

The GEM

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**"MANNERS MINOR
MAKES GOOD!"**

By Martin Clifford.

**"BUNTER THE
MISCHIEF-MAKER!"**

By Frank Richards.

AND

**MANY FIRST-CLASS
FEATURES
OF FUN AND FACT.**



**A TASTE OF
HIS OWN MEDICINE!**



HOW'S YOUR LUCK THIS WEEK?

Read what the stars foretell,
by PROFESSOR ZARRO.

THE coming week will see many big changes in the fortunes of almost everyone, the movements of the stars bringing many variations of fortune. On this page is a luck-forecast for every GEM reader. To find the horoscope which concerns you, look for the section in which your birth-date falls.

January 21st to February 19th.—Thursday and Friday of this week are critical, and you will be well advised to watch your step on them, for your actions are destined to have far-reaching effects. But Saturday will make up for all setbacks you encounter; it will bring progress in your ambitions, unexpected money, and a thoroughly happy time.

February 20th to March 21st.—A comfortable week, if not an exciting one. An unlooked-for outing seems probable, and there is good news indicated in connection with your work. Excellent for entertaining, for sport, and for friendships throughout the latter half of the week. Be on your guard against spiteful people.

March 22nd to April 20th.—A week for making things, if your inclinations lie in that direction. Hobbies prosper, and may even turn profitable, producing extra pocket-money for you. On the whole, a slowing down of your active interests, such as sport. In work, you will find older people befriending you.

April 21st to May 21st.—There are signs of a "rag" coming to a sticky end! If you'd planned japing your teacher, for instance, take my tip and put it off till another time. Otherwise, hot water and squalls! But this week is a big one for you, because you will find a means given to you of fulfilling an ambition. On the whole, a week for doing things, with an 8 as your lucky number, and Tuesday your lucky day.

May 22nd to June 21st.—An unusual week, because you will find many startling changes, bringing a switch-back of good luck and bad. The quiet types—the Mark Linley kind—come off best, but the venturesome kind can have even better luck if they go "all out" after their opportunities. It's as if you Gemini folk were a huge footer side this week, with the defence men all thorough in their job, and one or two attackers playing really brilliantly.

June 22nd to July 23rd.—You will notice many small kindnesses from your acquaintances, but minor irritations arise from mistakes you make yourself. The latter vanish, however, before the constant succession

of pleasant incidents in which you find yourself involved. A present is coming to you early next week.

July 24th to August 23rd.—Promotion and advancement are due to come your way within the next seven days. Possibility of a big change, such as starting new work, moving your home, mingling with an entirely new set of friends. A meeting with someone of importance. One young friend of mine, born in this Leo section, says he's padding his pants this week in case that "important someone" turns out to be the Head on the warpath!

August 24th to September 23rd.—Happiness is the keynote here. No great changes of any kind, but you will find life running wonderfully smoothly. Wednesday or Thursday, expect a reward for some task you have done, but whether the reward is a lucky one or not depends on the nature of the task concerned! Lonely people—and especially girls—will have cause to remember this week for the new friends and interests it will bring.

September 24th to October 23rd.—If you don't score a record number of goals, or shine in some other way at your favourite sport this week, it's time you turned to tiddleywinks! For this is the most favourable sports week for you Libra people I have ever come across. By comparison, other things seem dull and uninteresting, but the fact that money will be plentiful will appeal to all.

October 24th to November 22nd.—Relatives and family affairs play a big part in your life this week, and there is prosperity for you from this. Anything connected with home is lucky; friendships outside your home may be temporarily marred by a quarrel. A journey is forecasted, but not a very long one. The week-end will bring excitement; Monday, good news.

November 23rd to December 22nd.—People who have seemed bad-tempered towards you will show the kinder side of their natures. Maybe, even, your boss or teacher will overlook some misdeed you have done! A lot of laughs for you this week, and it will be an ideal time for going to cinemas, theatres, and so on. The end of the week is the time to ask favours. Blue is your lucky colour; eleven, a lucky number.

December 23rd to January 20th.—Set to work this week on those schemes you have been planning in the past, for now is the time to start new ventures. Shortage of money may handicap you, but there are many pleasures ahead from the everyday things that don't cost a cent. To-day is easily your best day.

BIRTHDAY INDICATIONS.

WEDNESDAY, February 2nd.—A year of harmony ahead—not the musical kind, but everything quietly successful. Rely on yourself, as well as on friends' help. Wonderful money luck this month. A sporting year, with many exciting holiday times.

THURSDAY, February 3rd.—Go carefully in your dealings with other people; ask help from parents and adults. This year marks a big step in advancement, and reward comes for past work. August will be a memorable month of good fortune.

FRIDAY, February 4th.—Busy people will find swift, unexpected changes, all of which prove in the end lucky, though not all seem so at first. No matter how quiet things are now, your world will have been turned topsy-turvy by the time your next birthday comes round.

SATURDAY, February 5th.—Your chances of success this year are more or less even. A change of surroundings comes to many, and these are the ones who will have best luck. For all, the early

part of the year brings much good news, and luck in money.

SUNDAY, February 6th.—An energetic year lies ahead for those born on this day. You will find yourselves getting about more, taking up new activities, making new friends. For those leaving or changing school, changing jobs, or travelling, a wonderful change of fortune.

MONDAY, February 7th.—Cheery people, looking on the bright side, is what the stars intend you all to be this year. Bob Cherry would be your instant pal if you met him during the next twelve months—and what a sunny time lies ahead for you! Look forward to June, especially.

TUESDAY, February 8th.—Because you are steady and reliable, you will find good friends flocking round you, helping you at all times. Money is plentiful, making week-ends and holiday-times happy. In work a year of steady progress.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A ST. JIM'S FAG FLOGS HIS FORM-MASTER?

MANNERS MINOR MAKES GOOD!



Reggie dropped his book and ran forward. "Who's going to be flogged and sacked?" he asked breathlessly. "Your major," said Joe Frayne.

By Martin Clifford.

CHAPTER 1.

Manners is Gloomy!

"COMING down to the footer, Manners?"
"No."
"Coming out with your camera?"

"No."
"Doing anything?"
"No."

Tom Merry ran his fingers through his curly hair and looked at his chum in perplexity.

Even Monty Lowther was looking serious, though that was quite an unusual difficulty for the merry humorist of the Shell.

Manners was standing with his hands in his pockets, staring out of the study window into the quadrangle. There was a glimmer of wintry sunshine on the old trees in the quad; but the countenance of Henry Manners was overcast, his brow wrinkled, his aspect gloomy and rather glum.

It was an unusual state for Manners. Though seldom boisterously merry, like Monty Lowther, he was generally cheery and equable, and a half-holiday with his beloved camera made him feel, as a rule, that life was quite worth living. Now there was a half-holiday, and the camera lay on the table, and the light was excellent for photography. And there was Manners, staring gloomily out of the window, perfectly glum.

Shunned and despised by the Third Form, Manners minor has made a bad start at St. Jim's. But the wilful and headstrong fag is brought to his senses when his brother makes a big sacrifice to save him from disgrace!

"Better come down to the footer!" said Lowther at last.

"Blow the footer!"

"Certainly!" said Lowther obligingly. "Blow it! Blow it twice! But it will do you good to punt a ball about a bit."

"Rot!"

"What I like about old Manners," Lowther remarked, addressing space, "is his beautiful manners, and the cheery, chummy way he answers a fellow's remarks."

"Oh, rats!" said Manners.

"I'll tell you what," said Tom Merry heroically. "We'll chuck the footer this afternoon, and we'll all go out with Manners' camera."

Monty Lowther suppressed a groan, and nodded.

"So we will!" he said. "Come on, Manners!"

"Hang the camera!" said Manners.

"Certainly!" said Lowther.

With a solemn look he picked up the camera and slung it over the study mirror. It swung to and fro there.

Tom Merry grinned, but Manners' gloomy face did not relax.

"Fathead!" he said.

"Anything else I can do?" asked Lowther, with unfailing politeness.

"Yes; you can stop being a funny ass!" said Manners peevishly. "Keep it for the 'Weekly,' old chap. It's bad enough there."

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"Why, you ass—" began Lowther, his politeness showing signs of wear and tear at last.

"Shush!" said Tom Merry. "Manners, my infant, get it off your chest! What's the merry trouble?"

Manners grunted.

"Not lines?" asked Monty Lowther.

"No, ass!"

"Ahem!"

Manners swung round from the window and stared moodily at his chums, his hands thrust deep into his pockets.

"It's my minor!" he snapped.

"Oh, young Reggie!" said Lowther.

"Yes, young Reggie!"

"I thought perhaps it was," said Tom Merry quietly. "He doesn't seem to be getting on in the Third. But really, Manners, there's no need for you to take it to heart like this. You've done your best for him. We've all done our best, I'm sure! If he will play the giddy ox, it's not your look-out!"

Grunt!

"Didn't we give the young rascal a ripping welcome to St. Jim's?" went on Tom, rather warmly. "Didn't D'Arcy of the Fourth take no end of trouble to make his minor in the Third look after young Reggie? And didn't young Reggie start, first thing, by rowing with D'Arcy minor? Haven't we all looked after him like Dutch uncles, and got more kicks than halfpennies for our pains?"

"We have!" murmured Lowther. "We have."

"I know!" growled Manners. "You've taken more trouble than the little rotter was worth! It was a waste of time!"

"Well, then—"

"Well, then," said Manners, "Reggie's got into hot water with all the Third, and not a fag among them will speak to him! They've left off ragging him, because he tells the Form-master—little beast! They've sent him to Coventry, instead, and it serves him right!"

"Well, if it serves him right, what is there to grouse about?" asked Lowther.

"Nothing!" said Manners. "I'm not grouching."

"Oh!"

"Only the pater asked me specially to look after Reggie here, and Reggie's the apple of his eye. More than I am, or ever was!" said Manners, with a trace of bitterness in his voice that he could not repress. "Reggie is a little tin god at home. If the pater found out how he was getting on here, it would cut him up no end. And Reggie's just the kid to write home letters full of complaints!"

"And your pater will lay the blame on you?" asked Tom, comprehending.

"Most likely. I—I wouldn't mind that, though, if—if I was sure I didn't deserve the blame. Only, what can a chap do? Reggie won't listen to a word from me, and it's no good licking him. He's got his back up because I've stopped him smoking."

"Well, you seem to be in rather a fix," agreed Lowther.

"No need for you fellows to bother about it, though!" said Manners brusquely. "You get down to the footer."

"Won't you come?"

"No."

"You can't do any good by moping in the study."

"I don't expect to."

"Well, then—"

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"Oh, rats! You fellows buzz off!"

Manners was evidently in the last stage of misanthropy.

Tom Merry and Monty Lowther exchanged a glance. They did not intend to leave their chum in such gloomy spirits.

"It's your face that's worrying me!" said Lowther plaintively. "You look like a funeral. Now, let's put our heads together! The unfortunate Reginald is sent to Coventry by his Form, and it serves him right. I suppose he's left on his own this afternoon, and considers himself a very injured party. Let's descend on him, like Greek gods from Olympus, and carry him off. We'll take him out for the afternoon, make much of him, stroke his fur the right way, and put him into a good little temper, and talk to him kindly. We'll show him what really nice boys we are when we try."

"Fathead!"

"I say, that's a good idea," said Tom Merry. "Reggie has had a few days of Coventry now, and he must be getting fed up with it. Perhaps he's ready to listen to reason, and we can do some good with him. Let's try, anyway!"

Manners hesitated.

"But you fellows want to go to the footer?" he said.

"Oh, the footer can go! It isn't a match."

Manners' gloomy face brightened a little.

"We'll try, if you don't mind," he said.

"Pleasure, dear boy!" said Lowther, moving to the door. "Come on! Let's track the beast to his lair!"

And the Terrible Three—glad to be doing something, at any rate—started for the Third Form Room, where they expected to find Manners minor.

CHAPTER 2.

A Friendly Visit!

"I SAY, young 'un!"

Manners minor started.

The new boy in the Third was seated at his desk in the Third Form Room.

He had been detained there for an hour as a punishment for impertinence to his Form-master, Mr. Selby.

The hour had elapsed, but Manners minor had not gone out.

Time hung heavily on his hands that bright and sunny afternoon.

Not a fellow in his Form would speak to him, and it was not to be wondered at. Sneaking to Mr. Selby had soon made him despised by all the fags.

There were many excuses to be made for the foolish fag, who had come direct from a home where he had been spoiled to the rough-and-tumble of a big school. Poor Reggie had vaguely expected to be as important at St. Jim's as he had been at home. He had found out his mistake tragically.

Manners minor wasn't feeling cheerful. Outside the sun was bright and the fresh breeze was blowing, but he did not want to go out by himself. And he had no friends in the school, since he had estranged his elder brother and his brother's friends.

Reggie was thinking it over glumly enough, and feeling that he was a very injured party and that he was misunderstood at school as he had never been at home, when Joe Frayne came in and spoke to him.

Reggie had noticed Frayne of the Third more

than once, wondering at his speech, which was quite unlike that of any other St. Jim's fellow.

Little Joe, rescued from a slum by Tom Merry and sent to St. Jim's by Tom's uncle, had made great progress in many ways. But, in spite of himself, in spite of his surroundings, his speech still remained more or less that of the Cockney. A better-hearted fellow there was not to be found in the school, and Joe was quite a favourite in the Third Form.

Reggie Manners stared at Joe.

Joe Frayne was looking sympathetic. He had not forgotten his first days at St. Jim's, when he had had an uphill fight. He had known what it was like to be an outcast, and his kind heart was touched by the loneliness of the perverse boy.

"Feeling a bit down?" asked Joe.

"Oh, no!" said Reggie. "Not at all!"

"Rather lonely—what?"

"Not a bit."

"Oh!" said Joe, somewhat at a loss. "I thought as perhaps you might be. Though, I'd come and speak to you, you know, young Manners. You're not really 'avin' a 'igh old time 'ere, are you?"

"I'm all right," said Reggie shortly. "I want to leave St. Jim's, that's all I want. I hope my father will take me away."

"P'raps it'd be better for you, young 'un," agreed Joe. "But it ain't so bad 'ere, you know, if you take it in the right spirit. Jest keep smilin', and don't get the coves' backs up, and you'll be all right."

"What are coves?" asked Reggie, with studied insolence.

It was curious—and very characteristic of Reggie—that although he had been solitary and lonely the minute before, he should be insolent to a fellow who had taken the trouble to seek him out from sheer kindness of heart.

"Coves! I mean the fellers."

"Oh, the fellows? Well, I don't care twopence whether they get their backs up or not."

"That ain't the right spirit," said Frayne. "They're rippin' blokes, most of 'em—cept a few like Piggott."

"Did you learn your English at St. Jim's?" asked Reggie.

"I ain't been at St. Jim's very long, and I come from a very different kind of place," said Joe.

"I should think so."

"I 'ad bad luck when I was a nipper, you see."

"What is a nipper?"

Reggie knew perfectly well what a nipper was, but it pleased his high mightiness to worry poor Joe in this way.

"A kid, you know. Master Merry found me in a rotten 'ole in London, and his uncle pays my fees 'ere, you see. Very kind old gent."

"And do you mean to say that you were allowed to come—the Head allowed it?" said Reggie, in surprise and disgust. "Did the Head know who you were?"

"Course 'e did," said Frayne, somewhat nettled. "The 'Ead's a rippin' old bloke. Everybody 'ere knows about my early life, and I ain't ashamed of it, neither. 'Sides, I don't speak jest the same as the other coves. There ain't much difference, but a bloke can notice it."

Reggie sniffed.

"Seems to me a lot of difference," he said.

Joe's face fell.

"You've noticed it?" he asked

Another sniff from Reggie.

"You speak like a costermonger," he said.

"Costermongers ain't bad sorts," said Joe

defensively. "I 'ad a good pal once 'oo was a costermonger."

Reggie snorted. He made a mental note that he would mention Joe in his next letter home, as an additional reason why he should be taken away from St. Jim's.

"I s'pose you 'ave a splendid 'ome, young Manners?" asked Joe, by way of changing the subject.

"Certainly!" said Reggie. "I have everything I want at home, and I'm allowed to do as I like. It's not like school."

"Tain't always a good thing to do everything you like," said Joe sagely. "You can't stay at 'ome always, and when you goes out into the world you're liable to find it rough and 'ard."

"Oh, rot!" said Reggie politely.

Joe tried another tack. He really wished to befriend the obstinate, peevish boy, and he had a great deal of patience.

"Wot about a walk?" he asked. "Look 'ere, you come on a trot with me. It's much better out o' doors."

Reggie did not move.

Joe had offended his aristocratic instincts, and he was far from giving the waif of the Third



"I was looking at it when all of a sudden it rolled up!"

Half-a-crown has been awarded to B. Cooper, 1, Waterloo Road, Burslem, Staffs.

credit for his good intentions. His impression was that the little outcast wanted to take advantage of his isolation to fasten on him.

"Won't you come?" asked Frayne.

"No!"

"Oh!" said Joe.

He sat on Reggie's desk and swung his legs. Manners' minor seemed a little difficult to get on with.

"Look 'ere, kid, would you like a tip from me?"

"Not specially."

"Well, look 'ere, you're a new kid, and I'm an old 'and, in a way of speakin'. You're on the wrong side of all the blokes. It was sneakin' to old Selby did it. The Third don't like that."

"I don't care what they like."

"Nunno. But—but you ain't havin' a 'igh old time, mopin' by yourself, you know. I dessay you ain't a bad sort, but you sneaked without stoppin' to think."

"Don't call me a sneak!" said Reggie savagely. "I told Mr. Selby because the rotters ought to be punished. But he didn't punish them enough."

"But tellin' the masters anythin' about the fellers is called sneakin' 'ere."

"I don't care what it's called. I shall do as I like."

"Ye-es. But if you think a bit about it, you'll see that it's rather a rotten thing to sneak—"

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"If you call me a sneak again, you low black-guard, I'll punch your head!" shouted Reggie.

"Wot!"

"Clear off and let me alone! I don't want to talk to a street arab!"

Joe slid off the desk and stood looking at Manners minor for some moments.

"Well, my 'at!" he said. "You sneakin', rotten little beast, I'm sorry I took the trouble to speak to you! If you wasn't Manners' brother, I'd mop up the floor with you!"

"Would you?" said Reggie. "Well, hang my brother! You needn't stop for him, you cheeky guttersnipe! Get out of this room, if you don't want me to pitch you out!"

"You wouldn't find that so jolly easy!" said Frayne, angry at last. "I'd mop you up with one 'and'!"

Manners minor jumped up.

"I'll give you a chance!" he exclaimed, and he whipped round the desk and ran at Joe.

"Ands off!" said Joe, backing away. "I don't want to 'urt you, you young fool! I come 'ere quite friendly— Well, if you will 'ave it—"

Joe put up his hands.

Reggie was attacking him savagely, all anger and irritation of the past few days wreaking itself in the attack upon the inoffensive waif of the Third.

Joe's blood was up, too, when he received a drive on the nose, and he hit out fiercely enough in return.

His friendly call had not prospered.

In a few moments the two fags were "going it" hammer and tongs, tramping to and fro before the desks, hitting hard.

Joe Frayne's nose was streaming red, and one of Reggie's eyes was closed, but they did not pause.

The combat was at its height when there was a tramp of feet outside, and three juniors looked in at the open door.

The Terrible Three had arrived.

"My hat!" exclaimed Tom Merry. "Joe—and your minor, Manners."

Manners gave a grunt.

"Separate them," said Lowther.

And Tom Merry and Lowther rushed in and dragged the fiery combatants apart by main force.

CHAPTER 3.

A Licking at Last!

JOE FRAYNE gasped as he swung back in the grasp of Monty Lowther.

But he cooled down at once and grinned at the Shell fellows.

"All serene!" he said. "Don't stick your knuckles into my neck. I don't want to 'urt the little beast!"

Reggie was struggling with Tom Merry.

His struggles did not avail him much, however, in the muscular grip of the captain of the Shell.

"Cheese it, you young ass!" said Tom Merry, jerking him back by the collar. "What are you nghting about?"

"Mind your own business!" hooted Reggie.

"Well, it is my business, when you're fighting a pal of mine!" said Tom good-humouredly.

"A pal of yours!" sneered Reggie savagely. "That guttersnipe! I suppose he's one of your

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pals, too, Harry!" He glared at his major. "A street arab who can't speak English!"

"You filthy little snob!" said Manners, in tones of concentrated disgust. "Hold your rotten tongue! You make me ashamed of letting the fellows know you're my brother!"

"Let me go!" yelled Reggie. "Let me go, Merry, or I'll kick you!"

"Now, look here, kid— Yaroo!" yelled Tom, as Reggie back-heeled him on the shin.

Tom Merry staggered, and he let go Reggie and leaned on the desk, almost overcome with pain for the moment.

Manners uttered a cry of rage, and strode forward.

Reggie was bolting at Joe Frayne again, when his brother's grasp fell on him.

Manners caught his minor by the collar and, with a single swing of the arm, pitched him face downwards over a desk. Then his right hand rose and fell with terrific vim.

Spank, spank, spank!

Reggie kicked and struggled spasmodically. He accompanied every spank with a yell of rage and pain.

Spank, spank, spank, spank!

Tom Merry straightened up. His handsome face was pale with pain. But he called out at once to Manners.

"Chuck it, old chap! Don't go for him! It's all right!"

"All right, is it?" roared Manners. "I'll pulverise the little cad! This is what he's wanted for a long time!"

Spank, spank, spank, spank!

Reggie roared like a bull. He was really getting it at last; not so much as he deserved, but pretty severely. He squirmed and kicked and howled.

Tom Merry limped forward and caught Manners by the shoulder and fairly dragged him off.

"Chuck it!" he gasped.

"Rot! Let me give him a good one while I'm about it!" howled Manners. "Hasn't he been asking for it?"

"Never mind—chuck it!"

Manners had to chuck it.

Reggie curled off the desk and leaned against it, panting, his face red and furious.

"My 'at!" said Joe Frayne. "Wot a little spitfire!"

"What were you quarrelling with him for, Joe?" said Tom, a little sternly, and wincing with pain as he spoke. "You might let him alone, as he's Manners' minor."

Joe coloured.

"I didn't go for him, Master Tom," he said earnestly. "I came 'ere quite friendly, jest because his major is your pal."

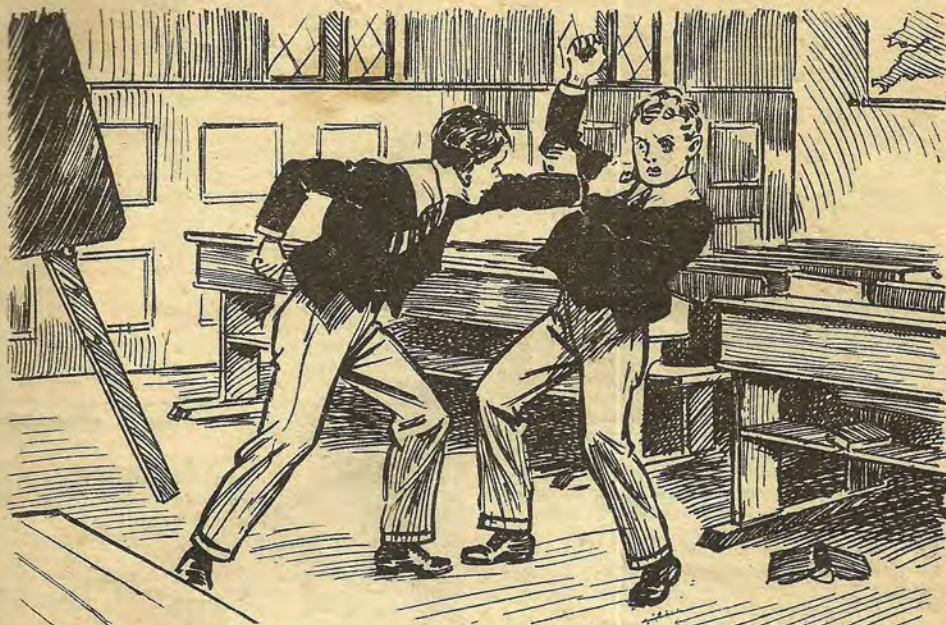
Tom Merry nodded; he could quite believe it. It was just like Joe to do a good-natured thing of that sort, at the risk of being ragged by Wally & Co. for doing it; and just like Reggie to repay it with perverse ingratitude.

"Better get out of here!" said Manners. "Come on! I'm sick of the sight of that young rotter! I'll write to my pater and ask him if he can't take him away! I'm ashamed to show my face in public with him here!"

Manners started for the door.

Monty Lowther looked questioningly at Tom Merry, who hesitated.

The Terrible Three had come to take Reggie out for the afternoon, but they had arrived at an unfortunate moment. But Tom was loth to give



In a few moments the two fags were "going it" hammer and tongs, tramping to and fro before the desks, hitting hard. Joe Frayne and Reggie Manners were soon badly damaged, but they did not pause. Joe's friendly call had not prospered!

up Reggie, perverse little rascal as he was. For Manners' sake he would have been glad to make conditions a little better for Reggie at St. Jim's.

"Coming out for a trot, Reggie?" he asked, with an effort. His shin was throbbing painfully. It was likely to be a long time before Tom Merry recovered from the effects of that savage kick. He knew that he would be limping for hours. But his sunny good-nature, and his regard for his chum, triumphed.

Manners minor stared at him.

"Coming out?" he repeated.

"Yes. You'd like to look round the country a bit—what? And we'll have tea at a farmhouse. It's ripping weather."

Reggie simply blinked. He could see that Tom was still quivering with pain from that back-heel on the shin, yet he spoke with good-humoured friendliness. Reggie could not understand it.

"No, I won't come," he said, at last.

"You'd like it, kid," said Tom. "We'll take you for a run on the moor, and come back through the woods."

It was a tempting offer. The fresh woods seemed ever so much better than the dusky Form-room. But Reggie could not understand, and he was obstinate.

"Is he coming?" he said, with a gesture towards his major in the doorway.

"Manners? Oh, yes!"

"Then I won't come!"

"For goodness' sake come out, and leave the sulky little beast alone!" called out Manners impatiently.

"Look here, Reggie—" urged Tom Merry.

"Oh, shut up!" said Reggie.

That reply would have earned Reggie a further spanking if he had not been Manners' minor.

Tom Merry, however, turned to the door without another word, and Monty Lowther followed him.

Joe Frayne paused to glance curiously at Reggie, and then followed the Shell fellows into the passage.

"I say, Master Manners," blurted out Joe, "I'm sorry as I 'ammered 'im!"

"You can hammer him every other minute, for all I care!" said Manners. "He won't get as much as he asks for, anyway."

"Dry up, old chap!" said Tom. "Look here, Joe, I know you weren't to blame, and Reggie is a little beast—excuse me, Manners—but I believe the kid's got some good in him, only he's spoiled, and rather a duffer. You might try to help him a bit in the Third, Joe. I know it's asking a lot, considering—"

"I'd do anything for you, Master Tom," said Joe sincerely. "You rely on me."

"Thanks, kid!"

And the Terrible Three went out, Tom Merry limping a little, and Manners as black as thunder.

CHAPTER 4.

D'Arcy Takes a Hand!

"IT'S up to me, deah boys!"

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy of the Fourth Form had been polishing his eyeglass in a thoughtful way for some time.

Blake, Herries, and Digby were watching a footer match on Big Side, and Gussy was supposed to be watching it, too. But Gussy had been thinking.

The game was worth watching. School House
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seniors were pitted against New House seniors in a House match, and there was some good play.

Kildare of the School House was at his best, and Monteith, the New House captain, was playing up splendidly. But Arthur Augustus D'Arcy was thinking.

Jack Blake had just remarked that Sefton of the New House was a rotten half-back, and that Monteith, if he had the sense of a bunny rabbit, would kick him out and put in a new man. Then Arthur Augustus spoke, and Blake stared at him, taking Gussy's remark as a reply to his own.

"Up to you?" he repeated.

Arthur Augustus nodded emphatically.

"Yaas, wathah!"

"You fathead!" said Herries. "How could you play for the New House when you're a School House chap? And how could you play in a senior team when you're in the Fourth?"

Arthur Augustus turned his eyeglass upon Herries in astonishment.

"I weally fail to follow the twend of your wemarks, Hewwies," he said. "What are you alludin' to?"

"I was alluding to what you said, fathead!"

"I object to bein' called a fathead, Hewwies. I wemarked that it was up to me, and so it is."

"To play half-back in a New House senior team?" yelled Blake.

"Certainly not! I was not speakin' of the New House team."

"Well, I was, ass!"

"Did you make a wemark, Blake? I am sowwy I did not heah it. I was thinkin'. The fact is, it's up to me, and I'm goin' to take it in hand, and you fellows are goin' to back me up. Come on!"

KEEP IT DARK!

Bunter's got a Fiver!

WHERE DID HE GET IT?



Read

"BUNTER'S BIG BLUFF!"

by FRANK RICHARDS

—this week's remarkable cover-to-cover story of Harry Wharton & Co., of Greyfriars, in our splendid companion paper—

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"Eh? Come on where?" said Blake. "This is only the first half."

"We have no time for watchin' the match this aftahnoon, Blake."

"Why, we've come here specially to watch it. What bee have you got in your bonnet now?"

"I wegard that as a wiculous question, Blake. I am thinkin' of Mannahs minah."

"Bless Manners minor!"

"He has been detained, I think," said D'Arcy. "Anyway, he has just come out into the quad, and he is standin' ovah there lookin' like a lost sheep."

"Well, let him stand!"

"Mannahs is a wathah decent chap, Blake, and he is wowwied about his minah, I know that. The Third won't speak to him."

"Shows their sense."

"Well, I am goin' to look aftah that kid a bit. His majah has gone out. I suppose he is fed up with him."

"I know I should be if I were his major."

"Howevah, it is quite possible that a fellow of tact and judgment may be able to bring that youngstah up in the way he should go. I am goin' to twy my hand. You fellows are goin' to back me up. We'll cut the footah, and take young Mannahs out this aftahnoon."

Blake, Herries, and Digby stared fixedly at their noble chum.

Out of consideration for Gussy's real kindness of heart they refrained from bumping him on the spot. But they came very near it.

"Cut the footer to take that sulky little cad out?" said Blake, in measured tones. "Are you off your rocker?"

"No," said D'Arcy, with dignity. "I am not off my wockah, and I wegard the question as impertinent."

"You can take him out if you like," said Herries. "If he comes near me he'll get a clump."

"And another from me," said Digby. "Sneaking little beast!"

"If you wefuse to back me up, I shall go alone," said Arthur Augustus. "I wegard it as a duty."

"Well, England expects very man to do his duty, and I suppose the same applies to donkeys," said Blake, with a yawn. "Go and do your duty, Gussy, and give us a rest."

"Wats!"

With that rejoinder Arthur Augustus turned his back on the footer, and walked off the field.

Blake, Herries, and Digby sniffed, and gave their attention to the game.

They were fed-up with Manners minor, and they expected that the noble Gussy would not be long in getting into the same state.

Reggie Manners was "mouching" about the quadrangle, looking very blue. He was sick of the school, dissatisfied with everything about him, and dissatisfied with himself. But his father had not answered the passionate letters—demanding to be fetched away instantly from St. Jim's.

It was a new experience for Reggie to have his demands treated with indifference by his fond father, and a dreadful conviction was growing in his breast that his demand would be disregarded, and that he would have to remain at the school.

Even that conviction did not induce him to make the best of it. It only added to his sulky discontent. He was in a gloomy and undecided frame of mind when Arthur Augustus D'Arcy

bore down on him, and tapped him on the shoulder.

"How are you gettin' on, deah boy?" asked D'Arcy affably.

"Rotten!" said Reggie.

"I am sowwy to heah that." Arthur Augustus was politeness itself, apparently forgetful of the fact that Reggie had alluded to him the previous day as a stuffed tailor's dummy.

Arthur Augustus could be very forbearing.

"Most of the fellows wegard St. Jim's as a wippen' place, you know."

"Blessed if I can see it! I think it's rotten!"

"Bai Jove! Pewwaps you will get to like it bettah in time," said D'Arcy, suppressing his indignation. "New chaps get wagged a little, you know. Are you comin' out this aftahnoon, deah boy?"

Reggie considered. He did not realise that it was an honour for a fag of the Third to be asked to walk out with the swell of the Fourth. Reggie was accustomed to regarding himself as a personage of the very first importance.

"Where can we go?" he asked.

"Have you seen the bunshop in Wylcombe?"

"No."

"Let's go there. They have a wathah nice lot of things, and it is wathah select, and there's a wippen' young lady looks aftah the customahs."

"All right," said Reggie. "I'm tired to death of this place. It will be a change, anyway."

"Yaas—won't it?" said D'Arcy sweetly.

"Come along!"

"Your friends coming?"

"Ahem! They're watchin' the footah."

"All the better," said Reggie. "I don't like them."

"Oh!"

"I don't like anybody here. I hate all the Third!"

"It is vewy w'ong to hate anybody, Weggie," said Arthur Augustus seriously.

"Oh, rot!" said Reggie.

But Arthur Augustus' remark seemed to have struck him a little, and he did not air his hatreds any more.

"My only Aunt Jane!" ejaculated Wally of the Third, as he caught sight of his major and Reggie walking down to the gates. "Gussy—I say, Gussy!"

Arthur Augustus looked round.

"Yaas, Wally?"

"What are you doing with that sulky sneak?"

"Pway mind your own bisney, Wally, and do not speak diswepctfully of my twiend Weggie."

"Your friend—eh?" said Arthur Augustus' cheerful minor. "Well, you've got a queer taste in friends. I'd rather pal with Herries' bulldog myself."

"Wats!"

Reggie's face was crimson as he walked on with D'Arcy. He was inclined to "go for" Wally; but he had tried that already, with direful results. He walked out of the gates with the stately Arthur Augustus.

"That young rotter's your brother, isn't he?" he asked.

"Wally is my bwothah," said Arthur Augustus quietly. "It is not vewy polite, Weggie, to call my bwothah a wottah in my pwesence."

"Oh!" said Reggie.

For the first time, it seemed to occur to



"There! I told you not to lend him the clothes-prop!"

Half-a-crown has been awarded to W. Harris, 29, Wyatt Street, Kirkdale, Liverpool, 4.

Manners minor that politeness was expected of him. He walked on in silence, for some minutes, and then spoke, with an effort.

"Sorry!"

Arthur Augustus beamed.

"Wight-ho, deah boy! It's all wight. Fwom one gentleman to anothah, an apology is all that is wequiahed. Pway say no more!"

And Arthur Augustus marched on, much comforted. He had a theory that there was some good in Manners minor, and that he, as a fellow specially endowed with tact and judgment, was the fellow to bring it to light. And really it looked as if he were making headway.

CHAPTER 5.

Tact and Judgment!

THE bunshop in Rylcombe was a very cosy place.

Arthur Augustus and his protege sat at one of the little tables in a corner, with a very big fern beside them.

Miss Bunn, with a specially graceful smile for Gussy, served them with delectable fare.

Reggie, though determined to be sulky, and to feel injured, brightened up considerably at the sight of jam tarts and cream puffs and cake and meringues. He found that he was hungry, and he did full justice to the little spread, and his good-humour increased.

Arthur Augustus felt that he was getting on. With pardonable satisfaction, he looked forward to the hour when he would be able to present Manners of the Shell with a reformed minor.

Reggie was getting quite civil; he even passed things to Arthur Augustus, instead of concentrating his whole attention upon himself as usual.

Arthur Augustus' face fell a little, however, when Reggie produced a cigarette to wind up the feed. He knew the trouble that had followed Manners' remonstrances on that subject, and he felt that he was on delicate ground. Fortunately Miss Bunn came to the rescue.

"Smoking is not allowed here, sir."

Reggie grunted discontentedly, and shoved the cigarette back into his pocket.

"Do you smoke?" he asked his companion.

"No," said D'Arcy mildly.

"Why not? It's fun!"

"It is vewy bad for the inside, deah boy. It is considahed bad form, too. A chap should always wegard good form."

"I wasn't asking for advice," said Reggie.

Arthur Augustus coughed.

"My brother gives me plenty of that,"

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sneered Reggie. "I'm fed-up with it. I had it from the pater, too, before I left home. Preaching all day long, because a chap smokes a fag or two and plays a game of cards now and then. That's as much as anything why I was sent to school—for Harry to look after me. Let me catch him looking after me, that's all! I'm going to do as I like."

"Wasn't it wathah a wowwy to your patah, Weggie?"

"Eh? Yes, I dare say it was."

"Do you think it quite wight to wowwy your patah?"

Reggie was silent.

"How do you get on in the Third?" asked Arthur Augustus, changing the subject.

"Beastly! They're all against me, because I made old Selby punish a rotter who locked me in a box-room."

"That can't be vewy pleasant."

"It's rotten!"

"It's all because of your speakin' to Selby," said D'Arcy. "That kind of thing is called sneak-in' at school. Of course, you didn't undahstand that."

"Of course I didn't," said Reggie. "I always told my father things when anybody was rotten to me."

"Ahem! But it was a wathah bad move at school," said D'Arcy patiently. "Suppose, f'instance, one of the chaps told Mr. Selby about your smoking?"

"That would be a caddish thing!"

"It would get you a feahful thwashin', you know. You would wégard such a fellow as a wotten sneak!"

"Ye-es," said Reggie slowly.

"So you can't weally be surprised at the fags wégardin' you in that light, can you, deah boy? They don't undahstand that it was simply inexperience on your part," said Arthur Augustus diplomatically.

"Yes, that's what it was, inexperience," said Reggie, with some eagerness. "Now I've thought it over, I—I wouldn't do it again."

"That's wight. As a weally honourable chap, you couldn't. I'm sure that you nevah even thought you were doin' anythin' disgwaceful."

"I—I didn't. I—I shouldn't like to do anything rotten, of course," said Reggie. "It never struck me as sneaking. I wouldn't sneak, of course. It's mean."

"Yaas, wathah! It's weally a misundahstandin', and if you stick to that, deah boy, the fellows will soon come wound."

"I don't know that I want them to," said Reggie sourly.

"Bettah to make fwiends than enemies, Weggie. Besides, it will be more comfy. It's awfully jolly at our school, if you go the wight way to work."

"Is it?" said Manners minor doubtfully. "I haven't found it very jolly."

"No, you made a bad beginnin', owin' to—inexperience. You mustn't mind a little wuffness in the Third. Fags are wathah wuff, you know. You don't want to be wégarded as soft."

"I'm not soft," growled Reggie.

"That's wight! Nevah be soft, and nevah complain. Then you'll get on wippingly, and be populah. It's wathah nice to be populah, you know. When your people come down to see you, you don't want them to see you hangin' about by yourself, without a fwiend in the school. It would wowwy them, and I know you would despise a wottah who wowwied his pawents."

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"Oh!" said Reggie very slowly.

Arthur Augustus rose, and paid his bill, and the two juniors walked out of the bunshop.

Reggie was looking very thoughtful, and Arthur Augustus was feeling inwardly elated. He could see that he had made an impression on the fag, and it enhanced his already good opinion of his own tact and judgment.

The swell of St. Jim's called upon Mr. Wiggs, the local tailor, to look at some neckties, and Reggie waited, with unusual patience, till he was finished. Then they walked home to St. Jim's.

The Terrible Three arrived at the school gates, from the opposite direction, at the same time.

Tom Merry, in spite of himself, was limping a little. He had a huge, blue bruise on his shin, and it hurt.

"Bai Jove! Had an accident, deah boy?" asked D'Arcy.

"Not at all," said Tom cheerily.

Reggie was silent, and the colour flushed into his cheeks. He knew what caused the captain of the Shell to limp.

"But what's the mattah with your leg, deah boy?"

"Only a knock—nothing."

"My precious minor hacked his shin," growled Manners.

Arthur Augustus started.

"Bai Jove! Oh!"

He went in, a sombre look on his face.

Reggie walked beside him with crimson cheeks. For the first time in his life, Reggie was feeling ashamed of himself.

"I—I say, D'Arcy," he stammered.

"Well?" said Arthur Augustus coldly.

"I—I—I'm sorry I hacked Tom Merry's shin, you know. I—I was in a temper, and—and I didn't mean to hurt him, not really."

"It was a wotten thing to do, Weggie. It is howwid to kick anybody."

"He was holding me, and wouldn't let me go," said Reggie sulkily. "But—but I was in a temper, too."

"Wathah lucky for you Tom Mewwy wasn't in a temper, too," said D'Arcy dryly. "I don't think many chaps would let their shins be kicked."

"I know it was rotten."

"Suppose you tell Tom Merry so?" suggested Arthur Augustus. "If you are sowwy, you can say so. Only a cad would be afwaid to say he was sowwy."

Reggie hesitated. Then, making up his mind suddenly, he ran towards the three Shell fellows.

"I—I say, Tom Merry—" he stammered.

"Yes, kid?" said Tom, cheerily enough.

"I'm sorry I hacked your shin."

Having made that statement, Reggie Manners hurried away before the captain of the Shell replied.

Tom Merry whistled.

"Gussy's had a wonderful effect on the young boulder," grinned Lowther. "Reggie is learning the manners of Vere de Vere."

"Well, he's improving," grunted Manners. "He could do with it, anyway."

"According to Gussy, an apology from one gentleman to another sets everything right," said Lowther. "Is your shin all right now, Tom?"

Tom Merry laughed.

"Not quite, but I'm glad the young rascal has owned up, all the same. I believe he's got his good points, after all."

"I wish I did!" growled Manners.

But even Manners looked a little less gloomy, and wondered whether Reggie might become,

after all, a little less of a discredit to his school and to his major.

CHAPTER 6.

Trouble at Prep!

MANNERS MINOR came into the Third Form Room for evening preparation, looking much more cheerful than usual.

His afternoon out with Gussy had done him a great deal of good.

He dropped into his place, and two or three fags ostentatiously shifted along to give him plenty of room.

Reggie's eyes began to gleam.

But Joe Frayne, who was on the same form, did not move.

He met Reggie's glance and nodded to him.

Reggie, to his surprise, nodded back.

"Leave that fellow alone, Frayne!" growled Hobbs.

Mr. Selby had not made his appearance yet, and there was a buzz of voices in the Form-room.

"Get off that form, Joe," said Wally. "There's plenty of room here, and you needn't sit beside a sneak."

"I'm orlright 'ere," said Frayne, mindful of his promise to Tom Merry.

"Are you palling with that cad?" demanded Jameson.

"I'm stayin' 'ere," said Frayne.

"Do you want a thick ear?"

"Oh, rats!"

"Look here, young Frayne——"

"Got your books 'andy, kid?" asked Joe.

Reggie stared. He had expected anything but kindness from Joe Frayne.

"Yes; I've got them here," he said, "thank you."

"Been out this afternoon?"

"Yes; with D'Arcy."

"You're speaking to that worm, Joe," said Wally. "What are you driving at? You know he's in Coventry."

"Ain't that gone far enough?" said Joe. "Where's the 'arm in speakin' to the kid? Give 'im a chance."

"Give him a hiding, you mean!" growled Wally.

Mr. Selby entered the Form-room then, and there was instant silence.

The fags did not venture to chatter in the presence of the sharp-tempered Form-master. But a good many grim looks were cast at Joe Frayne and Reggie Manners.

Mr. Selby was cross that evening. He often was cross at evening preparation.

The Third Form were something of a trial to the most patient master, and Mr. Selby was not patient.

Lines were handed out, and there were some swishes with the cane, and the Third were soon in a state of suppressed ferocity and the Form-master in a state of unsuppressed irritability.

It was natural that Reggie should get into hot water in the circumstances. When he was found fault with he looked sullen, and Mr. Selby was about the last man in the world to put up with sullenness in a pupil. A sullen glare from Reggie earned him two strokes with the cane, and after that he sat rubbing his hands and simmering with fury.

"Ard lines!" said Frayne in a consoling

(Continued on the next page.)

LAUGH THESE OFF!

—with Monty Lowther.



Hallo, Everybody! It'll never happen before Wednesday. What won't? Thursday.

Take India. You can have it; I don't want it.

Just press, and they come out automatically. Yes, postage stamps.

"Earthquake Empties Cinema," reads a headline. Unfair competition.

News: A man who opened up a £10,000 business in Wayland last week is in gaol. It wasn't his own!

I hear the Ministry of Transport is to order a closer inspection of car brakes. Instead of running over pedestrians, drivers will be able to stop right on top of them.

Story: "Are you coming down to hear Doctor Muggins' lecture on 'How To Avoid Simple Illnesses,' Noble?" asked Skimpole, the other evening. "It's off," replied Noble, "owing to the doctor having caught a cold."

"The famous comedian was at the top of his form," reads a Press notice. We didn't know comedians still had to swot maths, history and geography!

Hint for footballers: To get ten points from five matches, sharpen the ends.

A medico writes that the banana fruit is a splendid pick-me-up. The banana skin, of course, has the opposite effect.

Note from Australia: "Batsman Retires at 98." Well, he should have quickened the pace and got his century before old age set in.

Fishing Story: "This is a splendid place for carp," said a friend of Mr. Ratcliff's, at a stream near St. Jim's. "It must be," agreed Mr. Ratcliff. "I've never yet been able to get one to leave it!"

As the lawyer said: "My client is innocent, your honour. He got this counterfeit money picking somebody's pocket!"

"That was a lovely drive of yours, sir," said the coach to Mr. Selby, after the latter's first game of golf. "Which one?" asked Mr. Selby. "Why, that one when you hit the ball," replied the coach.

Remember, some of us are born good, but most of us have to make good.

Yes, and what about the racing trainer who decided to call his horse "Bad News," because bad news travels fast!

See you next Wednesday, chaps!

whisper. "Selby's on the warpath this evenin'; better be very careful."

Mr. Selby spun round.

"Someone was chattering."

The Third sat like stone images.

Joe's eyes were on his desk.

"Manners minor, were you speaking?"

"No, sir."

Reggie flushed. He had not been speaking, but he had been spoken to.

Mr. Selby's sharp eyes searched his face.

"Are you speaking the truth, Manners minor?"

"Yes, sir!" growled Reggie.

"The sound came from your direction. Was someone speaking to you?"

Reggie was silent.

"Answer me, Manners minor!"

"Yes, sir," said Reggie.

The Third Formers exchanged furious glances. They had not the slightest doubt that the sneak was about to betray Joe Frayne.

Frayne himself thought so, and he rubbed his hands under the desk in rueful anticipation.

"Who was it, Manners minor?"

Reggie did not answer.

"Do you hear me, boy?"

"Yes, sir."

"Who was speaking to you?"

Silence.

"Come out before the class, Manners minor!"

Reggie rose and stepped out. His lips were set in an obstinate line. He had not forgotten his talk with Arthur Augustus. He was as full as ever of resentment against the Third, but he would not give them the right to call him a sneak. He stood before Mr. Selby with a sulky, obstinate face.

The Form-master picked up the cane from the desk.

"Give me the name of the boy who was speaking to you, Manners minor!" he rapped out angrily.

"I can't, sir."

"My only 'at!" murmured Frayne, in astonishment.

And Wally whistled softly. The fags looked on at the scene in amazement.

Mr. Selby seemed at a loss for words for a moment.

"Do you mean that you will not?" he said.

"Yes, sir."

"My only Aunt Jane!" murmured Wally, almost overcome.

Even that cheeky and hardened young scamp would scarcely have ventured to talk to his Form-master like this.

"Manners minor," thundered Mr. Selby, "you— you refuse to answer my question! You refuse to obey my order! I—"

Up jumped Joe Frayne.

"If you please, sir—"

"Silence! Sit down!"

"It was me speaking to Manners minor, sir."

"Indeed! Then you will take a hundred lines, Frayne!"

"Yessir!"

"Now sit down and hold your tongue!"

Joe sat down and held his tongue. He hoped that his prompt confession would save Manners minor. He was mistaken. Mr. Selby was not disposed to allow his prey to escape him so easily.

"Manners minor, you have deliberately refused to obey my order! This is the climax of the impertinence of which you have been incessantly

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guilty since you came into my Form! Hold out your hand!"

Reggie sullenly held out his hand.

Swish!

Mr. Selby laid that stroke on with great vim.

Reggie's howl of pain rang through the Form-room.

"Now the other hand!" snapped Mr. Selby.

Swish!

"Now the other again!"

Reggie's eyes blazed. He put both hands behind him.

"I won't!" he said very distinctly.

There was a gasp from the Third Form.

Wally's eyes opened wide.

"Manners minor, hold out your hand!" spluttered Mr. Selby.

"Shan't!"

"Shan't!" from a member of his Form was more than enough for the Form-master. He grasped Manners minor by the collar and swung him round, and the cane rose and fell like lightning.

Reggie struggled and yelled, and at last kicked.

The fags gasped as they saw it. It was only a little kick, and it took effect chiefly on Mr. Selby's gown. But it earned a terrific punishment.

The cane whished on Reggie's back till Mr. Selby's arm was tired.

"Now go back to your place, Manners minor," panted the Third Form master.

Reggie crawled back to his place, aching and groaning.

It was the severest thrashing he had ever received in his life, and he felt dizzy with pain. He sat dazed, but with burning eyes, while preparation ran its weary length.

CHAPTER 7.

Gussy is Pleased!

PREPARATION was over at last, and Mr. Selby quitted the Form-room, leaving the Third to their own devices.

The fags crowded out of their seats and gathered round Reggie.

Reggie sat, still aching, his eyes burning. He was not a pleasant object to look at at that moment. But in the eyes of the fags the fellow who had defied the Form-master was something of a hero.

A revulsion of feeling had taken place, as was natural in the circumstances.

Wally D'Arcy patted him on the shoulder.

"Good for you, young 'un," he said. "Blessed if I thought you had it in you! You stood up to him a treat!"

"Right as rain, he is," said Frayne. "I'm sorry you 'ad it so 'ard, Manners minor."

"Selby's a beast!" said Jameson. "Fancy a Form-master asking a chap to sneak! Selby always was an outsider!"

"Rotten rank outsider!" said Hobbs. "But what I can't make out is, why didn't the fellow sneak? He sneaked before, without being asked."

"Never mind that," said Wally. "If Manners minor is going to play the game, I'm finished with being down on him."

"Well, he sneaked before," said Picke.

"Some blokes would have sneaked jest now, with Selby glowerin' at 'em like a tiger," said Frayne. "You would 'ave, Picke."

"So he would," agreed Wally. "You shut up, Picke! You wouldn't have had the nerve to kick Selby, I know that."

"Shouldn't be such a fool!" said Picke.
 "Well, it was rather fatheaded," agreed Wally.
 "Not that Selby didn't deserve it, the way he was going for him. Feel pretty bad, young Manners?"
 "Oh!" groaned Reggie.
 "It'll pass off in time," said D'Arcy minor comfortingly. "I've been there, and I know. Hallo! What do you want, Gussy?"
 Arthur Augustus' eyeglass gleamed in at the door.
 "Just lookin' in to see how you kids are goin' on," said the swell of St. Jim's cheerily.
 "Not so much of your 'kids,'" growled Jameson.
 "Sowwy—I mean young gentlemen," said Arthur Augustus. "Anythin' for a quiet life.

"Gweat Scott!"
 "He's the right stuff, after all," said Wally graciously. "We're not down on him any more. The Third's going to give him another chance."
 "Ear, ear!" said Joe Frayne.
 Reggie Manners rose. His back was stiff and aching with the pain of the licking. He did not answer a word to his Form-fellows.
 "Don't run away, kid," said Wally kindly. "We're going to have herrings for supper. You stay here."
 Reggie shook his head and left the Form-room. Even herrings for supper could not comfort him in the state he was in.
 Arthur Augustus followed him out. The Third were left in a buzz, discussing Manners minor and his remarkable "stand-up" to "old Selby."



"Hold out your hand, Manners minor!" snapped Mr. Selby. Reggie's eyes blazed, and he put his hands behind him. "I won't!" he said, very distinctly. There was a gasp from the Third Form.

Bai Jove! What's the mattah with Mannahs minah?"

"He's hurt."

"Wally, you young wascal, if you have been waggin' my fwiend Weggie—"

"Oh, dry up!" said D'Arcy minor disrespectfully. "Selby's been ragging him like thunder. The old sport was on the warpath this evening."

"You should not allude to your Form-mastah as an old sport, Wally."

"Bow-wow!"

"Weggie, deah boy, I twust you are not much hurt."

"Yow!" groaned Reggie.

"I—I hope he wasn't cheeky to Mr. Selby," said Arthur Augustus dubiously.

"Selby wanted him to sneak about a chap, and he wouldn't," said Wally.

Reggie's peace was made with the Third—until the next offence.

"Pway, come with me, Weggie," said Arthur Augustus, joining the fag in the passage. "We've got some chestnuts in Study No. 6. I suppose you are feelin' wathah wotten."

"Awful!" groaned Reggie.

"You are lookin' wathah pale. Pway come along, and you can sit in the armchair and take it easy."

Reggie groaned, and allowed himself to be led away.

Mr. Selby had laid on the cane not wisely, but too well. Even Wally, hard as nails as he was, would have suffered severely from such a castigation, and to Reggie, soft from a luxurious home, it came with tenfold severity.

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There was a little crowd in Study No. 6. Blake, Herries, and Dig were there, and the Terrible Three had dropped in to help them dispose of the chestnuts.

They all stared at Reggie's white, strained face, as Arthur Augustus led him into the study. "What's the matter?" asked Manners breathlessly.

"Our young friend has been through it," said Arthur Augustus. "He refused to speak about a chap, and Selby thrashed him."

"My hat!"

"Good man!" said Tom Merry.

"Well, this beats it!" said Manners, his face softening a good deal. "Here, take the armchair, Reggie!"

Manners minor sank into the armchair.

"I say, was it awfully rough?" asked Manners anxiously.

Reggie nodded, without speaking. Even his unreasonable ill-will towards his brother seemed to have gone, in the pain he was suffering.

"Let's see your hands," said Dig.

"It's my back," groaned Reggie. "I kicked him, you know."

"You shouldn't have done that, kid," said Talbot gravely.

"He was thrashing me."

"H'm!"

"Does your back hurt now?" asked Manners.

"Ow! Yes."

"Might wub it with somethin'," said Arthur Augustus. "Take your jacket off, Weggie, and let's see."

"It's all right."

"Wats! I've got some embrocation here."

"It surely can't be bad enough for that," said Talbot.

"Weggie looks as if it is."

"Take your jacket off, Reg," said Manners; and he helped his minor off with the jacket, and pulled down the shirt, while Arthur Augustus opened the bottle of embrocation.

"Great Scott!" exclaimed Blake.

Manners' brow grew as black as thunder. Reggie's back was scored with deep, red marks, showing how cruelly the cane had lashed.

"The awful wottah, to treat a kid like that!" said Arthur Augustus, his voice trembling with anger. "He wouldn't dare to do it in a County Council School. He would be summoned."

"Yow! Don't touch me!" mumbled Reggie.

"I'm goin' to wub it with embrocation, kid. It will make it feel evah so much better."

"I'm going to the Housemaster about this!" exclaimed Manners. "Selby's got no right to treat my minor like that, whatever he did. Come on, Reggie, and let Mr. Railton see it."

"Shan't!" said Reggie.

"Don't say 'shan't,' Weggie!" murmured D'Arcy. "It's wathah wude, you know."

"Well, I won't, then," said Reggie.

"Why won't you?" demanded Manners angrily.

"I'm not going to sneak."

"Oh, my hat!"

Manners sat down helplessly. That reply from Reggie quite overcame him.

"The kid's right, Manners," said Tom Merry. "Better grin and bear it. You will feel better presently, Reggie."

"I'll pay him out for it!" muttered Reggie, gritting his teeth. "The beast! I'll make him sorry for it, somehow."

"Don't talk like that, Weggie, please!"

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Reggie snorted, and relaxed into silence. The application of the embrocation to his back gave him some relief, and when he left the study at bed-time, he was feeling better.

But his eyes were still burning savagely, and there was only one thought in his mind—vengeance, by some means or other, upon the master who had ill-used him.

After the guests had departed from Study No. 6 Arthur Augustus turned his eyeglass upon Blake, Herries, and Dig with excusable triumph.

"What did I tell you, deah boys?" he demanded.

"Blessed if I know!" said Blake, with a yawn.

"About Mannahs minah, I mean."

"Did you tell us anything?"

"Weally, Blake, I remarked that there was some good in him, and that it could be got at by a fellow of tact and judgment. The pwoof of the puddin' is in the eatin', you know. I wegard him as havin' impwoved enormously alweady."

"Well, he doesn't seem to be such a sneaking worm," admitted Herries.

"Wathah not!"

"But he's as full of spite as an egg is of meat," said Blake, "and he'll be getting into more trouble with Selby from his looks. Jolly glad that he isn't my minor, that's all!"

"I shall continue to keep an eye on him, Blake. Selby has acted wottenly, and I admit it is distwessin' to heah Weggie speak so wevengefully. I shall ewadicate that twait from his chawactah."

"Bow-wow!" said Blake.

"I do not wegard that as an intelligent remark, Blake. We shall see what we shall see," said Arthur Augustus, with dignity.

And Arthur Augustus' chums agreed that they would.

CHAPTER 8.

A Letter From Home!

TOM MERRY & CO. looked for Manners' minor after morning lessons the next day.

Reggie came out of the Form-room with Frayne and Wally.

He seemed to be on speaking terms with the Third, and Frayne was sticking to him in quite a pally way.

Wally was very civil, too. Wally could not like Reggie, but he had a great respect for pluck, and Reggie had shown plenty of pluck. It was allied with obstinacy, and wilfulness, and revengefulness, but it was there.

"Feeling better, kid?" asked Tom Merry kindly.

Reggie nodded.

"Yes, thanks! I—I hope your shin doesn't hurt now."

"Only a bruise," said Tom. "That's ancient history now. By the way, Reggie," he added, as Wally and Frayne went on, "I hope you're not thinking anything more about what you were mentioning last night about Mr. Selby."

Reggie's eyes glittered.

"Yes, I am!"

"You can't do anything, you know. Better take it like a little man."

"I can do something, and I'm going to!" growled Reggie.

"What idea have you got in your head now?" asked Manners uneasily.

"Find out!" said his minor.

"That isn't the way to talk, Reggie," said Tom.



North Borneo respects her three peoples by inscribing her stamps in English, Malay and Chinese.

STRANGE STAMP STYLES

WHAT a host of interesting things the wording on some stamps can tell us. Look, for instance, at some of the stamps of the East Indies. Besides English, the issues of both Labuan and North Borneo bear inscriptions in Malay and Chinese—for the benefit of the mixed Malay and Chinese populations of these areas.

Crossing the South China Sea, and landing on the Mallacan mainland, we come to the protected native state of Johor and the Malay state of Trengganu. As in Borneo, the population of both these states consist of British, Malay, and Chinese, and, in consequence, the Johor and Trengganu stamps have the trilingual wording.

But now we come across subtle differences. The Johor stamps have their values in English and Chinese, whereas the Trengganu items have their values inscribed in English and Malay. From this, it would appear that the Chinese have the bigger say in Johor affairs than the native Malays, while the reverse is the case in Trengganu.

DOWN THE CENTURIES.

The use of Chinese, this time on the stamps of Macao, takes us back down the centuries to the days when the Portuguese were the first Europeans to reach the Celestial Empire. At the beginning of the sixteenth century, armed with the valuable Treaty of Tordesillas, which gave to the Portuguese rights to all lands discovered by them east of a line from the Arctic Pole to the Antarctic, they sent out numerous expeditions to the East.

One of these expeditions, under Fernao Pires de Andrade, reached Canton in 1517, and in 1557 the Portuguese were given full control of Macao—a control which they have never relinquished during the four centuries that have followed.

"Well, I'm not going to tell anybody anything," said Reggie.

"Why not?" asked Lowther suavely. "Confide in your kind uncles, Reggie. Tell us the scheme for dire revenge and perhaps we may help you to get rid of the body afterwards."

"Oh, don't rot!" growled Reggie. "I'm not going to tell anybody. There'll be a row when I go for Selby, and I suppose you don't want to be hauled up for knowing all about it, do you?"

Manners looked oddly at his minor. It was a new experience to hear Reggie speaking as if he had learned to consider others a little.

"No; that's right enough," said Tom Merry. "But I wish you'd chuck up the idea, whatever it is, Reggie. It's rotten to be revengeful."

"Oh, rot!"

Reggie stalked away with lowering brows. The pain had not yet all departed from his back, but even if it had, it would have made no difference

Stamp inscriptions sometimes look like Double Dutch, but, as our expert explains, they tell many interesting facts.



The two para issue of Jugo-Slavia. The top wording is in Cyrillic characters; that at the bottom is formed from letters in our own alphabet.

When the Europeans first came to China, the Chinese considered them the ugliest human beings they had ever seen. By contrast with the Orientals' flat, high-cheeked faces, the Portuguese's noses seemed very prominent, and their eyes positively bulging.

THE SLAVS' PATRON SAINT.

On many of the stamps of countries close to Russia, you will find wording in characters which to most of us seem like second cousins to Double Dutch. This alphabet is known as Cyrillic, and with individual modifications is used by all the Slav peoples—that is to say, the Russians, Bulgarians, Serbs, and Croats, etc.

The alphabet is said to have been the invention of the Slav's patron saint, St. Cyril, who adapted the Greek alphabet. Bulgaria, whose people are almost entirely Slavs, uses her own variety of Cyrillic exclusively. But in both Jugo-Slavia and Russia we see the more mixed populations pandered to. In the former state the Serbs are familiar only with Cyrillic, whereas the Croats and Slovenes now use our alphabet.

In the mighty Russian continent matters are much more complex. Slav Russian is the official language, but most of the scattered peoples still use their own private patters.

On one occasion Russia tried to give a fairly representative showing to the major tongues of her land on a single stamp. This was on the 28 kopecs value of 1927, commemorating the tenth anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution. On this stamp are shown specimens of normal Russian, Ukrainian, White Russian, Georgian, and Turkish. At first, it seems, it was hoped to include Armenian and Chinese, but there just wasn't space for them!

to him. His mind was made up, and all his obstinacy was aroused.

Tom Merry whistled.

"Perhaps the little ass is only gassing," said Monty Lowther. "After all, what can he do to Selby?"

"Nothing, I suppose," said Tom. "He can't punch his head or hack his shins."

"You don't know him," said Manners, with a troubled look. "The kid's got his good points, you admit that?"

"Certainly, old chap."

"But he's beastly spiteful," said Manners, with a sigh. "He seems to have learned not to sneak; but he's got a lot to learn yet. I'm afraid there's going to be trouble. I shall keep an eye on him, as well as I can. I don't know whether I've done my best, so far. I've tried to."

"You couldn't do more than you've done, that I can see," said Tom. "He set himself against

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you of his own accord. But now he's coming round, I think it might be just as well to forget bygones and treat him just as if nothing had happened, if you don't mind my giving you a tip. After all, he's your brother."

Manners nodded.

"That's exactly what I'm trying to do," he said. "And when I speak to him I generally get 'Shan't' or 'Find out!' for an answer. It isn't easy to look after a kid on those lines. Hallo, here's a letter for me!"

Manners took a letter from the rack. It was in his father's hand.

"Go ahead!" said Tom Merry. "If there's a remittance we'll have an extra sardine for tea."

Manners read the letter, and his face paled a little, his brows wrinkling darkly. His two chums looked a little anxious.

"Not bad news?" asked Lowther.

Manners held out the letter.

"Read it," he said.

He stood with a clouded brow, his hands driven deep into his pockets, while his chums read the letter.

Their brows grew dark, too, as they read.

The letter was from Mr. Manners, and it read:

"Dear Henry.—I have received no fewer than three letters of complaint from Reggie since he has been at St. Jim's. In each letter he urges me to take him away, and says that he is miserable at the school, and misunderstood, and that you have not helped him in any way, or made things easier for him. That is not what I expected of you, Henry. I cannot doubt that you have some natural affection for your brother, and some respect for my wishes. That Reggie has faults, I know only too well, and it was in the hope of seeing an improvement that I placed him in your school. I did not think it was necessary for me to repeat my request to you to look after him, and to make him as comfortable as circumstances permit. It seems you quarrelled with him on his first day at school, and deserted him, and he was subjected to unpleasant practical jokes. I suppose you have acted thoughtlessly, having many interests of your own that have prevented you from giving time and attention to your young brother.

"I'm not angry with you, Henry, but I am surprised and shocked. It is not what I expected of you. Once more, I ask you to do what I hoped the natural affections of your own heart would have dictated, and to make a friend of your brother—surely that is not much to ask—and to bear with him patiently.—Your affectionate father,
J. MANNERS."

Tom Merry felt his cheeks grow hot as he read that cruelly unjust letter.

Monty Lowther scowled at the wall.

Manners stood grim and despondent.

"That's the pater all over," said Manners wearily. "Everything Reggie says in his skulking, whining letters is taken as gospel, and I'm not even asked my version of the case—not that I'd give it. The pater cares more for Reggie's little finger than for all of me. Oh, it makes a chap feel rotten! The whining young cad, to write home and worry the pater!"

"It's hard cheese, old scout!" said Tom, handing back the letter. "Chaps do get misunderstood at times, and the only thing is to grin and bear it. I suppose Reggie hasn't mentioned that your row with him the first day was over his smoking, and you can't very well let that out."

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"Of course I can't! But—but—" Manners choked a little. "Well, that doesn't make any difference, anyway. It isn't the way to make me fond of Reggie, if the pater only understood that. But I shan't let it make any difference that way. I'm going to look after him just the same."

"That's right!"

The Terrible Three sauntered out into the quadrangle, and punted a football about till dinner, and the clouds cleared from Manners' brow.

But 'at the dinner-table Manners' face clouded over again.

His father believed that he was neglecting his minor—occupied in his own pursuits and neglectful of his brotherly duty. His father believed it because Reggie believed it—he wouldn't change his opinion unless the lordly Reggie changed his. For all Reggie's woes at St. Jim's Manners was held accountable—not Reggie's own faults and his bad training at home. The injustice of it rankled deeply. But that was not all the trouble. Manners knew that even then his minor was planning some wild scheme of vengeance on Mr. Selby, and if it came to anything there would be serious trouble—Reggie might be flogged, or even expelled from the school.

How was he to help it? What could he do? For, if it came to pass, the responsibility would be laid upon his shoulders at home. Yet what was there that he could do when the obstinate fag refused even to listen to him? Was he expected to shadow Reggie and watch him every hour of the twenty-four?

After lessons that day Manners looked for his minor.

Reggie met him with a sullen face. He was getting on better in the Third, but his grievances against his major were as strong as ever.

"I've had a letter from home, Reggie," said Manners.

"Oh!" said Reggie. "Is the pater going to take me away?"

"No. You're staying here."

"Well, I don't know that I mind. Some of the chaps in my Form are jolly decent," said Reggie, after consideration. "I shouldn't have quarrelled with them so much if you'd stood by me."

"The pater blames me for all the trouble you've had and that you've told him about."

"Well, so you are to blame, aren't you?"

Manners compressed his lips.

"Reggie, have you still got that silly idea in your head of scoring off Mr. Selby?"

"Yes, I have."

"Won't you tell me what you're going to do?"

"No, I won't."

"It means jolly serious trouble."

"I don't care!"

"Reggie—"

Reggie turned his back and walked away, whistling.

Manners looked at him in dismay, mingled with anger and apprehension. Certainly, it did not look as if he could carry out his father's wishes. How was he to look after Reggie?

CHAPTER 9.

Frayne's Warning!

"LOOKIN' for you," said Joe Frayne cheerfully.

Manners minor nodded cordially enough to Joe. The waif of the Third had run him down in the quadrangle.

"We're going to have tea in the Form-room," explained Frayne. "You'd like to come—what?"

Reggie hesitated.

"Look here, Frayne," he said slowly, "we had a fight yesterday—"

"Ferget it—that's nothin'!" said Joe. "I've 'ad more fights than I can remember since I've been 'ere."

"And you stuck to me afterwards, and the other fellows would have been down on you for it, especially D'Arcy."

"That's all right now, arter the way you stood up against Selby," said Joe.

"But what did you do it for?"

Joe shifted uncomfortably.

"Well, a chap don't bear malice, you know," he said. "Besides, Master Tom wanted us to go easy with you, young Manners. And your major is a good chap, too. Very kind 'e was to me when I first came 'ere."

"Was he? He hasn't been kind to me."

"Oh!" said Joe.

"It was jolly decent of you," said Reggie. "I spoke to you like a cad when you came into the Form-room yesterday. It was my rotten temper, and I was sorry afterwards. I'm not a silly snob, really, but—but you must have thought I was a rotter. I—I hope I didn't hurt your nose much?"

"Right as rain!" said Joe. "What about your eye?"

Reggie rubbed his eye.

"It blinks a bit," he said, "but it 'asn't gone very black. Look here, Frayne, suppose you were to help me—"

"Any old thing!" said Joe cheerfully. "What is it?"

"About that beast!"

"Eh—what beast?"

"Old Selby!"

"He is a beast, isn't he?" said Joe. "If Mr. Railton knew how he larruped you yesterday there would be a row."

"I'm not going to tell Railton," said Reggie, flushing. "I—I didn't understand at first, but I do now. I'm not going to sneak."

"That's the right spirit!" said Joe.

"I'm going to make him sit up for it!" said Reggie.

Joe looked grave.

"I don't like 'im any more than you do," he said; "but—but it's a rather risky bisney, goin' for a Form-master. What're you thinkin' of?"

"What about catching him in the quad after dark and thrashing him?"

Frayne jumped almost clear of the ground.

"Thrashin' 'im!" he gasped. "Thrashin' a Form-master! Oh, 'oly smoke!"

"He wouldn't know us in the dark," said Reggie eagerly. "You could hold him while I pashed him."

"Good lor'!" said Joe.

"He's a slacking, unfit beast!" said Reggie. "He couldn't put up much of a scrap. We could do it!"

"I dessay we could," said Joe, aghast; "and I dessay we would be flogged and booted out of the school arter it!"

"If you're afraid—" began Reggie, in quite his old supercilious manner.

"I ain't exactly afraid," said Frayne. "Tain't that. But I don't want to be kicked out of the school, young Manners. Besides, it would be rotten!"

"Would it?" growled Reggie.

"Yes, it would, really, Manners minor. 'Tain't



"Feeding the animals! Who's feeding the animals?"

Half-a-crown has been awarded to E. Bach, 30, Byrom Street, Todmorden, Lancs.

the right thing to hit a man of his age, wotever 'e's done."

"He hit me."

"Ye-es, I know; but you're only a kid! You see, a—a chap 'as to respect a master, you know, though he ain't a good sort. Look at some of the fellers—like Grundy of the Shell, f'rinstance. Grundy could knock Mr. Linton into a cocked hat if he liked, but he lets Linton cane him."

"I wouldn't!"

"You see, it's what they call discipline," said Joe. "Backin' up against the masters ain't considered playin' the game, not to that extent. Master Tom would tell you so in a minute. If it was a jape, I'm on—such as puttin' glue in his slippers. But not 'ittin' 'im; that's a bit too thick."

"You won't help me, then?"

"I couldn't, kid, and no more could any feller. You'd better give up the idea," said Joe, in alarm. "You'll be flogged."

"I don't care!"

"Ave you ever bin flogged?" asked Joe.

"Of course not!"

"Oh, that explains! If you 'ave you wouldn't want it a second time. I've seen a chap flogged, and it curled 'im up. Worse than what Selby gave you last night—ten times worse."

Reggie shuddered a little. Certainly he did not want that.

"But he wouldn't know who it was," he said. "In the dark—"

"Selby's sharp," said Joe sagely. "Lots of fellers think a master don't know things, but it generally turns out somehow that 'e do know."

"Look here, I've got a dog-whip. I got it out of Blake's study. I think it belongs to Herries. You could hold him."

"For goodness' sake chuck up the idea!" said Joe, in great alarm. "Come and 'ave tea and forget all about it. 'Sides, Selby's goin' out this evenin'. I fancy 'e'll cool off then."

And Joe chuckled.

"Going out, is he?" said Reggie. "What time?"

"Dunno! So you can't do it this evenin', you see. Come and 'ave tea, and don't think no more about it."

Reggie shook his head.

"I wish you'd come," said Joe. "Look here, we've got a good spread, and we shan't be interrupted, as Selby's goin' out. We fixed it for jest eight, so that he can't worry us. Wot do you want to 'ang about 'ere in the dark for?"

"I'll come in presently," said Reggie. "Thank you for asking me!"

"Not at all," said Joe. "I wish you'd come now."

"I'll come presently."

Joe Frayne gave it up, and walked away towards the School House through the deep dusk, looking troubled.

For Tom Merry's sake he took an interest in Manners' minor, and he was worried and alarmed about the reckless fag. Joe understood much better than Reggie did what was likely to be the result of such an outbreak on the part of the unruly boy. He was shocked, too, at the spite that was nourished in Reggie's heart. Whatever Mr. Selby had done, there was no justification for bitter malice and revengefulness.

Frayne paused in the passage before going to the Form-room.

After a little mental debate he turned his steps in the direction of the Shell passage.

The Terrible Three were in their study when Joe's little rugged face looked in.

They were at work on their preparation.

"Hallo, kid!" said Tom Merry. "Why aren't you in the Form-room? You'll have Mr. Selby down on you."

"Selby's going out," said Joe. "We've 'ad prep early, an' it's hover now. I come 'ere to speak to Master Manners."

Manners looked up from his work.

"Go ahead!" he said.

Joe flushed.

"It's about young Reggie," he said. "I—I don't know whether I ought to tell you, but he's got a fool idea in his 'ead, and I'm afraid it's goin' to cause 'im trouble. If you could—could speak to 'im, Master Manners—"

Manners rose.

"Where is he, Joe?"

"Under the helms in the quad."

"What on earth's he doing out there in the dark?" exclaimed Lowther.

"I—I—nothin'; only I think if Master Manners was to speak to 'im, it might do some good!" stammered Joe.

"I think I can guess what it is," said Manners quietly. "Thank you for coming to me, Joe. You're a good kid!"

"I shouldn't like 'im to git flogged," said Joe. Manners quitted the study quickly.

Joe followed more slowly. He had felt that Manners ought to be told, so that he could look after his minor.

"Shall we come, Manners?" called out Tom Merry.

"No; better not!"

"What's the young idiot up to now, I wonder?" said Lowther, when he was left alone in the study with Tom Merry.

"Goodness knows. I suppose we should do more harm than good. He's an obstinate little beggar."

"If he were my minor—" began Lowther. He did not finish, but his look was eloquent.

The chums of the Shell went on with their work.

CHAPTER 10.

Too Late!

MANNERS hurried along the passage to the stairs.

His brows were knitted. He had little doubt of what was the matter.

Talbot of the Shell was in the Hall, talking to

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Kangaroo, and Manners paused a moment to speak to them.

"Has Selby gone out, do you know?" he asked.

Talbot nodded.

"Yes, a couple of minutes ago!"

"Thanks!"

Manners ran out into the quadrangle.

The two Shell fellows looked after him in surprise.

Kildare of the Sixth, who was standing at the notice-board a short distance away, also glanced at him.

Manners' knitted brow and hurried manner struck him as odd.

Manners ran down the steps and into the quadrangle. He knew that Reggie had a wild scheme in his head for revenge on the Form-master. Reggie was lurking under the elms in the darkness, and Mr. Selby had just gone out, and then there was Joe's warning.

Manners realised that the trouble he had feared was probably imminent, and that not a moment was to be wasted.

It was very dark in the quad.

Manners ran along the path, breathing hard.

From the direction of the big, shadowy elms there came a sudden uproar. A series of loud shrieks, followed by a heavy fall, then a sound as of beating a carpet.

Manners' heart throbbed. Through the darkness rang the well-known voice of Mr. Selby.

"Help! Help!"

Manners ran on.

The sound of blows suddenly ceased, and was followed by footsteps. Somebody was fleeing



"Great Scott!" exclaimed Blake. Reggie's back was scored and lashed. "The awful wettah, to tweek a kid

from the scene of the attack. Manners could guess who it was.

Under the elms, Mr. Selby was still shrieking. Crash!

Right into Manners dashed a fleeing form, and he threw out his right arm and grasped it.

There was a violent struggle.

"Reggie!" panted Manners.

The dim figure ceased to struggle.

"Oh, it's you, Harry!"

"What have you done?"

The fag's face gleamed white in the gloom; his eyes were burning.

"I've paid him out!"

"Reggie!" groaned Manners.

"Let me go! You fool, they'll find me! Let me go!" said Reggie in a hoarse whisper.

Manners felt his brain reeling. He had come too late to prevent the outrage. His only resource now was to save his brother, if possible, from the consequences of it.

"Don't go towards the House, you young fool!" he whispered. "You'll be spotted as soon as you get into the light!"

"But I—"

"Cut round the back, and get into a window! Get to the Form-room as quick as you can, and don't say a word!"

"Keep it dark, Harry!"

"Of course—of course! Run for it!"

The fag, panting, disappeared into the darkness. Manners stood almost overcome. Under the elms, Mr. Selby was screaming for help. From the School House a dozen fellows were dashing in alarm.

"What's the row?"



...red with deep, red marks, showing how cruelly the cane had
...a kid like that!" said Arthur Augustus.

"Who's calling?"

"What's the matter?"

"Bai Jove! That's Selby's voice!"

"He's under the trees! Come on!"

"Help, help!"

"Hullo! Who's this?"

"Manners!"

Kildare's grip fell on Manners' shoulder. He swung the Shell fellow round, and peered grimly into his white face in the gloom.

"What's happened to Mr. Selby, Manners? Where is he?"

"I—I don't know!" stammered Manners.

"Here he is!" shouted a voice. "Bring a light!"

Fellows were crowding up from all quarters.

Mr. Selby's frantic yells were heard all over the school, and fellows were pouring out of the New House, on the other side of the quadrangle, as well as from the School House.

"Here he is!" It was Figgins' voice that shouted under the dark trees. "Get a light here, somebody!"

"Bai Jove! I've got a torch, deah boys!"

"Hurry up!"

Kildare's grasp was still on Manners' shoulder as the captain of St. Jim's hurried to the spot.

Manners went with him perforce.

D'Arcy had turned on the light of his electric torch. It gleamed upon Mr. Selby's pale and agitated face.

Figgins of the Fourth was kneeling on the path, supporting the Form-master.

Mr. Selby had ceased to shriek now; he was panting and gasping, evidently in a state of shaken nerves.

"What has happened, sir?" asked Kildare.

"I—I have been attacked—suddenly attacked in the darkness!" panted Mr. Selby. "I was hurled down and struck with a whip!"

"Good heavens!"

"My only hat!" said Blake. "Who the merry dickens—"

"Couldn't have been a St. Jim's fellow," said Darrell of the Sixth. "That's impossible. Some tramp—I'll see if the gates are closed."

"The gates must be closed at this hour!" muttered Kildare.

Darrell ran towards the gates as Mr. Selby was helped to his feet.

The Form-master was trembling in every limb from pain and passion and excitement.

Kildare had released Manners now.

Manners stood, pale and sick at heart. He alone knew who had assaulted the Form-master, and it was borne in upon his mind that he would be questioned.

Kildare's suspicious looks could mean nothing else. He would be questioned—and he knew!

Darrell came back.

"The gates are locked," he said.

"It was nobody from outside," said Mr. Selby in trembling accents. "It was not a man who attacked me. I could not see him, but I know it was a boy. I was felled by the suddenness of the attack, and then he lashed me with a whip. It was a boy of this school!"

"Better let us help you indoors," said Kildare.

Kildare and Darrell helped the unfortunate Form-master towards the House.

The juniors followed, in a buzz of wonder.

"Trouble for somebody!" Figgins murmured to Blake.

"Well, the chap ought to be flogged, whoever

he is!" said Blake. "Selby is rather a beast, but that's a bit past the limit!"

"Yaas, wathah! It's fwightfully diswespectful to thwash a Form-mastah!" said D'Arcy. "I—I hope—" The swell of St. Jim's turned quite pale. "Bai Jove! That young ass Wally—you wemembah he went for Selby once, aifah bein' tweeked vewy woughly!"

Arthur Augustus ran to the School House. He headed for the Third Form Room at top speed, a prey to the keenest anxiety.

As he reached the Form-room door, a fag reached it from the opposite direction from the back of the House. It was Manners minor.

"Is Wally here, Weggie?" gasped Arthur Augustus.

"Wally? I don't know——"

"Somethin' feahful has happened!"

Arthur Augustus tore open the Form-room door and rushed in.

A crowd of fags were gathered before the Form-room fire, and there was a smell of cooking.

The fags looked round in surprise as D'Arcy rushed in breathlessly.

Reggie sidled in, unnoticed, after him.

"Wally——"

"Hallo, cocky!" said D'Arcy minor. "Have you come to tea, and feel afraid that all the herrings are gone?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"No, you young ass! Have you been out in the quad?"

"Not for an hour," said Wally. "What's the row? What was all that yelling about, too—a New House raid?"

"Mr. Selby has been attacked and thwashed in the quad."

"My only Aunt Jane!"

"I feahed that you might have had a hand in it, you weekless monkey!" gasped Arthur Augustus.

Wally chuckled.

"Well, I haven't. But good luck to the chap, whoever he was! Selby has wanted thrashing for a long time!"

"Hear, hear!" said the fags, in cordial agreement.

"Oh crikey!" said Joe Frayne.

He said no more, however. He knew who must have done it, but his lips were sealed. Not even to his chums in the Third would he breathe a syllable of what he knew.

Arthur Augustus quitted the Form-room, greatly relieved. His fears for his minor had proved unfounded. But the news had not brought a shock of horror to the Third, such as any other junior Form at St. Jim's would have felt in like circumstances.

It was Mr. Selby's own fault if his pupils hailed the news with glee.

"Kids," said Wally, looking round, "I don't know who's biffed Selby, and I don't want to know; but three cheers for him, and more power to his elbow!"

And the Third Form gave the cheers heartily—which would have been very unpleasant for Mr. Selby if he could have heard!

CHAPTER 11.

The Head Inquires!

MR. SELBY had been assisted to the Head's study.

Dr. Holmes had been alarmed by the cries from the quadrangle, and he was almost

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petrified at the sight of the Third Form master, pale and panting, leaning on Kildare and Darrell.

"In Heaven's name, what has happened?" he exclaimed.

Mr. Selby sank into a seat.

He was breathless.

"Mr. Selby has been attacked in the quadrangle, sir," said Kildare quietly. "Someone pushed him over and attacked him with a whip or a stick."

"Good heavens!"

"I leave the matter in your hands, Dr. Holmes!" gasped Mr. Selby. "You see how I have been treated!"

"Surely no boy of this school——"

"The gates were locked, sir."

Dr. Holmes' brow grew grim and dark.

"I shall inquire into the matter at once," he said. "Rely upon it, Mr. Selby, that a terrible example shall be made of the miscreant. Has he been discovered, Kildare?"

"No, sir."

"You saw nothing of him?"

"Nothing, sir, in the dark."

"Kindly make inquiries at once as to what boys were out of the Houses. Mr. Ratcliff will lend you every assistance as to the New House. Make, also, a search in the quadrangle; it is possible that the miscreant may have left some traces."

"Yes, sir."

The two prefects quitted the study.

In the passage there was a buzzing crowd.

Kildare glanced round for Manners, but he had gone to his study.

Darrell fetched a torch, and a search was made under the trees.

In the Head's study Mr. Selby sat and gasped. Now that the matter was over, and he was safe again, he was a little ashamed of the terror he had shown. But the attack in the dark had been sufficient to try any nerves.

He was not very much hurt, either, when he came to think of it. His overcoat had taken the force of the blows. Only one, which had caught him across the face, had really hurt. It had left a red streak down the face and across the chin. He rubbed it very tenderly.

But it was the indignity, more than anything else, that ruffled the Form-master. He had bestowed numberless thrashings in his time; but receiving one was altogether a different matter. It was said of old that it was more blessed to give than to receive, and this particularly applied to thrashings.

"I cannot say how sorry I am by this unparalleled occurrence, Mr. Selby," said the Head.

"The punishment shall be equal to the offence when the delinquent is discovered. It cannot be a matter of more than a few minutes, I hope."

"I hope not!" gasped Mr. Selby.

"Ah, here is Kildare!"

The prefect had returned. Kildare held a dog-whip in his hand.

"That was lying under the elms, sir. I found it there."

"A dog-whip!" said the Head.

"Might have been the instrument," said Mr. Selby.

"I am sure of it, sir. It was dropped by the rascal in his flight, I have no doubt."

"Are you aware of the owner's name, Kildare?" asked Dr. Holmes.

"I think it belongs to Herries of the Fourth, sir."

"Let Herries be brought here at once!"



Who's Who at St. Jim's

(Continued).

JAMES MONTEITH, head prefect of the New House.

LAWRENCE, EDGAR.—One of the three scholarship juniors of Study No. 5, New House—Redfern and Owen being the

other two. All came to St. Jim's together, and soon became known as the New Firm. A straightforward and steady chap, and an all-round sportsman. Good at football and cricket, but not quite good enough to command a regular place in the school junior eleven. Age 14 years 11 months. Form, Fourth.

LEFEVRE, PHILIP.—Captain of the Fifth Form, and a genial, kind-hearted fellow. Has the welfare and dignity of the Fifth at heart, but doesn't get a great deal of support. An excellent footballer and cricketer, and plays for St. Jim's first eleven. Age 17 years. School House.

LEVISON, ERNEST.—A cunning, unscrupulous junior with no pretensions to decency. Formerly at Greyfriars, from which school he was expelled. Could be clever at lessons, but is too much of a slacker, preferring gambling and smoking to honest work and play. Is quite skilled in sleight-of-hand tricks and copying handwriting—skill which he often uses to carry out his schemes of revenge. Form, Fourth. School House. Study No. 9. Age 15 years 6 months.

LOWTHER, MONTAGUE.—The irrepressible humorist and punster of the Shell, and one of Tom Merry's closest chums. Always looks on the bright side, and is most to be admired when things are at their blackest. Has a weakness for the stage, and once ran away from St. Jim's to take up acting. Plays for the junior eleven at football and cricket, and is one of the leading lights of the dramatic society. Study No. 10, School House. Age 15 years 11 months.

LUMLEY-LUMLEY, JERROLD.—Son of a millionaire who made his money in America, and one of the most cool and daring fellows at St. Jim's, where he was once known as the "Outsider." Lawless and unruly at first, owing to the peculiar nature of his early upbringing, he has since undergone a complete reformation. He is now true blue, and a popular fellow in the Fourth Form. Study No. 9, School House. Age 15 years 9 months.

MANNERS, HENRY.—An enthusiastic photographer and a member of that famous trio, the Terrible Three. Thoughtful in all he says and does, and a loyal chum and splendid fellow. Good at football and cricket, but has never attained the brilliance of his two chums, Tom

Merry and Monty Lowther, Form, Shell. Study No. 10, School House. Age 16 years.

MANNERS, REGINALD.—Brother of Manners of the Shell and a newcomer to St. Jim's. Spoilt by his parents at home, he expected the same thing in the Third Form, but was quickly disillusioned by the fags. Has plenty of pluck, and atones for his bad start at the school in this week's story. School House. Age 13 years 4 months.

MELLISH, PERCY.—The sneak of the Fourth. One of the weakest and meanest fellows in that Form, and is usually employed as a catspaw by Levison, with whom he has been associated in many shady adventures. An utter toady and spy, and not to be trusted farther than he can be seen. Study No. 9, School House. Age 15 years 2 months.

MERRY, TOM.—The cheery skipper of the Shell, and leader of the Terrible Three. A first-class sportsman, and captain of the St. Jim's junior football and cricket teams. Is an orphan, and his guardian is Miss Priscilla Fawcett, his old governess, who treats him as if he were still a baby. Tom's uncle—a ranch-owner in Arizona—pays his school fees at St. Jim's. Tom's nature is strongly marked by courage and generosity, but his kindness is often imposed upon. Editor of "Tom Merry's Weekly," a school magazine run by the juniors. Study No. 10, School House. Age 16 years.

MONTEITH, JAMES.—Head prefect of the New House. A good fellow at heart, but inclined to be selfish and imperious. Has had many tiffs with Kildare in the past, but now backs him up loyally. A member of St. Jim's football and cricket teams. Form, Sixth. Age 17 years 5 months.

MULVANEY, PATRICK.—A good-natured senior in the Sixth, and sometimes plays for St. Jim's at football. Hails from Ireland. Age 17 years 6 months.

MULVANEY, MICHAEL.—The mischievous minor of the above. Caused a stir with his practical jokes when he first came to St. Jim's. Study No. 4, School House. Form, Fourth. Age 15 years 3 months.

NOBLE, HARRY.—Better known as Kangaroo of the Shell. As his nickname implies, he comes from Australia, and is a splendid sportsman. Shares Study No. 11 in the School House with Glyn and Clifton Dane, the Canadian. Is a regular member of the junior football and cricket teams. Age 15 years 10 months.

(To be concluded next week.)



Jerrold Lumley-Lumley, the one-time "Outsider" of St. Jim's.



Manners minor, who redeems a bad start in the Third.

Kildare left the study, and returned in a few minutes with Herries, who was looking astonished. Dr. Holmes fixed his stern glance upon the Fourth Former.

"Is that whip your property, Herries?"

Herries looked at him.

"Yes, sir."

"Are you the person who assaulted Mr. Selby?"

Herries jumped.

"I, sir? No, sir! Certainly not!"

"Your whip appears to have been used."

"I didn't use it, sir."

"Did you lend it to anyone?"

"No, sir."

"Then how came it on the scene of the outrage?"

"I don't know, sir."

"Were you in the quadrangle at the time?"

"No, sir."

"Where were you?"

"In my study, sir, doing my preparation."

"Was anyone with you?"

"Blake, Dig, and D'Arcy, sir. We were all doing our prep," said Herries. "We came down when we heard Mr. Selby yelling—I mean, calling for help, sir."

"Call Herries' studymates, Kildare."

Kildare looked out into the passage.

"Blake, Digby, D'Arcy!" he called out.

The three juniors entered.

"Blake, Herries states that he was in your study when the outrage upon Mr. Selby occurred. Do you bear out his statement?"

"Certainly, sir," said Blake, in wonder. "We were doing our prep; we usually are at this time."

"Yaas, wathah, sir! Hewwies' statement is quite cowweet. I twust, sir, that you do not."

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considah that Hewwies might have been concerned in thwashin' Mr. Selby?"

"I am inquiring into the matter, D'Arcy."

"Vewy well, sir; but I should like to wemak that it is uttaly imposs for any membah of Study No. 6 to be concerned in such a vewy diswepctful pwocceedin'," said Arthur Augustus. "Although we do not like Mr. Selby—"

"What?"

"Although we do not like Mr. Selby—Gwoogh! Stop tweadin' on my foot, you duffah! Although we do not like Mr. Selby, we should nevah dweam of such a thing."

"Shut up!" murmured Blake ferociously.

"I wufuse to shut up, Blake! I desiah to cleah the wputation of Study No. 6 of any possible suspish."

"That will do, D'Arcy. Herries, your dog-whip has been used by the miscreant who assaulted Mr. Selby. Where do you keep it?"

"Anywhere in the study, sir."

"Was it taken away without your knowledge?"

Herries reflected. He was not a quick thinker.

"Yes, sir; I suppose it must have been, because I didn't know it was gone," he replied.

"You do not know who took it away?"

"Oh, no, sir!"

"Very well, that will do, Herries. You may go."

Blake & Co. quitted the study, feeling relieved. They were innocent of all knowledge of the matter certainly, but they felt uneasy in Mr. Selby's presence. It was only too clear that the Third Form master was keenly desirous of punishing somebody, and that he would have been satisfied with very little evidence.

"The owner of the whip appears to have been cleared," said the Head. "Have you ascertained, Kildare, what boys were out of the Houses at the time?"

"I have not inquired in that direction yet, sir, but I am aware that one boy in the Shell was out of the House, and I myself encountered him very near the spot where Mr. Selby was attacked."

Mr. Selby's eyes glittered.

"His name, Kildare?" he exclaimed.

"Manners, sir."

"Manners!" exclaimed the Head. "A very quiet and studious boy—not at all the kind of boy to commit an act of this description."

"No, sir," said Kildare. "I should not have dreamed of suspecting him, but for certain circumstances. If you question him, sir—"

"I may say," said Mr. Selby, "that yesterday I had occasion to punish Manners' young brother, and that may have furnished the motive."

"Ah!" said Dr. Holmes. "Manners minor is, of course, in your Form. Are you aware, Kildare, whether there is any great attachment between the two brothers, such as might lead Manners major into an act of revenge?"

"They seem on bad terms so far as I have noticed them, sir."

"I am sorry for it; but it is a point in Manners' favour, so far as the incident is concerned. What led your thoughts to Manners, Kildare?"

"A few minutes after Mr. Selby went out Manners came downstairs in a great hurry, and inquired whether Mr. Selby had gone. He looked very excited, and ran out into the quad. Within two or three minutes I heard Mr. Selby calling for help."

The Head's face became very grave.

"Manners, at least, must explain his interest in

Mr. Selby's movements," he said. "I shall be astonished if Manners proves to be the author of this outrage. Will you bring him here immediately, Kildare?"

"Certainly, sir!"

And once more Kildare left the study.

CHAPTER 12.

The Blow Falls!

MANNERS was seated at the table in Tom Merry's study, but he was not working. Tom Merry and Lowther had ceased to work, too.

Manners was pale, harassed, and troubled, and his looks alarmed his studymates. He had come back into the room just as Tom and Monty were thinking of going down to inquire into the cause of the disturbance.

He had not answered when they asked him what was the matter. He sat at the table as if stunned.

Tom and Lowther exchanged hopeless looks. Tom rose at last, came round the table, and dropped his hand on Manners' shoulder.

"What's the matter, Manners?" he asked quietly. "Tell us, you duffer. Three heads are better than one."

Manners gave a groan.

"It's all up," he said. "What the pater will say, goodness knows. Look here! You—you remember Reggie was talking some rot in Blake's study last night about getting revenge on Selby?"

"Yes."

"Mind, don't say a syllable—not a word about it! Go and see Blake, and ask him to say nothing—not a whisper."

"But—but why?"

"Selby's been knocked over in the quad and thrashed with a dog-whip."

Tom Merry started in utter stupefaction.

Monty Lowther stared blankly at Manners across the table.

"Great Scott!" said Tom. "It must come out, Manners—it must! They'll turn the whole school inside out to find the chap. It must come out!"

"Don't say a word about Reggie," groaned Manners.

"Of course we won't. But—"

"Honour bright?"

"Honour bright!" said Tom a little indignantly. "Of course! But what do you mean? Do you think we'd give Reggie away?"

"You might—to save me!" said Manners, in a low voice. "But I know you won't break a promise."

"To save you—" stammered Tom Merry.

"I saw Reggie. I ran out to stop him. I guessed what he was up to. Kildare caught me close to the place, and collared me. I could see in his face what he was thinking."

"He—he thought it was you!" groaned Lowther.

"Yes."

"Manners!"

"I could see it in his face, and he's bound to report it to the Head as a prefect," said Manners. "I knew what he meant when he gripped my shoulder. I'm expecting to be called down any minute now. I don't understand why they're so long about it. Get to Blake and give him the hint to keep quiet about Reggie."

"But—but you can't—you shan't! If you're suspected, you've got to tell the truth about it!" almost shouted Tom.

"I shan't tell any lies," said Manners, "but I



"What has happened, sir?" asked Kildare as D'Arcy's torch showed Figgins supporting the fallen Form-master. "I—I have been suddenly attacked in the darkness!" gasped Mr. Selby. "I was hurled down and struck with a whip!"

shan't say what I know. Do you think I'm going to sneak about my own brother?"

"Well, no. But—but—"

"I promised him I'd keep it dark, too. It was rotten of Reggie to do it, but old Selby brought it on himself. You know how he marked Reggie. The little fool couldn't have understood the consequences."

"A flogging, at least," said Lowther—"a flogging for him. But, as you're older, Manners, it means the sack for you. They wouldn't sack a kid of the Third, but they will a Shell fellow. You're not going to have it."

"I'm going to hold my tongue," said Manners, "and you're going to hold yours. If Reggie was sent home in disgrace like that, it would break the pater's heart, I believe."

"No worse than if you're sent home in disgrace, I suppose?" said Lowther hotly. "It's a worse disgrace in your case, as you're older."

Manners smiled bitterly.

"That won't hit the pater so hard," he said.

"But, look here, old chap—"

"Hush!"

There was a knock at the door, and it opened.

Kildare, with a grim face, looked in.

"Follow me to the Head, Manners," he said curtly.

"Yes, Kildare."

"Can we come?" asked Tom Merry.

"No."

Manners followed Kildare down the passage and the stairs. His white face and downcast eyes attracted glances from every fellow he passed.

Arthur Augustus spotted him in the Lower Hall, and gave a jump, and dropped his eyeglass.

"Bai Jove, look at Mannahs!" he muttered.

"It—it can't be Mannahs that did it with the dog-whip, Hewwies?"

"Good lord!" murmured Blake. "He wouldn't do it just because Selby licked his minor, would he?"

Unheeding the startled chums of Study No. 6, Manners followed Kildare into the Head's study.

His white, strained face caught the Head's glance at once, and Dr. Holmes' brow grew darker and sterner. If ever there was guilt in a human face, it seemed to be in Manners' face now.

Mr. Selby's eyes gleamed. One look at Manners was enough for him.

The Third Form master felt that he had found the culprit—and his victim.

"Manners," said the Head, "you are aware of the unprecedented happening of this evening. I have sent for you to inquire if you have any knowledge of it."

Manners did not speak. He had knowledge of it, but knowledge that he intended to keep to himself, whatever might happen.

"A dog-whip was taken from Herries' study and used to assault Mr. Selby," said Dr. Holmes. "Did you take it, Manners?"

"No, sir."

"You deny having attacked Mr. Selby?"

"Yes, sir."

"The boy is evidently lying," said Mr. Selby, in a grinding voice. "His face is enough for me!" Manners' pale face flushed.

"I am not lying," he said, in a low voice. "I did not attack Mr. Selby."

"You will have every chance of proving your innocence, Manners, if you are indeed innocent. You were in the quadrangle at the time?"

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"Yes, sir. Kildare found me there."

"What were you doing there?"

"I had gone out."

"For what purpose?"

Silence.

"You have not answered that question, Manners. I will ask you another. Just after Mr. Selby had left the House, you came downstairs in a hurry, and asked if he had gone?"

"I did, sir. I asked Talbot."

"Kildare heard you ask the question and saw you run out into the quadrangle immediately you had learned that Mr. Selby had gone out. Within two or three minutes, the assault took place."

"Yes, sir."

"Why did you ask that question concerning Mr. Selby's movements?"

No reply.

"How did it concern you whether Mr. Selby had gone out or not?"

Silence.

"Why did you, on hearing that he had gone out, hurry after him?"

The Head paused, but Manners did not speak.

Mr. Selby's face was growing harder and more bitter. The Head's was like a rock.

But the Head, indignant and angry as he was, was just. The unfortunate junior was to have every chance to defend himself. For several minutes there was silence in the study, while he waited for Manners to answer. But no answer came.

"Will you answer me, Manners?" said the Head at last.

"I—I've nothing to say, sir."

"You are aware that by refusing to explain you render it perfectly certain that you were guilty of this attack on Mr. Selby?"

"I suppose it looks like it, sir."

There was another long pause. It was broken by Kildare, who was looking curiously at Manners.

"May I speak, sir?"

"Certainly, Kildare!"

"Manners may have seen another boy in the quadrangle, and may feel bound not to mention it, sir. Most fellows would."

Dr. Holmes pursed his lips.

"That would not explain Manners hurrying out into the quad after Mr. Selby, Kildare. However, I will put the question. Manners, did you see anyone in the quadrangle before help arrived for Mr. Selby?"

"I have nothing to say, sir."

"I command you to answer 'Yes' or 'No'!" exclaimed the Head.

Manners set his lips obstinately.

"Very well!" said the Head, also compressing his lips, his anger at white heat now. "You may go, Manners. You are adjudged guilty upon the clearest evidence of brutally attacking and injuring a Form-master in your school. For that offence you know the punishment. To-morrow morning you will be flogged in public before the assembled school, and immediately expelled. You may go!"

Manners, white as death, went unsteadily from the study.

CHAPTER 13.

The Cross-Roads!

"FLOGGED!" said Wally.

"Sacked! My only hat!"

Joe Frayne had just brought the news into the Third Form Room where Wally & Co. were finishing the herrings.

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The startling happening of the evening, and the punishment bestowed upon their Form-master, had not affected the appetites of Wally & Co. to any perceptible degree.

The herrings were finished up to the last cinder. Reggie Manners was not joining in the feast. He was seated apart, among the forms, looking at a book. But he was not reading. After the excitement of his wild and reckless deed, the reaction had set in, and he felt dispirited and wretched.

The terrible uproar which had resulted from his attack on the Form-master had scared him. He realised clearly enough now the serious nature of what he had done. The severest possible punishment awaited the delinquent when discovered. And how could he be sure of remaining undiscovered? Frayne knew—Frayne, whom he had sneered at, and called a guttersnipe—his major knew—his brother, whom he had flouted and disregarded. Half a dozen fellows in Study No. 6 knew enough to enlighten them when they recalled his sulky threats.

The miserable fag was in an unenviable state of mind and nerves when Joe Frayne brought the exciting news to the fags in the Form-room.

"Flogged! Sacked!" said a dozen voices, echoing the news on all sides; and Reggie dropped his book, and sat bolt upright.

"'Orrid, ain't it?" said Joe.

Reggie ran forward.

"Who's going to be flogged and sacked?" he exclaimed breathlessly.

"The chap who biffed old Selby," said Joe.

"But—but they haven't found him."

"It's your major," said Frayne.

Manners minor staggered.

"My major! My brother Harry!"

"That's it!" said Frayne, with a very queer look at Reggie. "That's the noos, young Manners! He's been up afore the 'Ead, and the ol' House is a-buzzin' with it! He's goin' to be flogged in the mornin' after prayers."

"Oh!"

"Blessed if I know what Manners major did it for," said D'Arcy minor, puzzled. "Selby isn't his Form-master."

"Might be on young Manners minor's account," said Curly Gibson. "He must have done it for something. 'P'r'aps because Selby walloped young Manners last night. I'm sorry he's found out!"

"Same here!" said Wally heartily. "It's rotten! Poor old Manners! He was a decent sort, though he was only a Shellfish!"

Reggie Manners left the Form-room, and Frayne followed him quietly, and stopped him in the passage. Reggie looked at him with terrified eyes.

"It wasn't Manners major who did it," said Joe, in a low voice.

"I know."

"It was you!"

"Hush!"

"I knowed there was somethin' on when you come sneakin' into the Form-room after D'Arcy. And I knowed what you was up to. I told your major and he came to stop you," said Joe.

"You—you fool! It would have been all right if he hadn't come!"

"If he'd been a minute or two quicker, it wouldn't 'ave 'appened," said Joe. "But this wasn't his fault, nor mine. Why did you do it, arter what I warned you? Now, what are you goin' to do?"

"I—I don't know. You—you won't—"

Joe's lip curled.
"I shan't say nothin', if that's what you mean. I ain't a sneak!"

Manners minor panted with relief.
"But I'd be cut into little pieces afore I'd let another chap take my gruel, and that chap my brother, if I 'ad one," said Joe. "You know what you oughter do. There ain't no need fur me to tell you, young Manners."

And Frayne went back to the Form-room without waiting for a reply.

Reggie, feeling dizzy and sick, crept away to Tom Merry's study. He knew that he would find his brother there. He found all the three there, looking in the depths of misery.

Tom Merry and Lowther gave the miserable fag bitter looks; they could not help it. Manners did not. The blow that had fallen upon him was too heavy for reproaches to be any solace.

"I—I want to speak to you, Harry," stammered Manners minor.

Tom Merry gave Lowther a look, and the two quitted the room, leaving the brothers alone.

"I—I've just heard," said Reggie, in a shaking voice. "Harry, is it true you—you are going to be—?" His voice trailed off.

"Flogged?" said Manners dully. "Expelled. Yes."

"But—but you haven't done anything."

"They think I have."

"But why? Because you were there?"

"Yes; and other reasons."

"You could have told—"

"Don't be a young ass," said Manners roughly; "and don't blub. It's all right for you. You won't miss me much when I'm gone, anyway. You'll be able to smoke without getting your silly ears clouted, too."

"I—I say, I—I'm sorry, Harry."

"Sorry enough to own up and tell the truth?" said Manners sarcastically.

Reggie shuddered.

"I—I couldn't face the Head. I—I couldn't face the flogging. I thought that nothing would come out. The beast couldn't see me in the dark. If—if you hadn't come, it would have been all right. Why did you come there at all?" muttered Reggie passionately. "Why couldn't you leave me alone?"

"You young fool!" said Manners. "Do you think a thing like that could happen without a chap being punished? They've fixed on me, as it happens; but if they hadn't, they'd have sifted and sifted till they got somebody. It might have been Herries, as you used his dog-whip, and it seems you were imbecile enough to drop it there. Or it might have been young D'Arcy, as he's known to have gone for old Selby once before. Most likely they'd have fixed on you. Half a dozen fellows knew you were gassing about what you'd do, and something would have come out. You'd have been bound to be spotted in the long run. If they couldn't find a chap, they'd make every fellow account for every minute of his time this evening. And where would you come in, then?"

"But—but—"

"But it's all right now; you're safe. They've got a victim," said Manners bitterly. "Selby doesn't care much who it is, so long as somebody gets it in the neck. You'd better pull yourself together a bit, though, as chaps will guess things from your face. Or perhaps they'll put it down to grief for me, though," added Manners, with bitter irony.

Reggie shuddered again. His brother's tone

cut him like a lash. This was the brother he had disliked and flouted, whose warnings he had despised, whom he had taken delight in defying and disregarding. One word from his brother was enough for justice to be done, and punishment to fall upon the guilty shoulders. And Manners would have died before he would have uttered that word.

The utter misery and wretchedness in Reggie's face touched Manners' heart a little, and his look changed, and became more kindly.

"Don't blub, kid, for goodness' sake!" he said. "It's done now, and can't be helped. I've got to stand it, and—the pater would think I ought to, I think. I'm the elder. You were bound to get bowled out if I hadn't chipped in."

"What's that you said about D'Arcy minor?" muttered Reggie. "You said he went for Selby once—"

"Yes; and might have been suspected this time if Kildare hadn't spotted me, poor little beast!"

"But he—he wasn't expelled?"

"No; flogged."

"Then why are they going to expel you?"

"I'm older, you young ass! It's different with a kid in the Third. I'm in the Shell, and I'm supposed to have more sense."

A strange expression came over Reggie's face.

"Then they wouldn't expel me if they knew?" he said.

"I don't know; most likely not, but you'd get the flogging. What do you mean? Not thinking of owning up, are you?" said Manners sarcastically.

He burst into a bitter laugh at the thought.

"I—I'll get out, if you're only going to say rotten things to me," said Reggie, with quivering lips.

"Do you want me to say nice things, when I'm going to be flogged and booted out of St. Jim's? I don't feel up to saying nice brotherly things. I don't feel very brotherly just now," growled Manners.

Reggie went out without replying, and closed the door.

He passed Tom Merry and Monty Lowther in the passage, and they did not speak to him. But as he reached the landing he paused. Then he slowly turned towards Study No. 6.

(Continued on next page.)



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CHAPTER 14. The Right Stuff!

"IMPOSS, deah boys!"

Arthur Augustus spoke with conviction. Blake, Herries, and Digby snorted in chorus.

"Of course young Manners did it!" growled Blake. "Old Manners is keeping it dark, and I suppose we've got to keep it dark, too. But it's rotten!"

"Imposs. I have made a fwiend of that young person, and have talked to him severely, and you fellows have acknowledged that he has impowed wonderfully. I wefuse to admit that my young fwiend would be such a misewable skunk as to wemain silent, and allow old Mannahs to suffah in his place. I am quite suah that if Weggie had done it he would have owned up."

"Catch him!" said Herries, with another snort. "The young villain took my dog-whip, too. Of course, I'd have lent it to anyone with pleasure to wallop Selby. But now Manners is cornered, the little beast ought to own up; but he won't."

"Wats! Bai Jove, come in, Weggie!" Reggie's white face looked in at the doorway. Blake & Co. softened a little at the sight of him. The young rascal was suffering for his sins—there was no doubt about that.

Reggie looked at them timidly. "C-can I come in?" he faltered. "Yaas, deah boy. We were just talkin' about you," said Arthur Augustus.

"I-I heard you," said Reggie, his cheeks flushing.

"Then you know our opinion of you," grunted Herries.

"Yes; I-I know." "Pway don't be downhearted, Weggie. I am convinced that you are an honouvable chap, and uttally incapable of the howwid meanness of lettin' your bwothah suffah for you, if it was you who did it."

Reggie's pale face was crimson. "Will you come with me, D'Arcy?" "Certainly, deah boy. Where?" "I-I want to go to the Head, and—and I'm afraid to go alone," groaned Reggie. "I-I wish I hadn't done it now."

Arthur Augustus jumped. "Gweat Scott! W-was it you thwashed old Selby, affah all?"

"Yes," mumbled Reggie. "Oh, bai Jove! But you haven't owned up," said Arthur Augustus, in perplexity. "If you did it, how is it you haven't owned up—now old Mannahs is gettin' it in the neck? That is vewy wemarkable."

"You silly ass!" hooted Blake. "He hasn't owned up, because he's a sneaking little cad, and wants to skulk behind old Manners, and get off. Can't you understand?"

"I certainly wefuse to undahstand anythin' of that sort, Blake. I am sure that Weggie is incapable—"

"Will you come with me, D'Arcy?" groaned Reggie. "I-I shan't be able to do it if I stop to think about it—I know that."

"What are you goin' to do, Weggie?" "Tell the Head."

Arthur Augustus smiled with satisfaction, and turned his eyeglass witheringly upon his study-mates.

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"What do you say now, you duffahs?" he demanded triumphantly.

"I say Reggie had better buck up before he changes his mind," said Blake.

"Yaas, pewwaps there is somethin' in that. Come on, Weggie! Wely on me to see you through!"

Arthur Augustus took Reggie's limp arm and led him away. In his satisfaction at this proof that his judgment was right Arthur Augustus smiled cheerfully, rather forgetting the painful ordeal that lay before his young friend.

Blake and Herries and Digby blinked at one another.

"Well, my hat!" said Blake. Arthur Augustus piloted his young friend triumphantly to the Head's study.

There was a murmur of voices in that dreaded apartment, the deep tones of Mr. Railton mingling with the Head's fainter voice.

Arthur Augustus raised his hand to knock, and Reggie jerked him back.

"Bai Jove! What's the mattah, Weggie?"

"D-don't!" panted Reggie. "Wait a minute!"

"Bettah get it ovah, deah boy"

"Wait—wait a minute!" groaned Reggie. "I—I can't go in! I—I can't—I can't be flogged! I can't—I—I—"

Arthur Augustus raised his hand again and knocked firmly at the door.

"Buck up, Weggie!" he murmured. "You're doin' the wight thin', you know; and when a chap's doin' the wight thin' he should go full steam ahead."

"Come in!" D'Arcy opened the door and walked in, still holding Reggie's arm.

The fag, his heart thumping almost to suffocation, had to follow him in. Both Mr. Railton and the Head looked at them in surprise.

"What does this mean?" said Dr. Holmes sternly.

"Pway excuse this intwusion, sir—"

"I shall not excuse you, D'Arcy, unless you can give a very good reason for it," said the Head tartly. "Why have you brought Manners minor here?"

"I have not bwrought him, sir. He came of his own accord, and I merely came with him to back him up," explained Arthur Augustus. "Weggie has somethin' to tell you, sir."

"Indeed!"

"Go it, Weggie! Dr. Holmes is waitin' for you. Wemembah you are doin' the wight thin', and showin' that you are the wight stuff, deah boy."

"What can this mean?" said Mr. Railton. Reggie licked his dry lips, with a frightened glance at the two stern faces.

"I—I—I—" he stammered.

"Have you anything to say to me, Manners minor?"

"Yes, sir. D'Arcy knows—I—I—"

"You need not be afraid, my boy," said the Head kindly. "Pray speak out quite frankly. What is the matter?"

"I—I did it, sir!" gasped Reggie.

"You did what?"

"It, sir—I did it: It was because he thrashed me, sir. I'm sorry I di' it now. I—I—"

"What is the boy alluding to, D'Arcy?"

"Thwashin' Mr. Selby, sir," said the swell of St. Jim's cheerfully.

"What!"



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"Yaas, wathah, sir! Findin' that his bwothah was goin' to be punished, Weggie vewy pwopahly wosolved to own up, sir. As an honouwable chap he could do nothin' else."

"Is it possible," ejaculated the Head, "that that child attacked Mr. Selby?"

"Yaas, wathah, sir!" said D'Arcy. "Lots of us knew it; but we couldn't give him away, of course. Old Mannahs asked ewevybody to keep it dark."

"This is extraordinary," said the Head. "Manners minor, if you really did this wicked thing, why did you do it?"

"He—he licked me, sir," faltered Reggie. "I—I was never licked at home, sir. And—and ewevybody said he was a beast to lick me so hard, sir, only because I wouldn't tell tales. The fellows had been ragging me for telling tales; and then Mr. Selby ordered me to, and—and I wouldn't, and—and—"

The fog's voice broke, and he burst into tears. Dr. Holmes' stern brow relaxed.

"I shall inquire into all the circumstances of this matter very strictly," he said. "For the present you may take Manners minor away, D'Arcy."

"Yaas, sir."

Arthur Augustus marched his young friend out of the study.

Dr. Holmes looked at Mr. Raitton.

"What do you think of this, Mr. Raitton?"

"I think, sir, that it is a case for a merciful view to be taken," said the Housemaster. "I have noticed that boy already, and remarked that he shows every sign of a bad home-training. Nothing, of course, can excuse his attack upon his Form-master. For that he should be severely punished. But—but the unfortunate lad was in a difficult position. If his Form-fellows had been punishing him for tale-bearing, and then his Form-master ordered him to repeat the same offence—for it is clear the boy is speaking the truth—some allowance must be made for him. Mr. Selby does not appear to have acted judiciously."

Dr. Holmes nodded.

"I shall speak to Mr. Selby, and we will see," he said.

Manners jumped up as Tom Merry and Monty Lowther rushed into the study.

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PEN PALS COUPON

5-2-38

For a moment he thought his chums had taken leave of their senses; for they seized him, yanked him out of his seat, and waltzed him round the study table, chortling and cheering like a pair of lunatics.

"What the thunder—" began Manners, dragging himself away at last. "What the thumping dickens—"

"Reggie's owned up."

"Impossible!"

"Fact, my infant! Owned up like a little brick."

Manners drew a deep breath.

"And faced the flogging—the sack!" he said. "I—I wish he'd held his tongue. The pater—"

"No flogging, and divil a sack!" said Monty Lowther. "The Head's had Selby in his study, jawing; and I fancy it's come out about that awful licking Reggie had, and why he had it. Anyway, Reggie's been caned by Selby, and that's the end of the matter. Floggings are off, and you're to go to the Head and be jawed for not telling him the facts."

"Well, I don't mind that," grinned Manners.

Manners was only five minutes in the Head's study, and he came out looking quite cheery.

A crowd of juniors greeted him joyfully when he emerged; among them Reggie, rubbing his hands, but quite happy.

Mr. Selby had laid the cane on with even more than his usual vim; but Reggie was happy, all the same.

The clouds had rolled by. Among the buzz of congratulations poured upon Manners, the voice of Arthur Augustus could be heard.

"I twust, deah boy, that in futuah you will wely on a fellow's tact and judgment. I remarked that Mannahs minah was the wight stuff, and I wathah think you will have to own up that he is the wight stuff—what?"

And ewevy fellow in the School House was willing to admit that Manners minor, with all his faults—and their name was legion—was the right stuff!

(Next Wednesday: "BIG BUSINESS GUSSEY!" You simply must read what happens when Gussy sets out to furnish Study No. 6 on a pound! It's a riot! Order your GEM early.)

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BUNTER'S VENTRILOQUISM PUTS THE FAMOUS FOUR ON FIGHTING TERMS!

Bunter the Mischief-Maker!

By FRANK RICHARDS.

(Author of the grand long yarns of Greyfriars appearing every Saturday in our companion paper, the "Magnet.")

WHAT HAPPENED LAST WEEK.

Angry at not getting a place in the Remove football team to play the Upper Fourth, Bulstrode enlists the aid of Bunter to help him get revenge on Harry Wharton & Co.

Bunter has discovered that he can ventriloquise, and Bulstrode, learning his secret, bribes him to cause trouble by means of his ventriloquial powers among the Famous Four. Bunter starts a row between Bob Cherry and Nugent, but they make it up.

Meanwhile, Wun Lung has been bullied by Ionides, and the Chinese junior plays ghost to get his own back on the Greek Sixth Former. Wearing a hideous Chinese mask painted with phosphorus, he descends in the night—to meet Mr. Capper in the passage! But the master is scared away, and Wun Lung goes on to Ionides' study.

(Now read on.)

The Curling-Pins!

HERACLES IONIDES, the Greek Sixth Former of Greyfriars, was asleep. A glimmer of fire was still in his grate, and shadows played to and fro in the room. The Sixth Formers at Greyfriars had bed-room and study combined. Ionides' room was the best-furnished in the Sixth. He had plenty of money, and he spent it carelessly enough.

The bed was in an alcove, half-hidden by curtains. The grate was on the opposite wall, and Ionides, with the curtains looped back, could watch the fire as he went to sleep. There was a comforting warmth in the room, and a lingering trace of scent in the air.

Ionides had a great taste for perfumes. He scented his hair, as well as spending almost as much time on it as a girl. When he went to bed it was after carefully applying cosmetics to his face for his complexion, and—as Wun Lung of the Remove had discovered—putting his locks into curling-pins.

He was sleeping soundly enough, but suddenly, in the quiet of the night, he awoke. He looked round him lazily, and caught the red glow in the grate.

There was a strong current of cold air in the room.

Ionides started. He knew that the door must be open, and he knew that he had closed it securely enough before turning in.

Someone had entered his room. He did not feel alarmed for the moment. He was unpopular with the juniors, and they had played tricks on him before. He had very little doubt that it was a junior who had thrown his door open and entered.

He sat up in bed, his eyes glittering. The next moment he gave a gasp of affright. There was a phosphorescent glow in the room, and in the midst of the glow the deathly face and burning eyes looked forth, and Ionides saw the same

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fearful vision that had so soared Mr. Capper on the stairs.

For some seconds the Greek gazed at it, too terrified to move. Then, with a wild howl of terror, he leaped from the bed and made a spring to the door. The terrible vision seemed to swoop towards him as he reached the door, and the Greek dashed frantically out into the passage.

He was yelling out wildly in his fright, and his voice rang through the passage. There was a sudden bump in the darkness, and a sharp exclamation from Mr. Capper. The Fourth Form master was returning to the scene. He had mastered his fright, and, annoyed at himself for being so startled by what he knew on reflection must be a trick, he had come to investigate, taking a walking-cane from the hall in passing, in case he should find the practical joker.

The terrified Greek ran right into him, and Mr. Capper grasped him by the collar of his pyjamas.

"Ah, so I have caught you!"

"Help!"

"Swish, swish, swish!"

"Ow—ow—ow!"

Heracles Ionides wore elegant pyjamas, of the most artistic design. They were very pretty to look at, and very warm for a winter night; but they did not form much of a protection from a lashing cane.

Ionides hopped and squirmed in pain.

"Ow! Leave off! Help!"

"Dear me!" gasped Mr. Capper. "It is Ionides! A Sixth Former playing such an absurd trick! Amazing! Disgusting!"

"Swish, swish, swish!"

A Sixth Former was not supposed to be caned, even by the Head; but in the circumstances Mr. Capper let himself go, and he made active play with the cane.

Doors were opening, lights were gleaming on all sides. A diminutive form, with a curious mask hidden under a buttoned jacket, glided unnoticed from Ionides' room in the dark. Wun Lung rejoined the juniors on the stairs. Fellows were coming out on all sides now, and the Removites did not hesitate to show themselves.

Heracles Ionides tore himself away from Mr. Capper at last, smarting and tingling where the cane had lashed. In his anguish he had even forgotten his fright.

"What is this?"

It was a deep voice that asked the question, and there was a hush as Dr. Locke strode on the scene. The Head of Greyfriars looked about him sternly.

"What is the meaning of this disturbance at such an hour?"

"I am sorry, sir," gasped Mr. Capper. "Very sorry that you should have been awakened. I came in late, sir, and as I was going upstairs I was startled by a fearful-looking face, lighted up with phosphorus. I was very much startled.

A GREAT YARN OF SCHOOL, SPORT, AND A "GHOST" THAT MADE A SCENTED DANDY THE LAUGHING-STOCK OF GREYFRIARS!

and when I came to investigate the matter, this boy ran into me and I have punished him, sir. Such an absurd and foolish trick, played by a member of the Sixth Form——"

"Quite right, Mr. Capper. Ionides, how dare you play such a foolish trick!"

"I did not!" yelled Ionides angrily. "I—I saw the same thing in my room. I was awakened by it. And I was startled, and ran out into the passage. Then I was attacked by Mr. Capper and savagely assaulted!"

Mr. Capper looked startled. It dawned upon him that he had been very hasty in jumping to conclusions. The Head looked at him.

"Are you sure that it was Ionides playing the trick, Mr. Capper?"

"I—I certainly thought so, sir," stammered the Fourth Form master. "You see, I—I found him here, in the dark. I imagined——"

"It was somewhat hard on Ionides to be punished in haste," said the Head dryly. "A mistake appears to have been made."

"If there has been a mistake I am very sorry," said Mr. Capper.

Ionides snorted. Mr. Capper's sorrow did not remove the ache and smart from his tingling limbs.

"This trick was doubtless perpetrated by a boy lower in the school," said the Head sternly. "The culprit shall be found and punished. Meanwhile—Boys, this is no laughing matter!"

The Head looked round in amazement and anger.

Some of the boys were grinning, some were laughing—all appeared to be in the throes of suppressed merriment.

"Boys! Silence! How dare you laugh! Wingate, I am surprised to see even you taking part in this unseemly demonstration!"

"Sorry, sir!" gasped Wingate. "But it's too funny, sir! Look at Ionides!"

The Head looked at the Greek. In the excitement he had not given Ionides more than a casual glance. There was plenty of illumination on the scene now, and the Greek was plainly to be seen. Light glimmered on the curling-pins in his hair.

The Head gazed—and gazed again. He could scarcely believe his eyes. The juniors were shouting with laughter, and even Mr. Capper could not resist joining in. Then slowly a smile dawned upon the Head's own severe face.

Ionides, who had forgotten all about the curling-pins, looked round in amazement. He saw that he was the centre of attraction and the cause of all the laughter, but he did not know why. He scowled furiously.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bob Cherry. "What lovely curls!"

"That's where we get our curly hair from!" shrieked Temple.

"Oh, rather!" said Dabney. "What price curling-pins?"

The Greek understood. His face went scarlet, and he rushed into his room and slammed the door.

Long and long the laughter rang in the passage.

The Head himself was laughing—he could not help it—and, encouraged by the fact, the boys simply roared.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Heracles Ionides listened to the ringing laughter as he stood, quivering with rage and shame, in his room.



Ionides looked round in amazement as he saw that he was the cause of all the laughter. He had forgotten the curling-pins in his hair. "Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bob Cherry. "What lovely curls!" The Greek understood then, and his face went scarlet.

"Dear me!" The Head recovered himself. "This is most absurd! Boys, go back to your beds at once."

And the spectators of that curious scene, still chuckling and sniggering, returned to bed. The Famous Four seized Wun Lung and bore him upstairs on their shoulders, the little Chinese grinning contentedly. But before going to bed, Wharton gave him a lecture on the subject of playing ghost, to which Wun Lung listened meekly, and promised to leave that kind of trick severely alone in the future.

Friendship in Danger!

"SNOW!" growled Bob Cherry.

Feathery flakes were descending in the Close at Greyfriars as the chums looked out of the bed-room window in the morning.

Snow was not, as a rule, unwelcome at the school. Snowflights and sliding were exciting and healthy. But just now the juniors were thinking of football.

If the grounds were deep in snow, the fixture with the Upper Fourth could not come off, and the match to which the Removites had been looking eagerly forward would have to be postponed.

"Rotten!" grunted Nugent, as he jumped into his trousers. "Beastly!"

"The rotten beastliness is terrific," said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "But in spite of the snowfulness, the practice of the honourable football will be possible, unless the heaviness of the downfall is——"

"Terrific," said Bob Cherry. "Of course, I suppose a few flakes don't matter. I fancy there's nobody here afraid of a little snow, except, perhaps, Bulstrode."

Bulstrode did not reply. He was looking at Billy Bunter, who was sitting up in bed, and putting his glasses on. Bunter blinked at him inquiringly.

"A feed before brekker, if you like," whispered Bulstrode.

Bunter's eyes gleamed.

"Right you are!"

And keeping the bedclothes up to hide his mouth, the ventriloquist of the Remove began his little game again.

"We can manage to get some practice if it doesn't become any worse," said Wharton, looking out of the window. "There are only a few flakes so far. We can get a run in the Close before breakfast."

"Too jolly cold!"

Wharton looked round quickly. It was Nugent's voice; but Frank, who was tying his shoelaces, did not look up.

"Oh, bosh!" said Bob Cherry. "A run will warm you up, Franky. Don't you start being afraid of the cold and setting a bad example to the team."

"Eh?" said Nugent, looking up. "Who's afraid of the cold?"

"Well, you think it's too cold for a run—"

"Rats! I think a run's a good idea!"

"You've changed your opinion jolly soon, then!"

"I haven't!" said Nugent. "I don't know what you're driving at. Seems to me you're a little bit off your rocker lately, Bob."

And he left the room. As he did so, a voice that anybody could have sworn was his made a parting remark.

"I'm not coming out, and you can hang yourselves!"

"Oh, can we?" exclaimed Bob Cherry hotly.

"Well, of all the pigs, I think Nugent takes the cake!"

Nugent looked into the room again. He had heard Bob's excited tones from the passage, and he was red in the face now.

"What's that, Bob Cherry?"

"I said you're a pig, and I repeat it!"

"Well, you rotter!" said Nugent warmly.

"What have I done now? If you're looking for a thick ear, you're going just the right way to get it."

"If you can give me a thick ear—"

"I'll jolly soon show you!"

"Come on, then!" exclaimed Bob, putting himself into a fighting attitude.

Harry Wharton jumped between them just in time.

"Hold on, you duffers! What do you want to begin rowing for?"

"He called me a pig."

"So you are!"

"Lemme get at the rotter!"

"Shan't! Stand back!"

"Look here, Wharton, get out of the way! This is nothing to do with you."

"You're not going to fight," said Harry quietly. "Don't be such fools. You oughtn't to have said what you did, Nugent."

"I never said anything amiss that I know of."

"Well, I thought it amiss, as well as Bob. Anyway, let it drop. You're not going to start fighting."

"Oh, I don't mind!" said Bob Cherry. "I

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won't call Nugent a pig if he doesn't like too much truth at once."

"Lemme get at him!" roared Nugent.

"Bosh! Come down!"

And Wharton dragged Nugent away and descended the stairs with him. Bob Cherry, looking red and flustered, finished his dressing, and followed. The other fellows had gone down.

Bulstrode and Bunter remained alone in the room. Bunter squirmed out of bed and grinned.

"Jolly good!" exclaimed Bulstrode. "Keep it up! My hat, if it hadn't been for Wharton they'd have been scrapping!"

The Remove ventriloquist chuckled.

"Yes, rather! They won't believe that I can ventriloquise, but perhaps they'll believe it some time. I say, Bulstrode, what about that feed?"

"Oh, come along; you can have it as soon as you like. Only keep it dark about the ventriloquism."

Bunter hurriedly dressed, and he and Bulstrode went downstairs. Several fellows noticed them go into the tuckshop, and noticed Billy Bunter's fat, greasy smile as he came out. For once in a way, Bunter made a moderate breakfast. He only ate twice as much as anybody else.

"Bulstrode feedee Bunter," said Wun Lung thoughtfully. "What his little game, eh? What you tinkee?"

"Oh, they're the opposition now," said Harry Wharton, with a smile. "I suppose Bulstrode is getting up a party on the football question, and he's enlisted the Owl."

He slapped Bunter on the shoulder when he left the dining-room. Bunter looked round irritably.

"Oh, really, Desmond—"

"Chumming up with Bulstrode?" asked Harry, laughing.

"Yes, certainly," said Bunter, with dignity. "There are fellows in the Remove who can appreciate me. Of course, I don't want to drop you fellows altogether. I don't want to be hard on you."

"Thanks awfully."

"But in the circumstances," continued Bunter, more and more dignified at every word, "I am compelled to look elsewhere for my associates, unless you agree to give me a trial at centre-forward."

"Don't be funny, old chap!"

"Then intimate friendship between us is out of the question."

"Oh, he's breaking our hearts!" moaned Bob Cherry. "Don't bring down our budding moustaches with sorrow to the crematorium!"

"You'll see," said Bunter darkly. "Give me a trial, and—"

"But you can't play footer for toffee!" exclaimed Wharton, laughing. "You know you can't, Bunter! Don't be an ass!"

"I know what I know."

"Look here, we'll give you a trial," said Wharton. "Come out now—there isn't much snow. We'll give you a trial, and if you show up all right, we'll shove you into the team."

"Very well, it's a go, and if you do me justice, Wharton, I'll restore you to my friendship."

Bob Cherry fell upon Bunter's neck and hugged him in a transport of delight. Bunter's foot slipped and he went down with a bump, with Bob Cherry sprawling over him. He squirmed and gasped frantically, till Bob rolled off.

"By Jove!" said Bob. "You must have fallen down, Bunter."

Bunter staggered to his feet and blinked angrily at the joker. Then, with his little fat

nose held high in the air, he followed Harry Wharton into the Close.

Bunter's Trial!

THE snow was falling in feathery flakes, but the footballers of the Remove did not allow it to deter them. The ground where the match with the Upper Fourth was to be played on Saturday was already safely under cover of thick layers of straw, and if the weather turned fine again the juniors would be able to play. Meanwhile, a few flakes did not prevent them from punting a football about the Close.

Billy Bunter was in deadly earnest, but the rest of the Remove seemed to be amused by his trial as a centre-forward.

In the Close the juniors formed up into two sides. Wharton took the place of Hurree Singh, and Bunter took Wharton's place at centre. Hurree Singh preferred to remain indoors while the snow was falling. To the native of India the English climate was a hard one. The Nabob of Bhanipur did not like snow.

Billy Bunter, finding himself the centre of the front line, did not know exactly what to do there; but he finally kicked off.

The other eleven, which was composed of Removites, headed by Lacy, rushed at the ball at once, and Bunter was shouldered away, and went reeling in the snow.

He sat down, and when he recovered his breath the juniors were half-way across the Close.

Bunter staggered to his feet. He wiped his spectacles and adjusted them, and blinked after the Removites, who were following the ball.

"Oh, really!" he gasped. "I—I—"

There was a roar.

"Look out!"

The play was coming back towards Bunter.

The Removites, mingled in a crowd, without much semblance to a couple of football teams, were chasing the ball through the snowflakes.

Billy Bunter was in the midst of the crowd in a twinkling. Bob Cherry blundered into him, and sent him flying. Lacy grinned, and shouldered him back, and he was biffed into Micky Desmond.

The Irish junior let Bunter roll to the ground, and as he went down, Russell and Ogilvy stumbled over him.

Bunter sat up and gasped for breath.

"Ow Gr-r-r! Hellup! Ow!"

"On the ball, there!"

The crowd streamed off after the elusive leather, which Ogilvy had lifted a third across the Close with a powerful kick.

Billy Bunter sat up in the snow.

Bulstrode came out with his hands in his pockets, and stopped to stare at the fat junior. He chuckled with amusement.

"Hallo! Run over?" he asked.

"N-no!" gasped Bunter. "Wharton's giving me my trial as a centre-forward for the Form eleven."

Bulstrode burst into a roar.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I'm pretty well winded. I believe the rotters are playing roughly on purpose!" gasped Bunter. "It looks to me like it."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I'm not going to stand it! I'm centre-forward, and I'm going to play!"

And Bunter toddled off to join the footballers again.

A whirl of the crowd caught him, and he went staggering away among the shouting Removites, hardly knowing whether he was on his head or his heels.

"Hold on!" he yelled. "Stop! I—"

"On the ball!"

"Play up, there!"

And Bunter rolled in the snow again, and the juniors rushed over him, hardly noticing that they were treading on the fat junior in their excitement.

Temple, Dabney & Co. of the Upper Fourth came out of the House, and looked on at the scene.

"Come on, you chaps! We'll have their footer!" said Temple.

"Oh, rather!"

A crowd of the Upper Fourth rushed into the melee.

"Look out!" yelled Bob Cherry. "Line up, there!"

In a moment the Removites, instead of being rivals for possession of the leather, were a solid phalanx against the rival Form.

A wild and whirling scramble ensued, and many of the juniors grabbed up handfuls of snow, and began to pelt.

In the furious combat Billy Bunter was alternately trodden on by both parties, till he managed at last to squirm away and escape.

He looked a sorry object as he tottered towards the House. He was smothered with wet and snow from head to foot; he had lost his cap, and his collar was torn out. His spectacles, saved almost by a miracle, were clutched in his hand.

Bulstrode, Skinner, and several other fellows were standing on the steps, and they roared with laughter as he came in.

"Good old footballer," chuckled Skinner. "Are they going to play you in the Form match, Bunter?"

"I'm done with those rotters!" gasped Bunter. "Of course, this was all done on purpose. It's jealousy."

"Of course," said Bulstrode, with a wink at Skinner, "you are out out for a centre-forward. You ought to play in a League team."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I shall catch cold," mumbled Bunter. "I shall have to go and change. Ow!"

And he hurried away, leaving the juniors shrieking with laughter. He changed his clothes before the bell rang for morning classes, and by that time the footballers had come in. Wharton laughed as he met Bunter, who glared indignantly through his spectacles.

"Feeling pretty fit, Bunter?"

"No," said Bunter. "I'm not feeling fit. I'm sorry to see jealousy of a better player than yourself carry you to such lengths, Wharton."

The Remove captain stared.

"What's the matter now?"

"You know jolly well what's the matter. I've been biffed about till I believe I'm bruised all over."

"My dear chap, you must take your chance of that. You asked for it. You couldn't expect us to treat you as if you were made of glass. A chap must expect a rough knock or two at football."

Billy Bunter sniffed.

"The long and short of it is, you don't want me to play in the Form match," he said. "I can see that."

"It's pretty plain for anybody to see. You can't play for toffee, old chap."

"Then you're not going to play me?"

"Of course not, you ass! You don't know how to kick a ball yet."

"There'll be trouble," said Billy Bunter darkly.

But Wharton only laughed.

The Quarrel!

"I DON'T think Bunter will ever make a footballer," grinned Bob Cherry, as the Remove came out of the class-room that morning. "He's been threatening that there'll be trouble if we don't play him as centre-forward; but I fancy there'll be trouble with the Remove Football Club if we do."

"I rather think so," said Harry, laughing. "Bunter is funnier as a footballer than as a hypnotist, or a ventriloquist, I think. By the way, we haven't heard so much of his ventriloquism lately. He hasn't been practising."

"No; I hope he's getting over it. Here he comes with Bulstrode again. Curious how they are chumming up."

"Velly culious," said Wun Lung, who heard the remark. "Meaneef mischief."

"Why, what mischief can it mean?"

"No savvy yet."

Bunter passed the chums of the Remove with his nose in the air. They laughed; Bunter on his dignity was an interesting sight. His dignity would last exactly as long as Bulstrode was inclined to stand him feeds at Mrs. Mumble's, they knew that. Then he would make it up again with the Famous Four. Meanwhile, they were not sorry not to be bothered with the fat junior for a time.

Nugent came last out of the class-room, having been detained for a few minutes by Mr. Quelch. As he came down the passage Bob Cherry's voice proceeded from around the corner.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Pig!"

Nugent flushed scarlet.

His old dispute with Bob Cherry had not been made up, but Wharton's influence had prevented it growing into a quarrel.

He quickened his pace and came round the corner. But found no one there but Bunter and Bulstrode, who were chatting.

"Is Bob Cherry here?" asked Nugent, looking up and down.

"He's gone on."

Nugent ran up the passage. Bob Cherry had reached the hall door with Harry when Nugent caught him by the shoulder and stopped him.

Bob looked round.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!"

He thought for the moment that Nugent only wanted to speak to him. But the red, angry face of his chum surprised him.

"You called out to me in the passage just now," said Nugent angrily, "and I want to tell you that I won't stand it!"

"You won't stand what?"

"Being slanged by you!" exclaimed Nugent savagely. "I've had enough of it. If you can't shut up that topic there'll be trouble!"

"Blessed if I know what you're getting at!"

"You know jolly well."

"I tell you I don't!" exclaimed Bob Cherry.

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angry in his turn. "You seem to me to be in nothing but tantrums lately! I don't know what you're driving at."

"Oh, bosh!"

"Hang it all," said Harry Wharton, looking worried, "are you two going to start rowing again?"

"I'm not going to stand Bob Cherry! I don't want anything more to say to him, and that's flat!" exclaimed Nugent.

"Have your own way," said Bob. "Come on, Harry!"

Wharton hesitated.

"Hold on!" he said. "I don't see—"

"Oh, come on, I say! It's no good arguing with Nugent. He's off his rocker."

"If you go with him, Harry, you needn't come back to me," said Nugent, pale with anger. "You were my chum before Bob Cherry came here. If you give me up for him—"

"He'll be acting like a sensible chap!" said Bob quickly.

Nugent stood looking at Harry without speaking again, but there was an angry determination in his face.

Harry Wharton was sorely puzzled between the two. Nugent was the older chum of them, but Bob Cherry was his friend, too.

"Come on!" said Bob again, pulling Harry by the arm.

"Hold on!" said Harry. "I don't see what you two chaps want to row for. I—"

"Well, we have rowed," said Nugent. "Are you sticking to that rotter or to me?"

Bob Cherry's eyes blazed.

"Who's a rotter?" he demanded.

"You are!"

Bob sprang forward. Harry dragged him back.

"Hold on, Bob!"

"I won't! He'll take that back, or I'll dust up the floor with him!"

Nugent pushed back his cuffs defiantly.

"Come on, then, and start the dusting!" he exclaimed.

Bob Cherry wrenched himself from Wharton's grasp and rushed on. In a moment the two juniors were hammering away.

"Hallo!" exclaimed Bulstrode. "A fight!"

"A fight! A fight!"

The cry was repeated in all quarters, and juniors hurried up from every side. But the hall door was not exactly the place to choose for a fight. The master of the Remove was on the scene in a few moments.

"Stop!"

Mr. Quelch rapped out the word like the report of a gun. The two Removites stopped and separated, still glowering at one another.

Mr. Quelch looked at them sternly.

"How dare you fight here!" he exclaimed.

"Nugent—Cherry, you ought to be ashamed of yourselves! How dare you!"

"Sorry, sir!" muttered Bob Cherry. Nugent did not speak.

"I hope you are sorry. In case there should be any doubt on the point, you can follow me to my study," said Mr. Quelch caustically. "I shall be able to convince myself that your sorrow is genuine."

Without a word the two culprits followed the Form-master into his room.

The juniors crowding outside the door distinctly heard the swishing of the cane and the gasps of the juniors as they received the stinging cuts.

A few seconds later Bob Cherry and Nugent came out of the study, looking very white and

angry. They turned away and walked in different directions. Harry, after a moment's hesitation, followed Nugent.

"Frank!"

Nugent looked round. He had been hurt by the caning. Mr. Quelch knew how to lay it on when he thought that serious punishment was called for. But it was not only that. There was a bitter indignation in Nugent's heart. He felt that Harry ought to have stood by him, instead of hesitating between the two. His glance met Harry's coolly.

"Well?"

"Don't be grumpy, old chap!" said Harry.

"You've nothing against me, at all events."

"I think you might stick to an old friend."

"Well, I'm doing so. Only Bob's a friend, too. And I can't make out yet what the row's about."

"Never mind what it's about. I'm not going to speak to Cherry again. And you can take your choice between us!"

"That's a rotten way to put it. You're both my friends—"

"Stick to him, then!" said Nugent, turning away.

Harry caught him by the arm.

"Hold on, Frank! It's not like you to be unreasonable."

"Unreasonable, am I?" snapped Nugent. "Go to Cherry, then—you may find him more reasonable! But you can't run with the hare and hunt with the hounds!"

Wharton flushed scarlet.

"That's enough!" he said. And he stepped back. His own temper was not a very patient one, and Nugent's words had roused the worst of it.

For a moment an apology trembled on Frank Nugent's lips; but he turned away with the words unuttered.

Harry looked after him, with set brows, and then walked slowly away. He met Bob Cherry near the door, and Bob stopped him.

"I'm done with Nugent," he said. "I never thought he was such a rotter. He's picked this row with me for nothing at all."

"I don't understand it. But don't call him a rotter—I don't like it."

Bob Cherry flared out at once.

"Well, I do call him a rotter, and you can like it or lump it! You're not going to dictate to me, Harry Wharton!"

"If you're going to quarrel with me, Bob—"

"I don't care whether I do or not!"

"If you don't care, then, that settles it!"

Harry walked away with his hands in his pockets. Bob Cherry called after him once, but Wharton did not turn his head.

Bowling Out Bunter!

HURREE JAMSET RAM SINGH, the amiable Nabob of Bhanipur, was greatly distressed. During all the time the nabob had been at Greyfriars, complete accord had reigned between the chums of Study No. 1.

Study No. 1 had been burnt to the ground in the recent fire, but the Famous Four's friendship had survived that historic apartment, and had been confidently expected to last through life.

And now it was ended!

The nabob hardly knew what to make of it. He had not witnessed the quarrels, and the new state of affairs came as a surprise to him. He learned it first of all from Frank Nugent.

"I have had the goodfellow news," he remarked, when he met Nugent a little while after the row.

"The worthy Temple, the excellent Dabney, and the inestimable Fry wish us to take tea with them in their study after afternoon school, as a friendly meeting before the football match to-morrow."

"Good!" said Nugent.

"If you will tell me where the esteemed Wharton is I will conveyfully take the excellent newfulness."

Nugent's brow darkened.

"Is Wharton coming?"

"Yes; and the esteemed Cherry."

"Then I can't come!"

The nabob's dark eyes opened wide.

"Why not, my worthy chum?"

"I'm not on speaking terms with them now, and I can't come to a feed if they're to be there."

And Nugent walked away abruptly, leaving the nabob staring in amazement.



Bunter sat up in the snow and gasped for breath as the crowd streamed off after the leather. "Ow! Gr-r-r! Hellup! Ow!" he roared. Bunter's trial as a centre-forward was proving painful for Bunter!

"My wordfulness!" murmured the dusky junior. "The surprisefulness is terrific! The excellent Nugent surely has an esteemed bee in his hat!"

And Hurree Jamset Ram Singh walked away in search of his other chums, to find out the solution to the mystery. He found Bob Cherry looking out of the window in the hall, in a very grumpy frame of mind.

The nabob tapped him on the shoulder, and Bob looked round with a grunt.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo, Inky!"

"The newfulness I hear from the esteemed Nugent is paralysing," said the nabob. "He says he is no longerfully on the excellent speakful terms with your angust self."

"That's right."

"The sorrowfulness in your friend's heart is

great. Is it not possible for the rowfulness to be made upfully?"

Bob Cherry shook his head.
"Not unless Nugent apologises."

And Bob resumed his gloomy stare out of the window. Hurree Singh shook his head and went to look for Wharton.

He found the captain of the Remove punting a football about in the Close. The snow had ceased, and there was only a thin layer of flakes on the ground.

Harry looked at the nabob with a smile. His face had been very gloomy. It was not a pleasant thing to break with two old chums like Bob Cherry and Nugent. And he was thinking, too, of the match on the morrow. How would they pull together in the game with the Upper Fourth eleven?

"The sorrowfulness of your friend is great," said Hurree Singh. "I heartily learn that the bustfulness of your honourable friendship is terrific."

"I'm sorry to say it is, Inky."

"Perhaps the makeupfulness would be the good wheeze."

"I don't see how. I don't quite know what's wrong with those two, but they've rowed and dragged me into it, and there the case stands. Better let it alone, old chap."

The dusky junior nodded. He did not see what he could do, but he consulted Wun Lung. He had great faith in the astuteness of the little Chinese. Wun Lung listened, and his almond eyes gleamed, as if he had a suspicion.

"Me see," he said. "Me lookie into it, my fiend. Me savvy."

The quarrel between the Famous Four soon became the topic in the Remove.

BOLD BAD BUNTER!

Revenge is sweet! So thinks Billy Bunter when he sets out to get his own back on a bullying prefect. But it's just like Bunter to wreak his vengeance on the wrong customer—a disastrous result that has a far-reaching effect at Greyfriars! Thrills, fun, mystery combine to make this a great yarn too good to be missed.

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Bulstrode and his friends chuckled over it, and wondered what effect it would have on the football match fixed for the morrow. Bunter did not chuckle. At first he swaggered over his success, till he was in danger of giving the whole game away, throwing out mysterious hints as to what he could say if he liked, and confiding to various fellows that he knew what he knew. But Bulstrode soon stopped him at that.

"You young ass!" said Bulstrode, interrupting Bunter as he was talking to Wun Lung, and dragging the fat Removeite away. "Do you want to put Wharton up to the whole game? Do you know what you'll get?"

"I suppose he would be waxy," Bunter remarked thoughtfully.

Bulstrode gave a scoffing laugh.

"He would lick you till you couldn't crawl, you duffer!"

"Oh, really, Bulstrode, I don't think Wharton would lick a fellow smaller than himself! He's not a bully, you know. You think everybody is like you. Ow! Let go my ear, you beast, or I'll call out to Wharton!"

Bulstrode released him, scowling fiercely.

"You'd better be careful!" he muttered.

"As a matter of fact, Bulstrode, I wish I hadn't played that trick on them," said Bunter. "I'm beginning to think that Wharton didn't deserve it. He would have the jealousy of all the Remove Football Club to face if he put me in the eleven."

"You dummy!"

"Oh, really, Bulstrode! Wharton had a registered letter this afternoon, and I think very likely he wants to stand a feed to the chaps. Now, I oughtn't to come between them at such a time. A joke's a joke, but a joke ought to end somewhere."

"You mean you want to get a feed out of Wharton now that he's in funds?"

"I'm sorry that you should impute such mercenary motives to me, Bulstrode," said Bunter, with great dignity. "I don't see how I can speak to you after such a suggestion. I think I shall make it up with Wharton, and drop you and Skinner."

"Come along to the tuckshop, Bunter," said Bulstrode, glowering.

"Oh, certainly, old chap, anything to oblige!" said Bunter.

And the threatened disclosure to the Famous Four was postponed.

Billy Bunter came up to bed, fat and contented the matter of feeds, and Bulstrode, though he was usually very flush of money, was getting short of that useful article. But so long as the Famous Four were kept in the dark till after the football match, he did not care so much. He would have been glad to see the Form team beaten, and with the best players in it at daggers-drawn its chance of victory was not great.

Harry Wharton was decidedly worried. But he was too proud to make any overtures to Bob Cherry or Nugent, and the juniors went to bed on the same terms of silent and dark looks.

Billy Bunter came up to bed, fat and contented from a ripping feed. The bully of the Remove had run up an account at Mrs. Mumble's little shop to feed him, and Bunter was satisfied.

There was a strained and painful politeness between Wharton, Nugent, and Cherry, which Bulstrode would have been glad to see break out into a fight. It needed very little to make it do so, and Bulstrode gave the fat ventriloquist a hint as they came in.

"You've had a jolly good feed, Bunter," he remarked.

"Yes, pretty fair," assented Bunter.

"Like another one to-morrow before breakfast?"

"Yes. I was thinking of asking Wharton for a little loan."

"Never mind Wharton. You stick to me."

"Oh, certainly, Bulstrode!"

And Billy Bunter, who was not sorry to show off his new powers before so appreciative a spectator, went ahead. Nugent was undressing, and he had dropped his shoes rather noisily on the floor. Bob Cherry's voice was heard to say emphatically:

"Pig!"

The repetition of that odious epithet made Nugent jump up from the side of his bed, where he was sitting, and turn towards Bob with blazing eyes.

"So you're beginning again?" he said.

Bob looked round at him.

"Eh? Did you speak to me, Nugent?"

"Yes, I did, you insulting rotter! If you want to have it out, say so at once, and put up your fists!" shouted Nugent.

"Oh, you're dotty! Go to bed!"

"You heard what he said, Wharton!" exclaimed Nugent.

Harry Wharton nodded.

"You oughtn't to do it, Bob," he said. "You can't expect a chap to take that sort of thing patiently."

"What sort of thing?" howled Bob Cherry, bewildered and exasperated. "What have I done?"

"You called Nugent a pig when he dropped his shoes."

"I didn't."

"It's no good saying you didn't when everybody in the room heard you!" exclaimed Harry angrily.

"I tell you I didn't!" shouted Bob. "I heard somebody say 'pig,' but it wasn't me. I suppose my word's good enough to be taken?"

"Not against the evidence of what a fellow bears," said Nugent.

"So I'm a liar, eh?"

"Yes, you are, if you want plain English."

"Then put up your fists, hang you!"

"I'm ready!"

The juniors were advancing on one another with clenched fists and blazing eyes. But at that moment there came a wild yell from Billy Bunter, and they paused to see what was the matter. The fat junior had been suddenly pounced upon by Wun Lung, and the Chinese had fastened him down on his bed, and was sitting on him.

"Ow! Help! I won't do it any more! Help!"

"Shuttee up," said Wun Lung. "Little lotel shuttee up!"

"What's the matter, Wun Lung?"

"Me spottee," explained the little Celestial.

"Me savvy. Bob Chelly no say piggee; Buntel sayee."

"Eh? What on earth do you mean?"

"Ventriloquist."

"What?"

"Fat Buntel sayee piggee in voicee Bob Chelly."

"Impossible!"

"Me spottee."

The chums of the Remove stared at the little Chinese, and at one another. They had never believed in Billy Bunter's ventriloquial powers.

His failures had been frequent and ridiculous, and it had not occurred to them that he might have attained success at last. And, knowing Bunter's nature, they would naturally have expected his success to be blazoned forth for all to see, if he ever attained any.

"Is it possible?" said Nugent slowly.

"Me spottee."

"We'll jolly soon know for certain," said Harry Wharton, his brow darkening.

And he advanced towards Billy Bunter with a look that made the fat junior feel nervous.

The Form Match!

WUN LUNG released the fat junior, and Bunter stood nervously before the captain of the Remove.

"Is it right, Bunter?" asked Harry. "Have you been ventriloquising at our expense?"

Bunter had no particular weakness for the truth; and, in fact, his usual method of getting out of a difficulty was to lie. But under Wharton's searching eyes, the lie would not come. He had a miserable inward feeling that if he lied the lie would be detected at once, and that it would make matters all the worse for him. Added to that was a desire to show off his new powers, and prove to the Famous Four that he was, after all, a ventriloquist.

"Answer me!" said Harry imperiously.

"Ye-e-es," stammered Billy Bunter.

"I can't quite swallow it," said Nugent. "If you can ventriloquise as well as that, Bunter, give us a proof of it."

The fat junior bristled into importance at once.

"Certainly, Nugent! I'm sorry that you should doubt my word."

"Oh, cut the cackle!"

"Go ahead, you young rascal!"

Bunter obeyed. The chums listened attentively while he gave them a sample of his new powers. He made his voice appear to proceed from the chimney—and there was no doubt about it this time. Billy Bunter was a ventriloquist at last—the real thing!

"My hat!" said Nugent. "It looks like it."

Harry Wharton's hand fell heavily on Bunter's shoulder.

"You young villain! So you've been playing tricks on us, and making us row?"

Bunter grinned a little.

"Well, I warned you that there would be trouble if I wasn't put in the team," he said. "You only laughed, too."

"So you've been doing this because we didn't play you in the eleven?"

"I told you there would be trouble. Besides, Bulstrode—"

"Oh," exclaimed Harry Wharton, understanding at once, "that's why Bulstrode has been feeding you lately. I might have guessed that that cad was at the bottom of it!"

"That what?" said Bulstrode fiercely.

"Cad!" said Harry Wharton, facing the bully of the Remove. "Bunter is only a fool, but you're a cad and a rascal! You've played upon his stupidity to make him serve us this mean trick!"

"Oh, really, Wharton!"

"Hold your tongue, Bunter! Bulstrode, you're a rotten cad! And if you've got any objection to make to that, get up and make it!"

Bulstrode gritted his teeth—and stepped into bed. He pulled up the bedclothes round him.

"It was only a joke," he said. "You can settle it with Bunter."

Wharton made a gesture of contempt. He turned his back on Bulstrode with a look that brought the scarlet to the bully's cheeks.

"I—I say, you fellows!" stammered Bunter, realising that the horn of plenty had ceased to flow from Bulstrode's direction for good, and remembering that Harry Wharton had had a registered letter that day. "I say, you fellows, I—I—it was only a joke, you know. I only meant to make you sit up for leaving me out of the eleven, and then I was going to own up."

"Hold your tongue!"

"Yes, but I—I say, I'm very sorry, and—and I—"

"Get into bed! If you weren't such an utter duffer I should give you a hiding!" said Harry savagely. "Get into bed, and hold your tongue!"

And Bunter thought he had better do so.

Wharton, Nugent, and Cherry looked at one another. They realised the truth now, and that there was no cause for offence—that their quarrel had been simply playing into Bulstrode's hands.

"The truthfulness is now clearly made up," purred the Nabob of Bhanipur. "The quarrelfulness is a thing of the esteemed past, and the proper caper is the shakefulness of the hand."

Wharton laughed.

"We've been a set of asses!" he exclaimed. "You understand now, of course, that it was Bunter who said the things we quarrelled about?"

"Yes," said Nugent. "I—I was an ass, I suppose, but—but Bunter ought to have a jolly good hiding!"

"Oh, really, Nugent—"

"The handshakfulness is the proper caper, my worthy chums!"

"Right-ho!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "It's all right! Give us your fist, Franky!"

And Nugent held out his hand, and Bob Cherry gripped it. The quarrel, which had threatened to be so serious, was over.

The Famous Four went to bed in a much more contented frame of mind, and Bob Cherry, before

he turned in bestowed a hearty thump of appreciation on Wun Lung, which knocked every ounce of breath out of the little Chinese.

The Famous Four looked cheery enough the following morning. It was a fine, bright winter day, and there was no sign of snow, and all were looking forward to the Form match of the afternoon. The Remove eleven—in which Billy Bunter was not playing centre-forward—were all in good trim; and so were the Upper Fourth fellows, for that matter.

When the afternoon came, and the rival footballers met on the field of battle, Temple, Dabney & Co., were in high and confident spirits. The Remove felt just as confident.

Temple kicked off, and the Form match started. The Remove were in fighting form, and they quickly showed that they were out for a good win. A goal in the first five minutes of the match was a foretaste of what was to come—for the Upper Fourth.

At half-time the Remove were two up.

In the second half, Temple, Dabney & Co. made desperate efforts to equalise, but the Remove were equally determined that they should do nothing of the sort. The result was a keen encounter, that was watched with greatest interest by the crowd round the ropes.

One goal, and then another, came to the Upper Fourth, and Temple hoped, for a time, of pulling off a victory. But his hope was brief. With a combined effort, the Remove brought the leather down the field, and Harry Wharton slammed it in. The Remove were leading now, three to two, with only five more minutes to play.

That five minutes was wholly spent in the Upper Fourth half, and it ended with another goal from Bob Cherry's boot. And then the whistle went.

"Four—two!" grinned Bob Cherry, as they came off the field. "What price the Remove now?"

And the Removites round the field cheered frantically. They had won the Form match. Temple, Dabney & Co. had to hide their diminished heads; but the rest of the afternoon was spent by the Removites in celebrating their victory.

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