Reggie.

"Have you sneaked to Mr. Railton?" said Manners savagely.

Reggie flushed. He did not like the word "sneak."

"I've complained to him," he said loftily.

"You young cad!"

"Easy does it!" said Tom Merry. "Reggie doesn't know the ropes. What did Railton say to you, kid?"

"Advised me to let the matter drop," said Reggie savagely.

"Good old Railton!" said Tom. "That's all right, then. Let it drop, and there's an end to the trouble."

"I'm going to the Form-master," said Reggie sulkily. "It seems that he's got to attend to it. I'm going to tell him."

Manners tightened his grip on his minor's arm.

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"Look here, Reggie!" he said, in a low voice. "Can't you see that old Railton was giving you a chance? If you begin here by sneaking, you'll have every kid in the House against you. Your life won't be worth living in the Third. It was a rotten trick that was played on you, but you can punch the fellow's head when you see him again. I suppose you're not afraid of him?"

"No, I'm not!" growled Reggie.

"Then punch his head, and let the matter drop."

"I won't!"

Manners' eyes gleamed, but Tom Merry chimed in gently and kindly.

"Why won't you, kid?" he asked.

"Because I won't!" said Reggie. "I'm going to have the cad punished—and it will be a warning to the others, too. Those fellows who let me out, they were all cheeky and rotten. I'm jolly well going to show them that I'm not standing any rot."

Tom Merry looked at him curiously. How to deal with so wilful and wayward a character was a little beyond his knowledge.

"They'll all be down on you if you sneak," he said at last.

"Hang them!" said Reggie.

"Reggie, won't you take my advice?" urged Manners.

"No, I won't! I've had enough of you, and I don't want to speak to you again while I'm at the school."

"You're not going to sneak!" said Manners resolutely. "Come with me!"

"I won't!"

"Then I'll make you!" said Manners, and he drew the fag away by main force.

Reggie clung to the banisters, and shouted.

"Let me go! Let me go! I'll yell for help!"

"Chuck it, Manners; you'll have Railton out!" muttered Tom.

Manners realised that, and he released his minor.

Reggie sneered, and went directly to his Form-master's study.

Manners and Tom Merry went up the stairs. It was time to do their prep.

"Hallo! Kid turned up?" asked Monty Lowther cheerily as they came into the study.

Manners grunted.

"Yes; never mind him. He's gone to Selby to sneak about some trick the fags played on him."

"Why didn't you stop him, ass?"

"I couldn't."

"Poor little beggar!" said Lowther. "Don't be too hard on him, old scout. He doesn't know our charming manners and customs yet. I suppose he always runs to pater or mater when he's got a grievance—what?"

"Yes," growled Manners.

"He'll soon get it knocked out of him here," said Lowther.

Manners grunted, and sat down to his work. He was very much inclined to dismiss the fag from his mind altogether, and let him go his own way. But he knew that he could not.

CHAPTER 12.

Tea in Tom Merry's Study!

REGGIE MANNERS felt a little uneasy as he presented himself to Mr. Selby.

The master of the Third was at work, and he was pressed for time, as it was getting

near the hour when he had to take his Form in evening preparation.

The look he gave Reggie as he came in was snappy and impatient.

"What do you want? You should not interrupt me like this. What is it?"

Reggie faltered. This wasn't much like Mr. Railton. At the same time, it struck him that the snappish gentleman was more likely to give heed to complaints than the genial House-master.

"Please, I've been locked up in the box-room and—"

"What—what?"

"I've been shut up for two hours, sir, and I—I haven't had any tea," said Reggie.

Mr. Selby stared at him.

"Do you mean to say that some boy has shut you up in a box-room?"

"Yes, sir."

"A Third Form boy?"

"I think so, sir."

"If it is not a Third Form boy I have nothing to do with the matter," snapped Mr. Selby.

"Was it D'Arcy minor?"

Mr. Selby did not like D'Arcy minor, and he would not have been displeased to hear a complaint about him.

"I don't know his name, sir."

"You have come to me with a complaint about some boy whose name and Form you do not know? You are wasting my time!"

"I—I—"

"You may point out the boy to me at evening preparation, if he is in my Form. Then I will inquire into the matter. You may go!"

Reggie left the room and drifted down the passage again, feeling lost and miserable.

He had not had tea, and he was feeling hungry. And he did not know anything about evening preparation, or when and where it was to take place.

How was he to find out?

His brother could and would have told him everything he wanted to know, but he did not think of seeking his brother. It would have been too humiliating, after what he had said and done. But what he was to do he had no idea.

A good many boys passed him, and some glanced at him; but he did not know anybody, and nobody seemed to bother about him. After a time he plucked up courage to speak to a big, handsome senior who came in from the quadrangle. It was Kildare, the captain of St. Jim's, though Reggie was not aware of it. The big Sixth Former looked down on him in a kindly way.

"Hallo! New kid?" he asked. "Manners minor, I suppose?"

"Yes," said Reggie. "P-please can you tell me what—what—"

"Eh? Fire away!"

"I don't know where to go!" said Reggie miserably. "I—I haven't had any tea, and I don't know what to do, and—"

"Dash it all! Manners might look after you a bit!" said Kildare, frowning. "Here, come with me!"

There were a good many of the Sixth who would not have bothered their heads about the forlorn fag, but Kildare was good-natured to a fault. He was a little angry, too, with Manners for neglecting his minor in this way. Reggie followed him to the Shell passage, and Kildare looked into Tom Merry's study.



Manners halted before his minor, and Reggie stared at him coolly. "You young fool!" said his major angrily. "Put that cigarette in the fire!" "Shan't!" said the fag defiantly.

The Terrible Three, who were at work on their prep, rose to their feet at once.

"Hallo, Kildare!"

"Here's your minor, Manners," said the prefect. "Don't leave the kid wandering about the House like a lost sheep! Look after him a bit!"

And Kildare walked away, without waiting for Manners to reply.

Manners turned crimson with vexation. Kildare knew nothing of his little troubles with his minor, of course, and evidently considered him as neglecting his brotherly duties.

Reggie stood uncertainly in the study.

Tom Merry and Lowther made the best of the situation.

"Had your tea, kid?" asked Lowther.

"No. I've been shut up in the box-room."

"Lucky we've got something left," said Lowther. "We've been dining out—ahem!—and the larder is well stocked. Have some tea with us."

"Yes, do, kid!" said Tom Merry.

"Don't you chaps leave your prep!" growled Manners. "I can look after it."

"Oh, rot!" said Tom.

The prep was put aside and a cloth spread over a corner of the table, and Reggie sat down. He felt much better after a meal of ham and tongue and cake, with coffee specially made by Monty Lowther.

"Tuck in, kid!" said Tom Merry hospitably. "It's jolly near time for your prep, you know."

"Mr. Selby told me there was evening preparation," said Reggie. "I don't know when it is."

"Seven o'clock. Time to finish your tea."

"In the Third Form Room," said Manners. "I'll show you the way."

"You needn't!" retorted Reggie.

"Ahem!" said Tom Merry. "Another slice of

cake, kid? Fill up that cup again, Monty, and make yourself useful!"

Reggie was looking much more cheerful now.

"I say, what is evening preparation like?" he asked.

"Oh, you prepare your lessons for the next day, you know!" said Tom. "We do it in our studies, but the Third do it in the Form-room with a master. Any of the kids will give you tips about it, especially D'Arcy minor."

"I don't know anybody in the Third, excepting the rotter who shut me in the box-room," said Reggie. "I don't like the idea of working in the evening. Can't I leave it if I want to?"

"Well, no; that wouldn't be allowed," said Tom, as gravely as he could. "Still, as it's your first day here, you won't be bothered much. You'll have to turn up, that's all; Selby won't expect much of you in the morning."

"I'd rather not do it at all."

Manners gave a snort, Lowther grinned, and Tom Merry smiled.

"But you must, you know," he said. "We're not our own masters here. We can't do just as we like."

"My father always lets me do as I like!" said Reggie sulkily.

Another snort from Manners.

"Well, you see," said Tom, rather perplexed, "school isn't exactly like home, you know. You'll find it all right in the long run."

"Better come along to the Form-room," said Manners. "It's close on seven, and Selby will rag you if you're late."

"I'm not coming with you!" said Reggie defiantly.

"You silly little ass!" roared Manners. "If you're late, you'll get lines!"

"I don't care!"

"May I have the honour of seeing our young

friend to the Form-room?" asked Monty Lowther in a honeyed voice. "Come on, Reggie! You stick to your Uncle Monty!"

"I'll go with you," said Reggie condescendingly.

"Thanks awfully, dear boy!" said Lowther blandly. "This way!"

Reggie, with a glance of defiance at his brother, followed Monty Lowther from the study.

Lowther guided Manners minor solemnly down the stairs to the Form-room.

Most of the Third were already in; with Mr. Selby it was always more judicious to be early.

"Here you are!" said Lowther. "There's your room, kid. Hallo, young D'Arcy!"

Wally came bolting up the passage as seven o'clock began to chime.

"This is Manners minor. Take him in."

Wally made a grimace.

"All right! Come on, Manners minor!"

Reggie entered the Form-room with Wally, and Lowther returned to his study. He clapped



"Oh, you poor thing, you must have fallen into one of those football pools!"

Half-a-crown has been awarded to the sender of this joke. Will he please forward his name and address.

Manners on the shoulder as he came in, and Manners gave a yelp as five or six blots spurted from his pen.

"Fathead!"

"All serene!" grinned Lowther. "How clumsy you are! His lordship has been duly guided to his lordship's quarters, and Wally's taken him under his wing. Now we can sleep in peace!"

To which Manners replied with a snort.

CHAPTER 13.

Sneak!

MR. SELBY was not in his place, and the Form-room was in a buzz.

Piggott grinned at Manners minor as he came in with Wally.

"Here's the new fathead!" Piggott remarked. "So you got out?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I let him out," said Wally. "You shut up, Piggott!"

"Well, I was going to let him out in time for prep," said Piggott. "Only Hobbs told me he was let out. I suppose I can pull a new kid's leg if I like, D'Arcy minor, especially a cheeky, scowling ass like that!"

"He said he was going to sneak about it," said Jameson.

"He ain't done it," said Frayne. "We'd have 'eard about it before now. Don't be 'ard on a new kid, Jimmy."

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"Well, he looks as if he might," said Curly Gibson. "He'd better not, though."

"Cave!" called out Hobbs.

The Third Formers scuttled into their places, and were quiet as mice as Mr. Selby entered.

Mr. Selby had apparently forgotten Manners minor and his complaint, for he went directly to his desk without a glance at him.

Reggie sat in suppressed indignation for some minutes. He was not accustomed to being forgotten. He rose, his face flushed and angry.

Then Mr. Selby's eyes turned on him, and he remembered.

"Oh," said Mr. Selby. "Is that you, Manners minor? You had a complaint to make to me, I think?"

"Yes, sir!" said Reggie.

Every eye in the room was turned on Manners minor. The fags looked angry, amazed, and incredulous. Sneaking was contrary to all their traditions, though the unfortunate Reggie was not aware of it.

Reggie didn't really mean to sneak—he only wanted to see strict justice done on his tormentor. He had always complained at home when he had a grievance, and he did not see any reason for changing his habits at St. Jim's. That was one of the many things Reggie had to learn.

"Well, it appears that you were shut up in a box-room by some foolish practical joker," said Mr. Selby, his eyes lingering on D'Arcy minor. "If the boy is here, you may point him out to me."

Mr. Selby's tone was a trifle contemptuous, which angered Reggie still more.

"That is the boy, sir," he said, pointing to Piggott.

Piggott gave him a deadly look.

"Stand out here, Piggott."

Piggott reluctantly stepped out before the class. There was a murmur in the ranks of the Third.

Mr. Selby stilled it with a glance.

"Piggott, did you lock Manners minor in a box-room?"

Piggott hesitated. He had few scruples about lying, but he felt that it would not do. Mr. Selby was not a man to be trifled with.

"Yes, sir!" muttered Piggott.

"Indeed! And why did you do it?"

"It—it was only a joke, sir!" stammered Piggott. "Nobody would make a fuss about it, sir. I—I didn't mean any harm!"

"I couldn't have my tea!" said Reggie, in a tone of deep injury.

"You need not speak, Manners minor!" said Mr. Selby acidly. "Piggott, I disapprove of these tricks. Hold out your hand!"

Swish!

Piggott went back to his place, with his hand tucked under his arm.

Reggie looked far from satisfied. He had expected to see Piggott soundly thrashed for such an unparalleled outrage. He sat looking sulky.

The rest of the Third looked furious.

Never had the fags found the evening preparation so long. They were anxious for it to be over, having many things to say to Manners minor.

But everything comes to an end at last, and so did prep.

Mr. Selby glanced at the clock, and quitted the Form-room, leaving the Third to their own devices.

The Third favoured the Form-room rather than

the Junior Common-room, having it to themselves when prep was over.

Piggott ran to the door as soon as the Form-master was gone, and put his back to it. He feared that his victim would bolt. But Reggie was not thinking of bolting. He did not know, yet, that there was anything to bolt for.

He was first apprised of the fact that trouble was brewing by Jameson.

Jameson put his head close to Reggie's and bawled in his ear:

"Sneak!"

Manners minor started back.

"Sneak!" howled the Third.

"Cad! Rotter! Telltale!"

"He's got me licked!" yelled Piggott furiously. "Got me licked, through telling tales. Collar him!"

"Let me alone!" roared Reggie, as the excited fags closed round him.

"Yes, we'll let you alone—I don't think," said Hobbs. "You worm, come out and be trodden on!"

"If you touch me, I'll complain!" yelled Reggie.

"Then you'll jolly well have something to complain about," said Jameson, and he seized Reggie by the collar and whirled him away from the desk.

Reggie spun out into the middle of the room. "Rag him!" shouted Piggott. "Rag the sneaking little beast!"

"Bump him!"

"Ink him!"

"Help!" shrieked Reggie, as the fags closed round him, angry and threatening, and he made a belt for the door.

Hobbs put out his foot, and Reggie tripped over it, and crashed down.

Then a dozen hands were laid on him.

Manners minor kicked and struggled furiously. Wally stood looking on, with his hands in his pockets. He did not join in the ragging, but he was not in the least disposed to interfere.

Wally's opinion was that the sneak deserved all that he was going to get.

"Let me alone!" screamed Reggie. "Rotten cowards!"

"Nice boy!" grinned Jameson. "Here, stick him on his feet and let him fight Piggy!"

"He's going to be ragged for sneaking," said Piggott. "He ain't fit for a decent chap to touch."

"Don't be a funk," said Jameson. "Give him a licking."

"That's a good idea!" said Wally. "Rag the little cad if he won't fight. But give him a chance!"

"I'll fight anybody here!" howled Reggie. "Well, here's your man!" said Jameson, dragging the reluctant Piggott forward.

"I'm not going to fight a beastly sneak!" snarled Piggott.

"Yes, you are—or you'll fight me!" said Wally. "Take your jacket off, young 'un. Can't help you—can't touch a filthy sneak!"

"I don't want your help!" growled Reggie, "and I'll fight you, if you like."

Wally grinned.

"One at a time," he remarked. "Go it, Piggott! Don't be a funk!"

Piggott growled, but he had to come on.

The fags made a ring round the two, and Piggott was urged on from all sides.

Piggott was by no means popular in his Form; but he was an idol in comparison with the sneak. All the sympathy of the Third was with Piggott for once.

Reggie, in a state of fury, and glad of a chance of hammering somebody, did not wait to be attacked. He opened the ball by rushing at Piggott, hitting out furiously.

Piggott hit out, too, and the fight was soon going strong. Piggott was the bigger of the two, but he did not like close quarters, and, to the disappointment of the fags, he was knocked right and left.

(Continued on next page.)

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"Go it, Piggott!" yelled Jameson indignantly. "Stand up to him! Don't funk!"

Crash!

Piggott went down on his back and stayed there, gasping.

"Get up!" rapped out Wally.

"I—I can't!" mumbled Piggott.

"Licked already!" said Jameson, in deep disgust. "The sneak wouldn't have licked a New House chap as easily as that."

"Yow-ow-ow!" said Piggott dolorously. "Tackle him yourself. Yow-ow! He's a wild beast! Groogh!"

"Well, he's licked Piggott," said Jameson. "Now he's going to have the frogmarch for sneaking. Collar him!"

Reggie struggled in vain as the fags collared him. He shrieked and yelled, but he had to go round the Form-room, bumping at every other step.

Piggott sat on a desk and watched in delight.

In the midst of the uproar the door opened, and Mr. Selby's angry face looked in.

"What does this disturbance mean?" he thundered.

"Cave!" gasped Hobbs.

Manners minor was dropped as if he had suddenly become red-hot.

The fags stared at Mr. Selby, and Mr. Selby glowered at the fags.

Reggie struggled to his feet, almost foaming.

"So it's you, Manners minor?" said Mr. Selby unpleasantly.

"I've been bumped and kicked!" howled Reggie. "I won't stand it! I'll write to my father to take me away from here."

"Silence! It appears that you have been ill-using this boy," said Mr. Selby. "I think I understand the reason. Every boy here will take two hundred lines, and bring them to me before bed-time. If there is another sound from this room the Form will be detained for three half-holidays!"

Mr. Selby rustled away.

The fags looked at Reggie as if they would eat him, but they did not venture to touch him again. Mr. Selby's threats were too terrible.

Reggie, putting his collar straight, walked out of the Form-room with a defiant look at his enraged Form-fellows.

Jameson gave a gasp.

"There's our evening gone," he said. "Lines till bed-time! All through that sneak. Selby wouldn't have come if he hadn't yelled. Oh, my hat! I'll make him squirm to-morrow!"

"I shan't wait till to-morrow," said Hobbs furiously. "Wait till the sneaking cad is in the dorm to-night, that's all."

And that thought was comforting to the Third. As they wearily ground out lines for Mr. Selby, they consoled themselves by the prospect of having Manners minor all to themselves in the Third Form dormitory.

CHAPTER 14.

The Last Straw!

TOM MERRY & CO. met Wally as he came out of the Form-room shortly before bed-time.

Wally was looking grim.

"We've been looking for you, Wally," said Tom. "Been detained?"

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"Yes," grunted Wally. "And I've got to get these lines to Selby."

"Hard lines, deah boy!" said Arthur Augustus. "What have you been up to?"

"Nothing."

"It's that rotten sneak Manners minor," said Jameson, following Wally out. "He's got us all lines with his sneaking. The cad!"

The fags crowded away with their impositions, looking savage and angry.

Manners gave his companions a hopeless look. This was worse than ever.

Arthur Augustus detained his minor.

"Wally, deah boy, I twust you are goin' to look aftah Weggie a bit," he said mildly.

"Yes, I'm going to look after him," said Wally.

"I'm going to make mince-meat of him!"

"Look here—" began Manners.

"You might go easy with him, Wally," urged Tom Merry. "He's a new kid fresh from home, and you're an old hand, you know."

"Oh, none of your soft sawdust!" said Wally sourly. "I've gone easy with him. I've let him punch my nose, and haven't slaughtered him. I've advised him not to be a sneak, and he's told me to mind my own business. He stood out before the class and sneaked about Piggott. I can't stand by him after that. If he'd been decent it would have been different. We were going to treat him well, but he's a rotten worm and an outsider, and I can't help it."

And Wally tramped away.

"Bai Jove! It's wotten!" said Arthur Augustus doubtfully. "Wally wouldn't be so watty ovah nothin', I'm afwaid!"

"It's Reggie's own fault," said Manners. "I suppose he'll get it knocked out of him in time. It will be a rather rough process, that's all. I don't see how he's to be set right with the Third now. But—but I'll speak to him."

It went against the grain to seek Reggie out, in his present humour, but Manners was anxious. He could guess only too well that a ragging was likely to take place after lights out in the Third Form dormitory. It was impossible for him to look after his minor there.

He looked for Reggie, and found him in the Common-room. There were a dozen juniors in the Common-room, and they were all staring at Reggie. That was not surprising, as the remarkable new boy was smoking a cigarette by the fire. His box had arrived, and Reggie had a new supply of smokes hidden in it.

"Is that your minor, Manners?" asked Kangaroo of the Shell.

"Yes," grunted Manners.

"You'd better speak to him. I've spoken to him, but if a prefect sees him there'll be trouble."

Manners crossed over to his minor.

Reggie stared at him coolly.

"You young fool!" said Manners, in a concentrated voice. "Put that cigarette in the fire."

"Shan't!"

"Do you know that these fellows here would have kicked you out of the room if you weren't my brother?" muttered Manners. "Throw it away! It's your bed-time, too."

"Oh, don't worry!"

Darrell of the Sixth looked into the room.

"Any of the Third here?" he asked. "There's one hasn't turned up in the dorm—a new kid: Why, what—what—" Darrell broke off in utter astonishment as he saw the cigarette. "You young rascal! What are you doing with that?"

"Smoking it," said Reggie.



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PEN PALS COUPON

29-1-38

"Put it in the fire!"

"Shan't!"

Darrell gasped, and the juniors gasped, too. It was the first time they had ever heard a fag of the Third say "Shan't!" to a prefect of the Sixth.

Darrell did not speak again. He gripped Reggie by the collar, took the cigarette away from him, and dropped it in the fire. Then he walked Reggie off to the dormitory.

Reggie struggled at first, but the grip on his collar was like iron, and he found it more convenient to go quietly.

The School House Third were in their dormitory when Reggie was marched in by the collar.

The fags grinned at the sight.

"Get into bed!" said Darrell quietly.

Reggie gave him one furious look, but he obeyed.

Darrell waited patiently a few minutes till he was in bed, and then turned out the light and quitted the dormitory.

"So the cheeky young rat's been cheeking Darrell," said Hobbs. "Lucky for him it wasn't Knox. Knox would have skinned him!"

"We're going to skin him pretty soon," said Piggott.

Manners minor quaked.

A match scratched, a candle-end was lighted, and then another.

In the dim and flickering light the Third Formers gathered round the bed of Manners minor.

"Have him out!" said Wally tersely.

"Turn the rotter out!"

Reggie sat up in bed.

"If you touch me, I'll yell for help!" he panted.

"Put a pillow over his chivvy," said Hobbs.

"He's cad enough! Have him out!"

A dozen hands grasped Reggie's bedclothes and jerked them off. Then he was bundled out of bed.

"Run the gauntlet first!" commanded Wally.

"Form up!"

"Good egg!"

The fags formed up in a double row along the beds.

Each of them grasped a slipper, or a pillow, or a twisted sock.

Reggie gaped at them furiously. He was not in the least disposed to run the gauntlet.

"Start, you sneak!" said Hobbs.

"I won't!"

"Then we'll jolly soon start you."

Hobbs and Frayne grasped Reggie, and he was hurled bodily into the space between the lines of waiting fags. He rolled over, yelling.

Blows descended upon him at once, and he picked himself up and ran. He had to run now; and he ran his hardest, and the vengeful Third almost fell over one another in their eagerness to get in a "swipe."

By the time Reggie reached the end of the double line he was gasping, and feeling decidedly hurt.

But the double line ended at the wall, and there was no escape.

"Back you go!" chortled Gibson.

"Yow-ow-ow!"

"Ha, ha, ha! Paste him!"

Swipe, swipe, swipe!

Reggie, yelling with pain and rage, raced along again, and came out at the other end, dazed and staggering. But he did not stop there. He ran straight on to the door, tore it open, and rushed into the passage.

The fags stared after him in stupefaction.

That Reggie would attempt to bolt from the dormitory in his pyjamas had not even crossed their minds.

"My only Aunt Jane!" ejaculated Wally, in astonishment.

"He's gone to sneak!" hooted Piggott.

(Continued on page 36.)

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WHEN BILLY BUNTER THROWS HIS VOICE, THE GHOST WALKS AT GREYFRIARS!

Wun Lung's Wily Wheeze!



Harry Wharton & Co. felt their hearts leap into their mouths as a deathly face, with grinning lips and burning eyes, glimmered out of the gloom. Mr. Capper stood rooted to the spot, staring up the stairs at that terrible vision.

No Chance for Bunter!

“WHARTON! I say, hold on a minute!”
“Can’t stop a second, Bunter,” said Harry Wharton, the captain of the Remove at Greyfriars. “I’ve got to get to a football committee meeting at seven, and it’s two minutes to now.”

“Yes, but it’s important—”

“Sorry! Can’t stop!”

And Harry Wharton ran on, leaving Billy Bunter blinking after him indignantly through his big spectacles. Wharton disappeared along the Upper Fourth passage, and Bunter was still blinking after him when Bob Cherry came along with big strides, and walked right into the fat junior.

“Hallo, hallo, hallo!” exclaimed Bob Cherry. “What are you getting in the way for, you ass?”
Bunter staggered against the wall and gasped.

“Oh, really, Cherry! Hold on a minute; I want to speak to you.”

“Can’t stop! Got to attend the meeting of the football committee.”

“Yes; but I say, Cherry— Beast, he’s gone!”

Bob Cherry had disappeared.

“I’ll jolly well follow them, anyway!” granted Billy Bunter. “I’m not going to have an important matter like this shelved. They might have asked me to the committee meeting. Hallo, Bulstrode!”

“It isn’t Bulstrode, ass!” said Frank Nugent.

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By FRANK RICHARDS.

(Author of the grand long yarns of Greyfriars appearing every Saturday in our companion paper, the “Magnet.”)

“And what are you blocking up the passage for, porpoise?”

“Hold on a minute! I want to speak to you!”

“Can’t stop! I’m going to the committee meeting.”

“But it’s about the football I want to speak.”

“Well, you can speak about it if you like, but there’s no need for me to stay here and listen. Good-bye!”

And Nugent eluded the fat junior and hurried on.

“Well, of all the beasts!” murmured Billy Bunter, in utter disgust. “I can only suppose that they have seen me at footer practice lately, and know how I’m coming on, and are determined to keep me out of the Form team. Hallo! Is that you, Inky?”

“It is my honourable self, my worthy chum!” said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, the amiable Nabob of Bhanipur. “But pray do not cause me the delayfulness, as I am expected at the august meeting of the football committee.”

“Hold on a second! I wanted to be present at the committee meeting.”

“The stopfulness is impossible.”

“Just a minute! Where are they holding the beastly meeting?” asked Bunter. “It’s most important for me to be present.”

“In the honourable Dabney’s study,” said Hurree Singh. “But the presentfulness of the esteemed Bunter will be superfluous.”

And Hurree Singh twisted himself away from the fat junior: and hurried on. Bunter rubbed his fat little nose with a determined expression, and started down the passage after the dusky junior.

The Remove football club usually held its meetings in one of the Remove studies, but since the recent fire at Greyfriars the Remove quarters had not been rebuilt. The rebuilding had commenced, but it was progressing slowly. Meanwhile, the Removites had no quarters that they could call their own, and Temple and Dabney of the Upper Fourth had lent their study for the purpose of the football committee meeting.

Bunter had very nearly reached the study door, when a junior came bolting along the passage, and ran into him and sent him flying. It was Trevor of the Remove. He ran into the study and banged the door. Billy Bunter sat up on the linoleum and gasped and blinked.

“Well, my word! Ow!”

Another junior was racing along after Trevor. It was Russell, also a committeeman, and also in a hurry. Seven had struck. Russell fell right over the fat junior, and gave a yell.

“What’s that—ow!—you dummy? What do you mean by lying about in the middle of a dark passage?”

“I—I’m sorry—”

WUN LUNG'S TRICKERY AND BUNTER'S VENTRILOQUISM CAUSE ALL THE FUN AND TROUBLE IN THIS SPARKLING STORY OF HARRY WHARTON & CO.

"Well, that will make you sorrier!" said Russell; and, having regained his feet, he bestowed a kick upon the plump form of Billy Bunter.

Bunter gave a yell and rolled over on the linoleum, and Russell grinned and disappeared into Dabney's study. Billy Bunter rose slowly to his feet. His fat face was very wrathful.

"It's a set against me in the football club," he said aloud; "that's what it is. They know how I can play, and they're determined to keep me out. I'm not the kind of fellow to stand it."

And Billy Bunter thumped at the door of Dabney's study.

"Go away!" yelled a voice within.

Instead of going away Bunter tried the handle, and the door opened. Six fellows were seated round the table in the study, and six glares of wrath were turned upon the fat junior.

"Get out!"

"I won't! I—"

"We don't want any ventriloquial entertainments now!" bawled Bob Cherry. "We don't want the latest thing in hypnotism. We don't want to know anything about physical culture, and we're all against thought-reading. Slide!"

"It's very important that—"

Trevor jumped up and seized the poker. Bunter was outside the study in record time, and he banged the door after him. In the passage he paused to think.

The fat junior was glowering with wrath. He felt that he was being hardly treated. Bunter was an enthusiast in many things, and though his enthusiasms were, as a rule, short-lived, they were very strong while they lasted.

He had taken up many things in his time, and, as Bob Cherry expressed it, "made a muck of all of them." Ventriloquism had lasted the longest of all. As a matter of fact, Bunter had discovered that he had a little gift that way, which had been improved by incessant practice.

But just lately he had rather dropped ventriloquism, and as all Greyfriars was talking football, Bunter had taken that up.

He was about as good at football as he was at flying, but he felt sure himself that he was a first-class centre-forward.

Hence his determination to make his claims heard at the meeting of the football committee of the Remove.

A Form match was about to take place between the Remove and the Upper Fourth. The rivalry was keen between the two junior Forms, and the Remove were very determined to beat their rivals.

Bunter thought he could help. The trouble was he couldn't find anybody in the Remove to agree with him on the point.

"Blessed if I'm going to stand it!" he muttered, as he stood in the passage and heard the murmur of the voices from the study within. "For the sake of the Form I ought to be played against Temple's team, and they've no right to leave out a really good forward. I'll make them listen to reason."

And, with an extremely determined expression on his face, the fat junior reopened the door of the study.

A Generous Offer Refused!

HARRY WHARTON was speaking when the fat junior came in. Wharton was looking serious. The selection of the team to play the Upper Fourth was no light task. There were various conflicting claims, and it required a captain with a will of iron to keep steadily in view the important point—that the team should be made up of the very best players.

"It isn't only the licking, if we're licked," said Harry Wharton. "But Temple, Dabney & Co. will crow. They'll say it was like our cheek to challenge an Upper Form. We shall look like a lot of cheeky youngsters who've got what they deserved. I tell you, you chaps, we've simply got to pull off this match."

"Yes, rather! Hallo, hallo, hallo! There's that porpoise again!"

"I say, you fellows—"

"Get out!"

"I've got something really important to say on this very question," said Bunter. "You ought to listen. I suppose you want to beat the Upper Fourth?"

"Bunk!"

"Oh, let him speak," said Wharton resignedly. "We'll give you a hearing, Bunter; but buck up, before we lose patience, and chuck you out!"

Bunter blinked round upon the impatient assembly.

"I say, you fellows, it's awfully important, you know. It's about the football match. You want the strongest team you can get, and I don't think that jealousy ought to be allowed to interfere with the selection of players."

Wharton turned red.

"What do you mean, you young ass?"

"I mean what I say. If there's a fellow in the Remove who can play footer rippingly and hasn't had a chance yet, he ought to be given a trial. Of course, some present member would have to get out; but that can't be helped."

Harry Wharton looked thoughtful.

"There's something in what Bunter says," he remarked. "I think I know the chap he's alluding to. A chap who hasn't had a chance yet."

"That's it!" said Bunter, beaming. "I'm glad to see you taking this in the right spirit, Wharton."

"Oh, rats!" said Harry. "Of course, I should make any necessary alteration to the team to improve it."

"But it's your own place that would have to go, you know."

"If the chap were better than I am at centre-forward, he could have the place, and welcome," said Harry. "I am willing to leave it to the committee. But I hardly think he's up to it. He used to play Rugger before he came to Greyfriars, and though he's picked up Soccer wonderfully well in a short time, I hardly know about putting him in the front line in a match like this."

"Eh? I don't quite make you out, Wharton. I never played Rugger in my life," said Bunter, blinking at the junior football captain.

Wharton stared at him.

"Who said you did, duffer?"

"Why, you were saying that——"
 "I was speaking of Mark Linley, the chap from Lancashire."

"Oh, I wasn't thinking of Linley. I was suggesting myself as centre-forward," said Billy Bunter modestly.

The committee looked at him. They seemed unable to credit their ears at first, but when they scanned the fat face of the Owl of the Remove and realised that he was in earnest, a roar of laughter went up that seemed to shake the study walls.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bunter blinked round indignantly. It certainly wasn't a flattering way to receive his valuable suggestion.

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Bob Cherry hysterically. "Bunty as centre-forward! We should have to roll him along."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, really, you fellows, I'm sorry this spirit of jealousy——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"My hat!" gasped Harry. "I believe Bunter will be the death of me yet!"

"Look here, if you're going to refuse my offer I——"

"Oh, we're going to accept it, of course!" said Trevor. "I can fancy a team with a spectacled porpoise as centre-forward!"

"Of course, all the fellows would have to be careful of my glasses——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"If you can't do anything better than cackle at my suggestions, this discussion had better cease," said Bunter, with dignity.

"Much better!" agreed Bob Cherry. "Get out!"

"Oh, really, Cherry——"

"Go and do some more ventriloquism, old chap. You're less funny when you ventriloquise. Go and throw your voice out of the window—and if you throw yourself after it, so much the better."

"I shall let all the Form know that this committee is governed by jealousy and favouritism," said Billy Bunter. "Unless I'm given a trial I shall denounce this committee to all Greyfriars. I warn you!"

"Thanks for the warning. Now bunk!"

"I shall point out the——"

"Chuck him out, Bob, and lock the door!"

Bob Cherry rose to his feet.

Bunter did not wait to be "chucked" out; he left hurriedly, and Bob Cherry locked the door after him. Then the committee went on with the more serious business of the meeting.

Billy Bunter went down the passage with a wrathful countenance.

"I'll jolly well make them sit up!" he murmured. "I wish I hadn't got out of practice at hypnotism. I'd hypnotise the lot of 'em, and make them squirm. Ey gum, though, I can make them squirm another way!"

Bunter suddenly stopped as a scheme of revenge came into his head.

"Could I do it?" he muttered. "I rather think so. With my wonderful abilities as a ventriloquist it will be as easy as falling out of bed. I'll jolly well make 'em squirm!"

And Bunter stepped into an empty class-room and began to practise. It was very gloomy in the class-room in the January evening, and very

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cold. But Bunter did not mind that. He started, and his voice echoed eerily through the empty room.

He imitated the clear, cultivated tones of Harry Wharton with marvellous facility, and it was undoubted that the fat junior had a gift that way. No one would have imagined that it was Bunter speaking. When he came to imitating Bob Cherry's deeper and louder tones his success was still more complete.

He was still practising when he caught a sudden glow in the dark end of the class-room, and stopped suddenly.

"My—my hat! What—what——"

A face came glimmering out of the darkness, glowing with strange, phosphorescent light. It was a curious face, with a deathly white skin, and the lips drawn back, showing a row of white teeth. No body was visible; nothing but the face, and at that terrible face Bunter gazed spell-bound.

Without a sound it advanced towards him, and the fat junior, with a sudden gasp of terror, turned and bolted from the room.

He dashed along the passage at top speed, and did not hear a voice call to him, and did not stop till an iron grip was laid on his collar.

"Ow!" he gasped. "The ghost—the g-g-ghost! Leggo!"

"You young fool!" It was the hard, metallic voice of Ionides, the Greek, the new Sixth Former at Greyfriars, and the most unpopular senior there. "You nearly ran into me. What do you mean by dashing along like that?"

"The ghost!"

"Fool! What are you drivelling about?"

But Ionides had changed colour. There was a vein of superstition in his nature, and the junior's terror was so genuine that it was evident that he had seen something.

"The ghost!" gasped Bunter.

"Where—where?"

"In the class-room, there!"

Bunter wrenched himself away and ran. Ionides hesitated a moment, and then strode along to the class-room door. A diminutive figure was coming towards him. It was that of Wun Lung, the Chinese junior. Ionides glanced at him.

"Have you been in the class-room?"

"No savvy."

"Have you seen anything unusual there?"

"No savvy."

Wun Lung never "savvied" when he didn't want to answer. The senior aimed a blow at him, which the Chinese dodged. The little Celestial scuttled off down the passage, and Ionides hesitated at the door of the class-room.

But he did not enter. He walked uneasily away.

The Eleven!

BULSTRODE was standing at the door of the Junior Common-room when Billy Bunter came up, still looking very scared from his strange experience in the class-room. Bulstrode dropped his hand on Bunter's shoulder, and the fat junior started.

"Ow! I wish you wouldn't startle me like that, Skinner——"

"Ass! Do you know where Wharton is?"

"Oh! Is it you, Bulstrode?" said Bunter, blinking at the bully of the Remove. "Yes; he's in

Dabney's study at the football committee meeting. I say, Bulstrode—"

But Bulstrode was walking away. A couple of minutes later he was tapping at the door of Dabney's study.

The football committee had finished their deliberations, and Bob Cherry had unlocked the door. He was about to open it when the tap came, and he stopped. He made a sign to the others to be quiet.

"It's that fat villain again!" he muttered. "He hasn't had enough yet. Don't make a row. Let him come in, and I'll nab him."

Bob picked up the inkpot from the table.

The door opened, and Bulstrode put his head in.

"I say— Oooch!"

The contents of the inkpot flew in a stream at the intruder.

Bulstrode, suddenly converted into a nigger minstrel, staggered back, with a yell.

Bob Cherry burst into a roar of laughter.

"Ha, ha, ha! Got him!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" shrieked Nugent. "You've got the wrong man!"

"Eh—what?"

"It's Bulstrode!"

"My only hat!"

The football committee shrieked with laughter.

Bulstrode glared into the study, nearly stuttering with rage. His furious face, streaming with black ink, was a curious sight to see.

"You—you beasts!"

"Sorry!" gasped Bob Cherry. "Quite a mistake! I thought it was that ass Bunter bothering us again."

"Don't lie to me!"

Bob Cherry coloured.

"Oh, shut up!" he said. "I suppose you're feeling rather excited; but if you say that again, you'll get something besides ink on your chivvy!"

Bulstrode did not say it again. He did not feel like fighting just then. He mopped his face with his handkerchief, reducing it very quickly to an inky rag. Bob Cherry generously offered his own to help, and Bulstrode grabbed it, with a growl, and mopped away. His aspect when he had finished was peculiar, and the football committee could not help grinning.

"I'm sorry!" said Bob Cherry again. "I really thought it was that fat young villain, and he's been interrupting us before. Of course, we weren't expecting a visit from anybody during the committee meeting."

Bulstrode sneered savagely.

"Of course not! Since Wharton's been at Greyfriars he has stepped into my shoes in a good many ways, and he has shifted me off the football committee."

"Oh, rats!" said Wharton. "I was elected football captain by the whole Form. That's an old story, too. What are you raking it up for again? And you don't go in much for footer, either."

"That's what I came here to speak about," said Bulstrode. "Last term I was shifted out of the committee and out of the team. I mean to play the game this term. If you don't intend to go by favouritism this term, I ought to have a chance."

"You can have as much chance as the rest. Stick to practice, and if you're better than a member of the team, you take his place for the matches."

"That's all very well. But it's pretty well known that you always look after your own friends first."

Wharton's eyes gleamed.

"If you came here for a row, Bulstrode, you'd better say so plainly. If not, what do you want?"

"I want my old place in the team. You can say what you like, but you know jolly well that my footer is all right. I want my place for the match with the Upper Fourth."

Wharton shook his head.

"That's impossible. You might have a chance for the next match, but the eleven for the Form match on Saturday is made up."

"I guessed as much!" said Bulstrode, with a scowl. "Well, there'll be trouble!"

Wharton shrugged his shoulders. Bulstrode stood aside, still scowling, while the members of the football committee left the study. Wharton went downstairs to put up the notice on the board.

The Remove were all curious to know who would be playing in the Form match, and Wharton had promised to put up the list when the committee had decided upon the matter.

There was soon a crowd round the notice-board reading the names of the list of players selected for the Form match.

The list ran as follows:

Hazeldene; Trevor, Morgan; Desmond, Russell, Jones; Cherry, Nugent, Wharton, Hurree Singh, Ogilvy.

"Faith, and it's a good team intirely!" said Micky Desmond, as he read over the names.

"Rotten!" said Skinner. "Why, my name's not there!"

"Faith, and did ye expect it to be?"

"Ridiculous!" said Stott. "Now, you fellows know the kind of half I am—"

"Yes, rather! We do!" said Hazeldene. "Wharton knows it, too; that's why he's left you off the list!"

"You needn't jaw; you can't play for toffee! It's only because of your sister that Wharton has shoved you in as goalkeeper!"

"Rats!" said Hazeldene cheerfully.

"It's true! If Marjorie were my sister, Wharton would have asked me to play at centre-half!" snapped Stott.

A grip was laid on Stott's collar, and he was jerked back. He whirled round, to find himself looking at Harry Wharton, whose eyes were glinting.

"Will you come into the gym, Stott?" asked Harry.

"N-no. Why?"

"To put the gloves on. I heard what you were saying to Hazeldene."

"I don't want to fight with you, Wharton! It was only a j-j-joke!" stammered Stott.

Harry laughed scornfully.

"Very well; if you like to eat your words, do so. Only if you make any more jokes about that, you won't have any choice about backing them up with your fists, that's all!"

And Stott went away, scowling. He was not the only malcontent. Skinner and Lacy both considered that they ought to have had places, and they joined Bulstrode in forming the opposition.

But Harry cared little for the opposition. He was backed by the majority of the Form, and if opinion went against him he was always ready to resign. But the Remove knew well enough that they would never get a better football captain.

Bunter the Ventriloquist!

"I SAY, you fellows—"

Bulstrode, Stott, Skinner, and a couple of other Removites were talking in a corner of the Common-room when Billy Bunter came up.

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He had to speak several times before Bulstrode turned his head, with an impatient grunt, and glared at him. Bulstrode had washed the ink off his face, but there were still traces of it round his ears and the roots of his hair.

"Cut!" he exclaimed angrily.

"But, I say, I want to speak to you. It's about the football. Some of the fellows in the Remove think there's a jolly lot of favouritism goes on," said Bunter.

"So there is," said Bulstrode, more amiably. He was glad to get a new backer, though Bunter certainly wasn't of much account in the Form. "Wharton shoves in his own friends and leaves us out! That's perfectly well known!"

"I say, you fellows, are you going to stand it? It's jolly plain to everybody that there's a better centre-forward to be found than Wharton, and the way he sticks to the place is simply rotten!"

"I don't know," said Bulstrode. "I'm not saying that I'm a better centre-forward than Wharton. I could take the place quite well, or I could play inside-right."

"I—I wasn't thinking of you, Bulstrode. I was speaking of myself."

Bulstrode stared at him.

"Off your rocker?" he asked.

"Oh, really, Bulstrode—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" shrieked Skinner. "Fancy Bunter playing football. It would beat his physical culture and his hypnotism hollow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, really, Skinner! I'm sorry to see this spirit of petty jealousy all over the Form. I'm practically not on speaking terms with Wharton and his lot now, on account of their jealousy of my form as a footballer."

"Oh, don't, Bunter! It's rough on a chap's ribs!"

"I was thinking," said Bunter, glowering angrily, "of forming an opposition, and putting those chaps in their places."

"Then what will you do for feeds?" asked Skinner.

"I'm sorry to see that you regard me as capable of being actuated by mercenary motives," said Bunter, with dignity. "Of course, I haven't thought of that at all. Besides, since our study was burnt down, we haven't had any study feeds. We have to take tea in Hall. We can't cook anything anywhere, and Ionides cut up awfully rusty when I cooked a feed in his study. Until the Remove studies are rebuilt, there won't be any more study feeds."

"Oh, that accounts for your being disinterested, of course!"

"As a matter of fact, I'm in want of a good feed now," said Bunter pathetically. "Now I'm not on speaking terms with Wharton's lot, I have to go short, and it comes rather rough on me. I haven't been on speaking terms with them for nearly two hours now—"

"Ha, ha, ha! How you must have suffered! Do you mean to say that you haven't had anything to eat for two hours?"

"Nothing at all," said Bunter. "I'm hungry. I've been disappointed about a postal order, or I was going to stand myself a feed. I shall be getting it by the first post to-morrow morning, and if one of you fellows felt inclined to cash it in advance, that would make the matter all right."

"Oh, ring off!"

"Very well. I had a jolly good scheme for

making Wharton & Co. sit up, but if you don't want to hear it—"

"Rats!" said Bulstrode. "Fire away."

"I'm too hungry to talk. If you'd care to walk along to the tuckshop—"

"Catch me standing you a feed on spec."

"You needn't stand the feed till you know the wheeze," said Bunter, with dignity.

Bulstrode hesitated. Bunter had been Wharton's studymate till Study No. 1 was burnt out, and it was quite possible that his acquaintance with the private affairs of the Famous Four might afford the bully of the Remove an opportunity of getting even with the Form football captain.

"Come along," he said abruptly.

And with a nod to the other malcontents, he walked away with Bunter. The Owl of the Remove, with a grin of delighted anticipation on his fat face, toddled along beside the burly Bulstrode to the school shop.

Mrs. Mimble came out of her little parlour and looked decidedly disappointed at the sight of Bunter. He was never welcome in the school shop. His stowing capacity for provisions was only equalled by his incapacity to pay for what he consumed.

Bunter walked up to the counter and looked round at Bulstrode. The latter sat down on one of the tables and put his hands in his trousers pockets. Bunter blinked at him indignantly.

"You're keeping Mrs. Mimble waiting, Bulstrode," he reminded him.

"Sorry—I'm not going to give any orders," yawned Bulstrode.

"But you said—"

"You know jolly well what I said."

Bunter frowned as Mrs. Mimble, with a discontented look, retreated into her little parlour. Bulstrode grinned.

"Well, I don't see how I can explain when I'm practically perishing with hunger," said Bunter.

"Right-ho!" said Bulstrode; and he walked towards the door. Bunter called after him excitedly.

"Hold on, Bulstrode! Come back a minute, will you? I can manage all right, if I have the feed afterwards."

"Get on, then," grunted Bulstrode, turning back. "If you've got a scheme for making Wharton sit up, explain it. And don't waste time."

"I was thinking that if I made them quarrel, you know, and punch one another's heads, and—"

"Do you mean you know something that would set them rowing?" asked Bulstrode eagerly. "By Jove, that would be ripping!"

"Yes, rather! I mean by my ventriloquism you—"

"Your what!" roared Bulstrode.

"My ventriloquism! I can make— Here, hands off, you beast!"

"You dummy! Do you mean to say you've brought me here to gas about your silly-fool ventriloquism?" shouted Bulstrode.

"But—but it's genuine, you know. Hold on! I'll prove it."

"Well, buck up! You'll get a jolly good licking if you've been wasting my time. If you can ventriloquise, give me a sample now."

"I'm so hungry—"

"Go ahead!" roared Bulstrode.

"Oh, very well!" said Bunter, who was glad at any rate to get somebody to give him a hearing at last. "I'll make Mrs. Mimble think there's somebody else."

And with a very clever imitation of Skinner's squeaky voice, Bunter squeaked out:

"Mrs. Mimble!"

The good lady came into the shop.

"Yes, Master Skinner. What is it?"

Then she looked round her in amazement.

There was no sign of Skinner in the shop, and Bulstrode and Bunter were grinning.

She looked at them suspiciously.

"Where is Master Skinner?" she asked.

"Look under the counter, ma'am!"

"Nonsense, Master Bunter!"

"Ere I am!"

It was a squeaky voice, and it certainly seemed to proceed from under the counter. Mrs. Mimble stooped in amazement and looked there. Bunter turned a triumphant look upon his companion. But, to his surprise, Bulstrode seized him and jammed him against the wall.

"Wh-wha-what's the matter?" gasped Bunter. "Hold on!"

"You young spoofer! Think you can take me in?" grunted Bulstrode. "Think I don't know that you and Skinner have put this up between you? You got him to cut round here first and get under the counter."

"I—I didn't! Look there!"

At that moment Skinner entered the tuckshop. Bulstrode released Bunter, and stared at the fat junior in blank amazement.

It was pretty clear that Skinner could not have been under the counter. Mrs. Mimble rose with red and puzzled face, and when she saw Skinner standing at the counter her eyes nearly started from her head.

"Goodness gracious! Master Skinner!"

"Hallo! What's the matter?" said Skinner in surprise. "Seen a ghost?"

"I—I thought you were under the counter."

"Oh, that's a jolly good joke!" said Skinner.

"I suppose I'm likely to get under the counter—I don't think! Give me some sausages, Mrs. Mimble."

Bulstrode clapped Bunter on the shoulder.

"Ripping! Keep it dark."

"You believe me now, I suppose?" said Bunter, with an important air.

"Yes, rather! But keep it dark."

"Right! But what about the feed?"

"Oh, go ahead! It's worth it. You can have anything you like up to five bob," said Bulstrode, who had plenty of money, and was generous enough when he was pleased.

Billy Bunter did not need telling twice.

He travelled into Mrs. Mimble's good things at express speed, and he got rid of that five shillings' worth of tuck in record time.

A Rift in the Lute!

WUN LUNG, the Chinese, came into the Junior Common-room looking rather white, and with a black bruise showing on his forehead. Harry Wharton noticed it and came over to him at once.

It was the day after the football committee meeting. School was over, and most of the Remove were in the Common-room. Some were doing their preparation there, as well as they could in the buzz of voices.

"Accident, Wun Lung?" asked Harry Wharton. The Chinese shook his head.

"No accident," he said. "Me gettee whackee."

"Do you mean to say somebody hit you hard enough to make a bruise like that?" exclaimed Wharton quickly. "Was it Bulstrode?"

"Not Bulstrode—Ionides."

"The brute!"

Wharton was not surprised to hear it. Heracles Ionides, the new Sixth Former, was the most hated senior in the school, and he specially disliked the Chinese. Wun Lung had worked the scheme by which the juniors had got their own back on the Greek, and it had come to the Sixth Former's knowledge. And since then Wun Lung had felt his heavy hand more than once.

"The beast!" said Nugent. "He ought to be shown up!"

"And he shall be!" exclaimed Harry Wharton angrily. "Come with me, Wun Lung."

"Whele goee?"

"To the Head."

"No goee. Allee light. Me payee out Gleek."



Terrified, Bunter dashed along the passage at top speed, but he was brought up with a jerk as Ionides gripped his collar. "Ow!" gasped the Owl of the Remove. "The g-g-g-ghost! Leggo!"

Wharton hesitated.

"Look here, the brute ought to be shown up," he said. "He's always down on you. The Head would give him the order of the boot if he knew the kind of cad he is."

"Allee light. Me payee out."

"How did it happen?"

"He cathee me in passage. Me lun, he kickee. Me fall, knockee head on floor. Me makee Gleek sittee up. Me savvy."

"You've got some little scheme for getting level?" said Wharton, laughing. "What is it? Can we help you?"

"Me tinkee. Me see Ionides in bed-loom at nightee," said Wun Lung. "He puttee facee wash on facee, and blush hair and puttee on seentee, and puttee hair in culling-pins."

"My hat!" said Nugent, in disgust. "I knew he was a dandy, but I never thought even Ionides would put his hair in curling-pins."

Harry Wharton laughed.
 "That's where his beautiful curls come from," he remarked. "My hat! What a lark if he could be brought out of his room one night with his hair in pins!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Wun Lung's almond eyes glistened.

"Me tinkee that. Me makee him comee out."

"Oh, so that's your little wheeze?"

"Me savvy. Me makee him comee out nightee. Playee ghostee."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Removites grinned gleefully as Wun Lung's scheme dawned upon them.

The new Sixth Former had already become noted in the school for his effeminate ways; but the curling-pins were a dead secret.

To bring him out before a crowd of fellows with his hair in pins, would be a joke he would never quite recover from.

"You waitee," said Wun Lung. "Me showee up! Me makee all school laff. What you tinkee?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! What are you cackling at, Nugent?"

Nugent looked round quickly.

Bob Cherry was standing near at hand, with his hands in his pockets, looking up at a map on the wall, which showed the sea coast near which

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 Greyfriars stood. Bob had not looked round, but Nugent knew Bob Cherry's voice. He did not even notice that Billy Bunter was standing near, partly screened from sight by the bulky form of Bulstrode.

"Been studying new manners, Bob?" asked Nugent.

"Eh?" said Bob Cherry, looking round.

"What's that?"

"I wasn't cackling, as a matter of fact; I was laughing."

"Were you?" said Bob. "Well, it's a free country, and you can laugh if you like; but what are you looking ratty about?"

"I'm not looking ratty."

"Well, don't catch a fellow up so," said Bob Cherry wonderingly, for Nugent was usually the best-tempered fellow in the Remove. "Anything the matter?"

"No. I'm sorry you don't like my cackle, as you're pleased to call it, that's all."

"Dotty?" asked Bob pleasantly.

"Oh, rats!" said Nugent, walking away huffily. Bob Cherry looked after him, and then looked inquiringly at Harry Wharton.

"What's the matter with Franky?" he asked.

"Have I huffed him in any way?"

"Well, you didn't speak in a pleasant tone,"

said Harry, "and I suppose he didn't like you to call his laugh a cackle."

Bob Cherry looked bewildered.

"But I didn't. I never said anything about cackling."

"Oh, draw it mild, old chap!"

"I tell you I never said anything of the sort. I suppose you can take my word, Wharton?"

"But I heard you."

"You didn't hear me!" exclaimed Bob Cherry.

"I suppose I ought to know whether I spoke or not. Look here, Bulstrode, did you hear me say what Wharton says I said?"

"No," said Bulstrode.

"Oh, cheese it!" exclaimed Harry warmly. "You were standing quite close; you must have heard him."

"So I'm a liar, too, as well as Cherry?" said Bulstrode, with an unpleasant laugh. "I didn't hear Cherry say anything of the sort."

Wharton made an impatient gesture, and turned his back on Bulstrode. He knew that the bully of the Remove would be only too glad to make trouble if he could.

"You must have spoken without thinking, Bob."

"I didn't speak."

"Very well," said Wharton quietly. "If you say so, Bob, it's no good discussing the matter any further. It's of no importance, anyway."

He walked away. Bob Cherry looked after him, and made a movement as if to follow. Then he thrust his hands deep in his pockets, and walked away in another direction.

A Shock for Mr. Capper!

THERE was something like coolness between Bob Cherry and Nugent after that little incident. But when the Remove went to bed that night, Nugent tapped Bob on the shoulder as he walked beside him.

"Don't look grumpy, old chap," he said. "It's not worth while having a row about nothing."

Bob Cherry grinned. He was thinking the same thing himself.

"That's all right," he said. "But I'm blessed if I know why you should imagine I spoke when I didn't."

"But you did speak, Bob."

"Oh, rats! It's a case of illusion, I suppose, and you and Wharton were dreaming," said Bob Cherry. "Never mind it, anyway. What is that young bouncer Wun Lung grinning at like a Cheshire cat?"

"There's a joke on up against Ionides. It's coming off to-night."

And Nugent explained in a whisper. Bob Cherry grinned gleefully. Anything up against the unpopular senior was welcome to the Removites.

The Remove turned in, and Carberry, the prefect, saw lights out. He scowled at the juniors, grunted in reply to their "Good-night!" and slammed the door, in his usual amiable way. But the Remove did not go to sleep.

Wun Lung sat up in bed, and drew the bed-clothes round him for warmth. The Famous Four had made up their minds to keep awake and keep him company, but as the quarters struck from the clock tower, it occurred to them that it was quite sufficient for one to keep awake.

They dropped off one by one, and the Chinese junior was the only one left awake in the Lower Fourth. Wun Lung sat upright, his eyes gleaming in the darkness of the room. With Oriental impassiveness he had sat there without motion, while the clock struck again and again.

EVERY WEDNESDAY

Harry Wharton was fast asleep when he felt a light touch on his shoulder, and started into wakefulness again. He looked round him drowsily in the gloom.

"Is that you, Wun Lung?"

"Me hee," whispered the Chinese.

"What's the time, then?"

"Half-past eleven."

"By Jove! I've been asleep."

The Chinese junior chuckled.

"Allee light. You wakee now, wakee others. Me gooe out. Savvy?"

"Right-ho!"

And Wun Lung glided silently from the room.

Harry Wharton slipped out of bed. It was bitterly cold in the room, but he did not care about that.

There were only seven or eight beds in the room. The Remove dormitory had perished in the fire at Greyfriars, and the Remove Form were scattered in various quarters. An old box-room had been fitted up with beds for seven or eight of them, and it was in this room that the Famous Four were sleeping.

Harry shook Bob Cherry by the shoulder and woke him, and did the same for Hurree Singh and Nugent.

The chums of the Remove put on slippers, and then crept quietly from the room. They had to go down a staircase into the Upper Fourth passage, and then down to the Sixth Form quarters. As they came into the passage Hurree Singh gave a sudden convulsive start.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! What's the matter, lanky?" muttered Bob Cherry.

"The terrific vision," murmured the Nabob of Bhamipar. "The glimpses of the instantaneity, but the sight was terrific."

"Hallo, Inky's seen a ghost!"

"The ghostfulness was great."

Nugent gave a chuckle.

"It's Wun Lung, I expect."

"Hark!"

A voice floated through the dusk of the passage. It was that of Mr. Capper, the master of the Upper Fourth.

"You may as well come out of hiding. I know you are there."

"It's Capper!" muttered Wharton. "He's spotted Wun Lung, and the game's up."

"Wait a minute. That Chinese generally squirms out of a fix."

The juniors looked down the stairs before them. In the corridor below they could see the form of Mr. Capper, dim in the gloom. The Fourth Form master had evidently returned late after going out, and had been coming upstairs in the dark, when he caught sight of a boyish figure on the stairs. But it was pretty clear that he did not know who it was he had seen, as he used no name.

"Boy, you may as well come out at once," said the Form-master sternly.

"Not likely!" murmured Bob Cherry. "Hallo, hallo, hallo! Look there!"

A sudden glow appeared on the stairs.

"Ah!" murmured Hurree Singh. "The terrific vision!"

A deathly face with grinning lips and strangely burning eyes glimmered out of the gloom in a phosphorecent light.

The juniors felt their hearts leap into their mouths.

"Great Scott!" murmured Bob Cherry. "What—what—"

There was a gasping cry from Mr. Capper.

The deathly face was turned towards him. The

juniors saw it no more, but it was in full view of the Form-master.

Mr. Capper stood rooted to the spot. He stared up the stairs at the terrible vision which seemed to be floating down towards him in the darkness.

There was no body to be seen, only that deathly face, strangely, eerily lighted up, and it was no wonder that the Form-master gazed spellbound.

It was only for a few moments. As the terrible vision came nearer Mr. Capper turned and fled and dashed away at top speed, gasping inarticulately as he went.

His footsteps died away down the corridor. Then from the darkness of the staircase came a faint chuckle.

Wharton drew a quick breath of relief.

"My hat! It's Wun Lung!"

"The—the young boulder!"

The Removites hurried down. They ran into the Chinese in the dark, and Wun Lung turned round, and they saw the deathly face again. But this time the countenance of Wun Lung was grinning above it. It was simply a grotesque Chinese mask, and the junior had taken it off.

"You young scamp!" muttered Harry Wharton. "You gave us a start."

Wun Lung chuckled softly.

"Me tinkee makee Ionides stallee, too. What you tinkee?"

"But—"

"Me hully up. Hote Mistle Cappel makee low."

"Hold on! This won't do, kid. It's a rotten trick to startle people by playing ghost. Look here—"

But Wun Lung had already glided away.

(Will Wun Lung succeed in getting his own back on Ionides? Don't miss next week's exciting chapters.)

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THE RAGGING OF REGGIE!

(Continued from page 27.)

"Oh, the cad! The rotter! He'll bring Selby here."

"Turn in?" said Wally hastily. "Better be fast asleep!"

"Yes, Selby'll believe we're fast asleep!" groaned Hobbs. "He'll bring a cane. Oh dear! Oh, the awful young villain!"

The candle-ends were hastily blown out, and the fags bundled into bed in a state of great apprehension.

Meanwhile, Reggie was racing downstairs in his pyjamas.

In that light and airy attire, he burst headlong into Mr. Selby's study, without stopping to knock.

Mr. Linton, the master of the Shell, was there with the Third Form master, having dropped in for a chat.

The two masters sprang to their feet in amazement as the fag booted in.

"Good heavens!" ejaculated Mr. Selby.

"Bless my soul!" said Mr. Linton.

"Who is it—Manners minor?" Mr. Selby grasped the cane. "Manners minor, how dare you—how dare you, I say, descend in your night attire and enter my study! Hold out your hand, sir!"

Reggie yelled.

"I won't stay in the dormitory! They're ragging me! They're beating me! I believe they're after me now! Yow-ow-ow!"

"Ahem!" said Mr. Linton. "It appears to be a case of ragging, Mr. Selby. The boy seems frightened."

"He has been in trouble with his Form already," said Mr. Selby, frowning. "He seems to be an unpopular boy; bad training at home, I think. Manners minor, come with me! Excuse me a few minutes, Mr. Linton. Come, boy!"

"I won't go back there!" howled Reggie.

"Do you hear me, sir?"

"I won't go—I won't! I want to go home! I—I—yaroo!" Reggie howled, as Mr. Selby grasped his ear with a grip that was like a vice.

"Yow! Ow! Yaroooh! Leggo!"

Mr. Selby marched him out of the study by the ear.

Reggie struggled in the doorway, and the Form-

master—never a very patient man—lost all patience.

The cane sang through the air. Pyjamas were a very poor protection against a cane, and Reggie howled and writhed.

"Now will you come?" thundered Mr. Selby.

"Wow-wow! Ye-e-es! Ow!"

"Bless my soul!" murmured Mr. Linton, in astonishment, as Reggie was marched away. "An extraordinary boy—very!"

Mr. Selby escorted Manners minor to the dormitory and turned on the light.

Every bed but one was occupied, and slumber seemed to reign.

"Boys," said Mr. Selby, in a deep voice, "you need not affect sleep; I am perfectly well aware that you are awake! Listen to me! There has been a disturbance here this evening. Every boy here is detained for Saturday afternoon, and will write out three hundred lines. If there is another sound from this dormitory to-night, I shall cane every boy in the Form, and stop holidays for the rest of the term! Get into bed, Manners minor!"

"I—I don't want to stay here—"

"Get into bed!" thundered Mr. Selby. And Manners minor bundled in.

The worried Form-master quitted the dormitory. Wally sat up in bed.

"Gated for Saturday, and three hundred lines!" he murmured. "Oh, ripping! And no holidays for the rest of the term if we touch that sneaking rat again! Well, we can't afford to be gated for the rest of the term."

"He's not going to be let off!" said Hobbs sulphurously.

"More ways of killing a cat than choking it with cream," said Wally. "He's going to be sent to Coventry. They can't line us and gate us for that!"

"Hear, hear!"

And Wally put his head on his pillow again.

Manners minor settled down to sleep. He was feeling relieved; there was no more ragging to be feared; the penalty of that was too heavy. And he did not yet realise that being sent to Coventry might be more painful than a good many raggings.

But he was destined to learn that—and many other things—before he had been much longer at St. Jim's.

(But Reggie is brought to his senses in "MANNERS MINOR MAKES GOOD!" Look out for this great story next Wednesday.)

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