

THREE GREAT SCHOOL YARNS—PRIZE FOOTBALLS FOR READERS
—AND MANY OTHER STAR FEATURES!

The GEM

2^d

A COOL CUSTOMER!

—Read the Grand
St. Jim's Story Star-
ring Ralph Reckness
Cardew—Inside.



OUR TIP-TOP PRIZE OFFER— You Must Be In This!



250 is the huge number of winners we want for Super Footballs in our November "Footer-Stamps" competition. It's FREE to you . . . and up to YOU to seize this wonderful chance.

If you are already collecting "Footer-Stamps" and haven't so far won a ball, you should be making another effort now to be a winner! If you are *not* collecting yet, don't lose another minute—snap right into this month's competition!

It's a great idea! "Footer-Stamps" are appearing every week, and the object is simply to make up as many "goals" as you can with them. The stamps illustrate *six* different actions on the football field.

The six stamps are: **KICK-OFF—DRIBBLE—TACKLE—HEADER—SHOT—GOAL**, and every complete set of the six actions you collect scores a "goal." (The "goal" stamp by itself does not count as a "goal"—you must get a set of the stamps, 1 to 6, each time.)

There are ten more stamps this week, five below and five more on page 35, and you will find a complete "goal" among them. Then go all out to get as many more of these stamps as you can. Ask your friends for them, swap with them if you like, or even collect them together. The more you get, the more "goals" you'll score—and here's good news:

FOOTER-STAMPS making complete "goals" are also in other famous papers like **MODERN BOY** and **MAGNET**—you can bump up your score with stamps from these papers.

The 250 Prize Footballs in the November prize-giving will go to the collectors scoring the most "goals" for the month.

No stamps to be sent in yet—just wait until we give you the word at the end of the month. So if you haven't won a football yet—keep busy with "Footer-Stamps."

OVERSEAS READERS—you are in this scheme also, and special prizes in cash are to be awarded for the best scores from readers outside the British Isles. There will be a special closing date for you, of course.

***** 5 "FOOTER-STAMPS" HERE—5 MORE ON PAGE 35! *****



MEET ST. JIM'S COOLEST "CARD"—RALPH RECKNESS CARDEW. SNOB HE MAY BE, BUT YOU'LL ADMIRE HIS DARING, AMUSING, AND CANDID MANNER!



A COOL CUSTOMER!

"Excuse me," said Arthur Augustus, raising his hat. "You are Cardew, I presume?" "That's my name," replied the grandson of Lord Reckness. "The new chap for St. Jim's?" "I'm goin' to St. Jim's, certainly." Cardew's manner was cold and steely.

CHAPTER 1.

Noblesse Oblige!

ARTHUR AUGUSTUS D'ARCY came along the Fourth Form passage, and stopped at Study No. 9.

There was a very thoughtful frown upon Arthur Augustus' brow, as if a deep and weighty problem lay heavy upon his noble mind.

He tapped at the study door, and Sidney Clive's cheery voice rapped out:

"Come in!"

Arthur Augustus entered. Levison and Clive, who shared Study No. 9, were both there.

Levison was scribbling down lines from Virgil at a great rate, and Clive was sitting on the corner of the table, watching him.

Levison did not look up; he was too busy. But Clive gave the swell of St. Jim's a genial nod.

"Busy, deah boys?" asked Arthur Augustus.

"Levison is," grinned Clive. "He's got to get a hundred lines done before

the House match. I've offered to take his place in the team, but he doesn't seem to see it, somehow."

"Rats!" said Levison, without looking up.

"Bai Jove! You will have to buck up, Levison!"

"Br-r-r-r-r!"

"What does that remark mean, Levison?"

"Shut up, ass!"

"If that is what you call good mannaahs, Levison—"

"Do you want this inkpot?" rapped out Levison.

"Bai Jove, no!"

"Then don't interrupt!"

"I weally do not mean to intewwupt you, Levison, if you are busy. I came here to speak to Clive. I twust I shall not be intewwuptin' you by speakin' to Clive, Levison?"

Levison did not reply. It was difficult to hold a conversation and write out Virgil at express speed at the same time. That fact did not seem to dawn

Not many new fellows would have the nerve to smoke a cigarette in front of a Housemaster. Yet that is the sensational manner in which Ralph Reckness Cardew marks his arrival at St. Jim's!

By

MARTIN CLIFFORD

upon the powerful brain of the Honourable Arthur Augustus.

"I addressed a remark to you, Levison," said Arthur Augustus gently, as no reply was forthcoming.

Still no reply.

"Weally, Levison—"

"Will you dry up, ass?" yelled Levison.

"Bai Jove! I wefuse to address anothead word to you, Levison, as you persist in bein' unmannahly! I do not see anythin' whatevah to gwin at, Clive. Howevah, to come to the point, I am booked to play in the House match this aftahnoon."

"Lucky bargee!" said Clive.

"I am goin' to wequest you to weplace me."

"Eh?"

"I wequest you— Bai Jove!"

Sidney Clive slid off the table, rushed at Arthur Augustus, clasped him like a long-lost brother, and waltzed him round the table.

"Bai Jove! Have you gone off your wockah?" gasped the astonished Gussy. "Welease me, you ass! You are wumplin' my coat! You are disawwangin' my tie! Gwoogh! If you do not immediately—yawoooh—welease me, I shall—yow—punch your nose, you ass!"

Clive grinned and plumped Arthur Augustus, breathless, into the armchair. The swell of St. Jim's sat and gasped.

"You uttah ass!"

"Will I replace you?" chuckled Clive. "Yes, rather! Gussy, old son, you are a boon and a blessing—you're corn in Egypt—you're a cherub! I'm your man!"

"Gwoogh!"

"Have you told Tom Merry?" asked Clive, his eyes sparkling.

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Clive did not need asking twice to play in the House match.

"I wegard you as a wuff ass, Clive!" Arthur Augustus rose and arranged his tie carefully before the study glass. "I have not yet spoken to Tom Mewwy on the subject. The fact is, it is wathah a delicate mattah. Of course, we want to beat Figgins & Co., and I feah that the result may be wathah doubtful if I stand out of the team—"

"Oh, that will be all right!" said Clive confidently. "Tommy can shove Lowther into the front line, and I can play in his place. Right as rain!"

"I twust it will be wight as wain, Clive, but I cannot help havin' my doubts," said Arthur Augustus dubiously. "Howevah, it is a case of noblesse oblige."

"What on earth are you cutting the House match for, though?" asked Clive curiously. "Don't you feel fit?"

"Yes. But it is a case of noblesse oblige. There is a new chap comin' here this aftahnoon—"

Clive nodded.

"Yes, I know. Mr. Railton told us the chap was coming into this study," he said. "You're not missing the match on his account, I suppose?"

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Well, of all the asses—"

"Weally, Clive—"

"I—I mean, it's a jolly sensible thing to do!" grinned Clive. "About the best idea you've had this term."

"You see, it is wathah an awkward posish," explained Arthur Augustus. "This chap who is comin' is a sort of connection of mine—at least, his gwandfathah, Lord Weckness, is a relation of my patah, so I suppose this chap is welated to me somehow. I've never seen him, and don't know anythin' about him, but as he is a distant welation, I feel bound to take some notice of him. I felt that it would be only the wight thing to meet him at the station, and bwing him to the school, you know, in the circs."

"Jolly good idea!" agreed Clive.

As Arthur Augustus' idea had the effect of giving Clive a place in the House team, the Colonial junior was prepared to regard it as the very best idea Arthur Augustus had had.

"It is wathah wotten in a way," said Arthur Augustus. "It's a wippin' aftahnoon for footah, and I feah that I shall be mised in the team. But the patah has asked me to see the chap when he comes, and, of course, a chap can't wefuse his patah anythin'. It's weally noblesse oblige, you know. The eleven will have to do the vevy best it can in the circs."

Clive chuckled.

He thought that the School House junior eleven would probably give a good account of itself even without the assistance of Arthur Augustus. It was probable that Tom Merry, the junior skipper, would not be utterly overcome with dismay at the prospect.

"I did not know the chap was comin' into this study," said Arthur Augustus. "I twust you fellows will be decent to him, as he is my welation."

"He shall be the apple of our eye!" assured Clive. "What's he like?"

"I weally don't know anything about him, Clive, exceptin' that he is vevy wick, and I have heard that he is wathah a weckless chap."

"What's his name?" asked Clive. "Railton didn't mention that to me."

"Walph Weckness Cardew."

"Ralph Reckness Cardew!" repeated Clive.

"Yes, he is a grandson of Lord Weckness. He has been to a school in the North of England before, I undahstand. I don't know why he left. And he will be at Wayland by the thwee twain. The wowwy is that vevy likely you fellows will get licked by the New House—"

"Done!" said Levison, jumping up and throwing down his pen. "I'll take this lot into Railton, Clive, and join you on the ground."

"Right!"

Levison hurried from the study with his scarcely-dry impot in his hand, and Arthur Augustus followed with the South African junior.

The noble Gussy had quite made up his mind that he was bound to go to Wayland to meet his relation, but he looked forward to the interview with Tom Merry with considerable doubt. He was uneasy as to how Tom might take the terrible loss which was to fall on his team.

CHAPTER 2.

Not a Calamity!

“**W**HEREFORE that worried brow, O Gustavus?”

Thus Monty Lowther.

Tom Merry, Manners, and Lowther were chatting in the quadrangle when Arthur Augustus came up with the smiling Clive.

Clive, was smiling, but Arthur Augustus looked troubled, as was natural in the serious circumstances.

"Anything happened to your new topper, Gussy?" asked Manners with much sympathy.

"Or doesn't your new suit fit you like paper on the wall?" asked Tom Merry gravely.

"Wats! I have wathah sewious news for you, Tom Mewwy!"

"Did you find a rat in your topper this morning?" asked Lowther.

"I wish you fellows would be sewious. The fact is, Tom Mewwy—ahem!"

"Go ahead!" said Tom.

"I dare say you have noticed that Clive is wathah a good footballah?" began Arthur Augustus cautiously.

Tom Merry nodded.

"He plays left-half weally wippin', I considah."

"Ripping!" said Tom. "What the dickens are you singing Clive's praises for, Gussy? Can't he sing 'em himself?"

"Lowthah genewally plays half, but he is a pretty good forward!" said Arthur Augustus, unheeding.

"Right on the wicket," said Monty Lowther admiringly. "This is where Gussy displays his well-known tact and judgment!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I know Lowther can play forward," said Tom, in wonder. "What on earth are you driving at, Gussy?"

"Suppose your best forward should be called away this aftahnoon, deah boy?"

"Can't be did! Nobody's going to call me away!" said Tom, laughing.

"Ahem! I wasn't alludin' to you, you know!"

"Do you mean Talbot?" Tom Merry looked more serious. "If Talbot tells me he's called away I'll punch his nose!"

"I did not mean Talbot, Tom Mewwy!"

"Nothing happened to Levison?" asked Tom.

"He'll get through his impot before we're ready. He promised me. That's all right!"

"Yaas, Levison is all wight!"

"And Blake isn't going to scuttle off, I suppose? Blake, you ass, you're not thinking of standing out of the match, are you?" asked the captain of the Shell, as Jack Blake came along.

"No jolly fear!" said Blake emphatically.

"Then perhaps you can guess what Gussy's talking about? He makes his meaning about as clear as a politician in an epoch-making speech!"

"Weally, Tom Mewwy, I believe you are deliberately misundahstandin' me! I was alludin' to myself!"

"But you said my best forward," said Tom innocently.

"Wats! Suppose I should be called away, Tom Mewwy?"

"I'd try to bear it," said Tom heroically. "These awful things will happen, and a chap learns to bear them with fortitude!"

"The fact is, Tom Mewwy, I shall be called away."

Tom leaned upon Monty Lowther for support.

"Anybody got my smelling-salts?" he asked in a faint voice.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You uttah ass!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus.



"I couldn't find me braces this morning, sir!"

Half-a-crown has been awarded to F. Hayworth, "The Greens," Bacup, Lancs.

"Why didn't you break it gently?" murmured Tom Merry, almost tearfully.

Arthur Augustus put his celebrated eyeglass into his eye and surveyed the grinning juniors with a lofty stare.

"I see no cause whatevah for this absurd mewwiment!" he said crushingly. "The fact is, Tom Mewwy, a wulation of mine is comin' to the school this aftahnoon, and I have to meet him at the station. I wecommand you to play Clive. He is willin'!"

"Rather!" grinned Clive.

"You could put Lowthah in the fwont line. Of course, he would not be quite up to my form, but—"

"I suggest a vote of thanks to Gussy," said Monty Lowther solemnly. "Very likely he has saved the match for the School House by going to Wayland instead of playing in the forward line!"

"I weward you as an ass, Lowthah! Of course, Tom Mewwy, if you feel that you cannot let me off I am bound to play."

"Not at all," said Tom Merry kindly. "I'll excuse you, Gussy. In fact, I was thinking of giving you a rest, anyway."

"Eh?"

"So everything in the garden is lovely."

"Weally, Tom Mewwy—"

"I'll put Lowther in your place, and Clive in
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Lowther's place," said Tom, laughing. "And we'll do the best we can without our Gussy. I hope we shall wriggle a bit before the New House walks over us. We can but try."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I wegard you as an ass, Tom Mewwy! I wegard you as anothah ass, Lowthah! I wegard you all as asses, in fact! And I do not see anythin' whatevah to cackle at."

Arthur Augustus marched into the School House to select his best topper and to call Digby.

Digby was going to Wayland with him. The House match was beginning by the time Arthur Augustus was ready to start for the market town.

Arthur Augustus came out looking like a new pin from top to toe; but Robert Arthur Digby had seen no reason to polish himself because Ralph Reckness Cardew was coming to St. Jim's. In spite of strong hints from Arthur Augustus, Dig came out in a cap. And he glanced towards the footer ground.

"Let's see the start," he suggested.

"We have to walk to Wayland, Dig."

"That's all right; we'll take the short cut," said Dig.

"The short cut is wathah muddy, Dig."

"Oh, never mind the mud!" said Dig.

And he sauntered away to Little Side, and Arthur Augustus had to follow.

The House match was already going strong. Figgins & Co. of the New House were in great form. But Tom Merry's team held their ground well, though unassisted by the usual outside-left. Herries was in goal for the School House, and the rest of the team were: Hammond, Reilly; Julian, Manners, Clive; Talbot, Levison, Tom Merry, Blake, and Lowther.

The School House side were attacking, and the forwards brought the ball fairly up to goal.

It went in from Levison's foot, but Fatty Wynn drove it out again with a fat grin and a hefty fist.

Tom Merry sent it in again, and again Fatty drove it out, only to meet Levison's head and come back like a pip from an orange.

There was a roar:

"Goal!"

"Bravo, Levison!"

"Bwavo!" shouted Arthur Augustus.

"Good goal!" remarked Dig. "Let's wait a bit longer."

"Bai Jove! School House have a chance, aftah all," said Arthur Augustus, with much satisfaction. "Levison is playin' up wemarkably well. I am vevy glad I encougaged Levison in turnin' ovah a new leaf, Dig!"

"Go hon!" said Dig.

"You would hardly think that he used to be a smokin', bettin' blackguard to see him now!" said Arthur Augustus. "I am vevy glad I had a hand in weformin' him, Dig."

"Did you?" yawned Dig.

"Yaas, wathah! I backed him up, you know. Come on, deah boy, or we shall be late at Wayland Junction."

"Let's see 'em kick off!"

"Weally, Dig—"

The New House kicked off.

"Come on, Dig!"

"Wait a minute! There's going to be an attack!"

"Dig, you ass!"

"Go it, School House!" roared Dig.

"Weally, Dig, if you do not come I shall have to go without you!" said Arthur Augustus. "Cardew will awwive—"

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"Oh, blow Cardew!" said Dig. "Look at old Levison! What grand ball control he has! Look at Racke & Co., too!" Dig chuckled. "They're enjoying it—I don't think!"

Racke, Crooke, and Mellish, the black sheep of the School House, were looking on, in a surly group. They probably had bets depending on the result of the House match, or they would not have been there. But it was plain, from their expressions, that Levison's former associates did not enjoy his triumph in his new role.

"Are you comin', Dig, you duffah?" exclaimed Arthur Augustus.

"Oh, all right!" said Dig. "Rotten to miss a match and go to a station for a blessed new kid! Let's get off!"

And Digby tore himself away, and the two juniors started on the long walk through the wood to Wayland.

CHAPTER 3.

A Very Superior Person!

"WAYLAND Junction!"

Ralph Reckness Cardew, the new junior bound for St. Jim's, threw away the sporting paper, pitched the stump of a cigarette out of the carriage window, and rose to his feet with a yawn.

The express stopped at Wayland Station, and Cardew stepped out on the platform.

He glanced up and down the platform, and beckoned to a porter.

"Change here for Rylcombs?" he asked.

"Yessir!"

"Where's the train?"

"T'other platform, sir, across the bridge; local goes at three-thirty."

"Oh gad! That's half an hour to wait!"

"Yessir!"

"Can get a taxi here, I suppose?"

"Might be one outside, sir," said the porter.

"Well, bring that bag along," the grandson of Lord Reckness said ungraciously.

"Sorry, sir; got the luggage to look arter."

Cardew stared at the porter. The latter did not even notice his stare. He scuttled along the platform.

"By gad!" said Cardew.

Wayland Junction, like many another country railway station, was short-handed. The old porter had no time to look after the bags of passengers.

With a frowning brow, Cardew picked up his bag and walked towards the exit.

"Over the bridge," said the ticket collector, as Cardew handed out his ticket.

"I'm goin' out."

Cardew passed on, and came out into the High Street.

The only vehicle outside the station was an ancient hack, with an ancient horse, and an ancient driver half-asleep on the box.

Cardew glanced at it, and his lip curled.

The horse looked as if it would fall down dead before it could cover half the distance to St. Jim's.

The old driver woke up and blinked at the junior.

"Ack, sir?"

"No, thanks!"

Cardew stood looking about him.

Two juniors came along the High Street, hurrying towards the station. One of them wore

a cap, the other a shining topper. And the latter exclaimed:

"Bai Jove! That must be Cardew!"

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy and Robert Arthur Digby had arrived somewhat late, owing to Dig's keen interest in the House match at St. Jim's.

It was against all Arthur Augustus' principles to hurry; he preferred to cultivate the repose which is held to stamp the caste of Vere de Vere. But he had been hurrying now; and he was a little breathless as he came up to the new junior. But he raised his silk topper in his most graceful manner.

"Excuse me," he said. "You are Cardew, I presume?"

"That's my name."

"The new chap for St. Jim's?"

me. Perhaps you can tell me some way of gettin' out of this sleepy hollow without walkin'?"

"Yaas, wathah! We've come to see you to the school, you know. This is Digby—my studymate."

Cardew gave Digby a cool nod, and Dig returned a still shorter nod. Cardew did not even offer to shake hands with Arthur Augustus, who, as a distant relation, might have been supposed to be entitled to that distinction.

The swell of St. Jim's was already considerably chilled. But noblesse oblige had brought him to Wayland to meet this distant connection of his family, and Arthur Augustus' noble manners were equal to any strain.

"There's a local twain to Wycombe at three-thirty," he said. "Have you given up your ticket?"



"What do you rags want?" snarled Cutts. "Only called to inquire after your health, my lord," said Monty Lowther meekly. "How is the eye getting on?" "Is it black but comely?" asked Levison. "Get out!" roared Cutts.

"I'm going to St. Jim's, certainly."

Cardew's manner was cold and steely. Dig gave him a look, and closed his lips a little.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy's expansive smile faded. It was not exactly gratifying to be treated like an obtrusive fellow who was shoving his acquaintance upon a stranger.

"I am D'Arcy," explained the swell of St. Jim's, with dignity. "I came here to meet you, Cardew."

"Oh!"

"I am sowwy we did not awwife before the twain. It was owvin' to Dig wastin' time ovah a footah match."

"Oh, you're D'Arcy?" said Cardew, his manner thawing a little. "Lord Eastwood's son?"

"Yaas!"

"Glad to meet you! Thanks for comin' to meet

"Yes."

"It's all wight. I'll explain to the man—he knows me. Come on!"

Cardew did not move.

"I suppose there's another way of gettin' to the school?" he asked. "I don't want to hang about for half an hour, and wait for a crawlin' local train."

"Well, there's sometimes a taxi," said Arthur Augustus. "There doesn't seem to be one here now. If you'd like to wait for one to turn up—pewwaps—"

Cardew gave an impatient shrug.

"I wouldn't," he said.

"There's the hack," said Digby sarcastically. "It would get to St. Jim's in about three hours, if the horse didn't fall down dead."

"I suppose there's a car to be got somewhere?" said Cardew, without taking any notice of Digby's remark.

"Suppose we walk?" suggested D'Arcy amicably. "It's a wippin' walk through the woods, and only a few miles, if you don't like the local twain."

"I'm not lookin' for a walk of a few miles, thanks! What about gettin' a car? There must be a garage somewhere, even in this out-of-the-way hole."

"Yaas wathah!"

"Well, where is it?"

"Two minutes' walk down the woad, deah boy."

"Then let's get along to the garage and see whether there's a car to be had."

Cardew evidently didn't intend to wait for the local train, and he didn't intend to walk. The three juniors set off down Wayland High Street, and soon arrived at the garage.

Arthur Augustus was well known there. He had often hired cars at the garage, and his noble pater had sometimes had the pleasure of drawing quite extensive cheques in consequence.

The swell of St. Jim's was treated with the respect due to a youth who could order out a car regardless of expense, but it was Ralph Reckness Cardew who took the lead on this occasion.



"Hallo —
police-station?
I want to report
a murder!"

Half-a-crown
has been ar-
warded to E.
Baker, 3, College
Street, St. Cath-
erine's, Ontario,
Canada.

There was a car to be had—a large limousine. Cardew engaged it without even asking the cost. The car was driven out, and the three juniors entered it.

"St. Jim's School!" said Cardew.

"Yessir!"

The big car rolled away.

CHAPTER 4.

The New Boy Arrives!

"SCHOOL HOUSE wins! Hurrah!"

"Bravo!"

On Little Side the School House juniors were cheering. The House match was over, and Tom Merry & Co. had won, one-nil. It had been a hard-fought match from start to finish, and School House had been fortunate to win.

The footballers came off the field looking very ruddy. Tom Merry clapped Clive on the shoulder.

"Quite a happy thought of Gussy's," he remarked. "I must tell him that you're more use in the half-back line than he is in the forward line."

And Clive chuckled.

"But it's your match, Levison," added Tom.

"You got the one and only goal."

"Luck!" said Levison.

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"Luck and good play," said Tom. "You're a rod in pickle for the Rookwood chaps when we go over to Rookwood. Hallo! What the dickens—"

The School House players, with coats and mufflers on over their footer rig, were heading for the House. A big car had turned in at the gates, and it came grinding up the drive in the clear winter sunlight.

"Gussy!" ejaculated Blake.

"My hat!"

"That must be the new chap!"

The car came to a halt before the School House, and the footballers gathered round.

Mr. Railton, who had spotted the car from his study window, came out of the great doorway as Cardew stepped from the car, followed by Gussy and Digby.

"This is Cardew, sir," said Arthur Augustus. "It's Mr. Wailton, our-Housemastah, Cardew."

"Oh, you are Cardew?" said Mr. Railton.

"Yes, sir."

"You were expected this afternoon."

"So I gather, sir," said Cardew, looking round superciliously at the crowd of juniors. "Excuse me for a moment while I settle with the chauffeur!"

And Cardew coolly left the School House master and went across to the chauffeur, who was still waiting with the engine running. The new junior did not seem to recognise in the least what an important person a Housemaster was—or perhaps he did not choose to recognise it. Mr. Railton compressed his lips for a moment.

Cardew settled with the chauffeur, and the limousine drove away. Then the new boy took out a silver cigarette-case, and, to the amazement and consternation of the juniors, he coolly lit a cigarette.

Arthur Augustus fixed his eyes upon Ralph Reckness Cardew as if fascinated.

There were merry blades in the school who smoked in the privacy of their studies, and regarded such proceedings as remarkably doggish. But for a junior to put a cigarette in his mouth in the presence of his Housemaster was amazing, almost unnerving. It was time for the skies to fall!

Arthur Augustus nudged Cardew gently.

"Pway thraw that away, deah boy!" he murmured.

Cardew stowed at him.

"Why?"

"Ahem! You are not allowed to smoke, you know."

"What rot!"

"Mr. Wailton will be angwy."

"Let him!"

"Oh!" said Arthur Augustus.

Cardew was the cynosure of all eyes. If the new fellow had meant to mark his arrival at St. Jim's with a sensation, he had certainly succeeded. The juniors waited for the storm to burst. It did!

"Cardew!" thundered Mr. Railton.

"Yes, sir?" Cardew's manner was quite nonchalant and unconcerned.

"How dare you, boy! How dare you smoke a cigarette in the presence of your Housemaster! Throw it away at once!"

"Mayn't I smoke, sir?" asked Cardew coolly.

"You may not! Throw the cigarette away instantly and follow me to my room!"

And Mr. Railton turned and strode back to his study. Cardew threw away the cigarette and strolled into the House after the School House master.

"My hat!" exclaimed Monty Lowther. "That's a cool merchant!"
 "Cheeky cad, I think!" growled Manners.
 "He does seem wathah che ky," said Arthur Augustus. "But pewwaps it is only his way."
 "And perhaps Railton will change his ways for him!" grinned Lowther.
 Meanwhile, Cardew had followed Mr. Railton into his room. The Housemaster was looking very angry.
 "You had the audacity to smoke in my presence just now!" he said severely.
 "Yes, sir"

"May I inquire whether you are in the habit of smoking?" demanded the Housemaster severely.
 "Yes, sir," said Cardew calmly.
 Mr. Railton breathed hard for a moment.
 "You may be ignorant of school customs, Cardew. Smoking is strictly forbidden, and if you err again in this way your punishment will be severe."
 "Indeed, sir?"
 "But even if your training has been bad, Cardew, as it appears to have been, you must still be aware that it was disrespectful to smoke in my presence. I am afraid, Cardew, that it was your
 (Continued on next page.)



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intention to be impertinent, and to make a foolish display of independence."

"Not at all, sir," said Cardew calmly.

"I am very far from satisfied with you, Cardew. I may mention that any repetition of this impertinence will be dealt with severely. I do not desire to be hard upon a new boy, and I will therefore say no more about the matter now. You may go to your Form-master. Mr. Lathom's study is the next along the passage."

"Thank you, sir!"

Cardew left the study. The Housemaster's rebuke had not had the slightest effect upon his nonchalant manner, and Mr. Railton was strongly tempted to call him back and administer a caning there and then. He refrained, however, and Cardew proceeded to interview Mr. Lathom.

About a quarter of an hour later he emerged from the Form-master's study, and strolled down the passage with his hands in his pockets, evidently in the best of spirits.

He found Arthur Augustus waiting for him.

"Did you get on all wight with Wailton?" asked D'Arcy.

"Oh, yes!"

"Not licked?"

"No; only a sermon. Rather a grandfatherly old merchant, your Housemaster," said Cardew.

"Mr. Wailton is one of the best," said Arthur Augustus.

"I dare say he is," agreed Cardew, with a yawn. "A bit of a bore, all the same. Has my box come, do you know?"

"It will not come from the station till to-morrow, Cardew. You have your bag, I suppose?"

"Oh, yes! I'll get it unpacked if you'll show me where my quarters are."

"Certainly, deah boy."

Arthur Augustus led the way to the Fourth Form dormitory. There he left the new junior. Tea was waiting in Study No. 6.

Cardew followed him down a little later, and found his way to the Fourth Form passage.

Mr. Lathom had told him the number of his study, but it was not easy to find. Most of the numbers over the studies were half obliterated, and Cardew did not know yet who were his study-mates.

Some new boys would have mooched about, helplessly, wondering where they could get information, but Ralph Reckness Cardew was not that kind of new boy. He knocked at a half-open study door and looked in.

It happened to be Study No. 5, which belonged to Julian, Kerruish, Reilly, and Hammond of the Fourth.

Harry Hammond was alone there, and he looked round good-naturedly at the new junior.

"'Allo!" he said.

Cardew stared. He had never seen Harry Hammond before, and did not know that the Cockney schoolboy had manners and customs of his own, which were taken quite good-naturedly by the other fellows.

Hammond was the heir of the great firm that sold Hammond's High-Class Hats, all one price, three-and-nine; but the elder Hammond had worked his way up from humble beginnings, and Harry's early education had been sadly neglected. And the time he had spent at St. Jim's had not enabled Hammond to overcome his little difficulties with the aspirate.

"You the noo kid?" asked Hammond quite affably.

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"I'm a new boy here," said Cardew.

"Come in!" said Hammond. "Don't 'ang about out there. I say, though, 'as Railton put you in this study?"

Cardew stared quite hard.

"Do you belong to the school?" he asked.

It was Hammond's turn to stare.

"'Course I does!" he said.

"Well, my hat!"

Hammond flushed.

He could see that his peculiar pronunciation had struck the new boy forcibly.

"I suppose this is the Fourth Form passage?" asked Cardew.

"Yes," said Hammond shortly; "and I 'ope you're not comin' into this 'ere study! We're four already!"

"I hope not, I'm sure!" said Cardew superciliously. "But it depends on the number. I'm looking for Study No. 9."

"Fourth door up," said Hammond.

And he took no further notice of Cardew.

The new boy looked at him curiously for some moments. Apparently, the Cockney schoolboy interested him.

Hammond looked up and caught Cardew's amused eyes fixed on him.

"You ain't gone yet," he remarked. "May a bloke inquire what you are starin' at? I may as well tell you that if you've come 'ere to put on hairs, you'll soon find the trouble you're-lookin' for!"

"Hairs!" repeated Cardew, as if not understanding. "Ah! Perhaps you mean airs?"

"I mean hairs!" said Hammond, jumping up from his chair. "And I don't want any of your cheek, Master Cheeky Noo Boy! You can travel—and sharp!"

Cardew's face hardened, and he did not stir.

"You 'ear me?" exclaimed Hammond.

"I hear you, if that is what you mean!" said Cardew coolly. "And you belong to St. Jim's! By gad!"

"What did you think I was, then?" demanded Hammond aggressively.

The cool, supercilious insolence of the new junior was more than enough to rouse his anger, good-tempered as he was.

"I should have supposed that you were the boot-boy, to judge by your language!" said Cardew insolently.

Hammond drew a deep breath.

"Well, I ain't the boot-boy! But I shouldn't be ashamed of it if I was," he said. "I give you one minute to clear out, you worm!"

Cardew's eyes glittered, and he made a step farther into the study. That was enough for Hammond. He rushed at the new junior and grasped him.

They went whirling through the doorway together.

There was a loud bump in the passage.

The door of the next study opened, and Arthur Augustus D'Arcy's eyeglass glimmered out.

"'Bai Jove! What's the mattah? Gwreat Scott!"

"Hallo! The new kid scrapping already?" grinned Blake, looking out. "Go it, both of you!"

"Pway stop!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus, rushing to separate the two angry juniors. "Hammond, deah boy, this chap is my wrelation!"

Hammond released Cardew at once, and stepped back.

"I didn't know that, Gussy," he said apologetically. "I'd 'ave stood his cheek if I'd knowed."

LAUGH THESE OFF!

—with Monty Lowther.



Hallo, Everybody!

They say Gussy is so polite he raises his topper when talking to a lady friend on the telephone.

An M.P. says he was caned at school for telling the truth. He doesn't say whether it cured him or not!

New outlets are sought for the products of the gas industry. Suggested slogan: "Eat More Coke."

"Monty Lowther Wins £10,000 Football Pool Prize." That was the headline I was looking at just about ten seconds before Tom Merry squeezed a cold sponge over my face the other morning!

You can always tell when you've had enough to eat, says Baggy Trimble. It hurts!

During a recent performance by the New House Dramatic Society, the floor of the stage suddenly collapsed. Tom Merry & Co. said they had never seen a show go down so well!

"What have you been quawwellin' with Hammond for, Cardew?"
Cardew laughed.

"His accent rather amused me, and he took it badly," he replied.

"Weally, Cardew, that is a wotten remark!"

"E's a cad, right enough!" said Hammond. "I don't know 'ow you comed to 'ave a relation like that, D'Arcy! But I won't 'urt 'im."

"You couldn't!" said Cardew contemptuously.

Hammond breathed hard. But he controlled his feelings, went back into his study, and closed the door.

Cardew laughed again.

"I suppose that fellow isn't a specimen of the Fourth, D'Arcy?" he asked. "Where on earth was he brought up?"

"Hammond was wathah unfortunate in his early days, Cardew," said Arthur Augustus. "He is a wippin' chap, and a particulah fwien of mine."

"Queer taste in friends, I must say! Do the other fellows speak to him?"

"Yaas, wathah! I am happy to say that there are vewy few wotten snobs at St. Jim's."

"That means that I'm a snob, I suppose?" said Cardew pleasantly.

"I feah, Cardew, that you are wathah a snob! I'm sowwy to see it."

Jack Blake chuckled.

"Go it, Gussy!" he said.

Arthur Augustus went it. His noble indignation was aroused.

News: The men in Cornwall have dark complexions and black hair, we are told. But there are sandy coves there!

Good cooks are still scarce in the Royal Navy, we read. And bad ones, of course, have to make themselves scarce.

Echo of Navy Week: "There goes eight bells," said the able seaman to Skimpole; "it's my watch below." "Good gracious!" exclaimed Skimpole. "Fancy your watch striking as loudly as that!"

Flash: Britain has a hush-hush speedboat, we read. Well, it will be a change from some of the others that kick up such a din, anyhow!

I heard this in the barber's shop at Rylcombe. "Are you one of our regular customers, sir?" asked the barber of a stranger. "I don't seem to recognise your face!" "I don't suppose you do," growled the customer. "It's some time since I've been in—and it's healed up now!"

Story: A second-hand dealer in Rylcombe could not get rid of a car he had bought for two pounds. "Why not put a notice on—something snappy, like 'Who'll take this car away for £3?'" suggested a friend. The dealer put a card on it, and not long after a man came in. "I've been looking at that apology for a car of yours," he said. "I suppose there's a catch in your offer somewhere, but I'll take a chance. Where's the three pounds?"

As the sage said: The road to war is paved with good intentions.

Signing off till next Wed., chaps.

"I'm sorry to see you actin' in this way, Cardew," he continued; "and if you are guilty of furthah bad taste like this, I feah that fwien-ship between us will be impos."

"Suppose you keep your friendship till it's asked for!" said Cardew tartly.

And he went up the passage, leaving Arthur Augustus D'Arcy to digest that remark.

"Bai Jove!" he exclaimed at last.

And he went back into Study No. 6.

Cardew sauntered up the passage to the fourth door from Study No. 5, and opened it without knocking.

There was a half-legible "9" on the door. The new boy had arrived at his quarters at last.

CHAPTER 5.

Not Kindred Spirits!

LEVISON and Sidney Clive were in the study, just getting tea ready. But they paused as the new junior came in.

"Hallo!" said Clive cordially.

"Don't trouble to knock at the door!" said Levison sarcastically.

"This is my study, I think?" said Cardew.

"That's right enough," said Clive. "Mr. Railton told us you were coming in here. You're welcome!"

"Thanks!"

"Had your tea?"

"Not yet."

"Then take a pew and tuck-in!"

"Many thanks!"

Cardew seated himself at the table. Both Levison and Clive regarded the new Fourth Former with some interest. It was easy to see that Cardew of the Fourth was a new fellow a little out of the common.

"You're a relation of D'Arcy's, I hear?" remarked Levison over tea.

"A very distant relation," said Cardew carelessly; "not much of a connection. My name's Cardew."

"Mine's Levison, and this is Clive."

"Levison?" repeated Cardew.

"Yes. We haven't met before, have we?" asked Levison, with a curious look at the newcomer.

"No; but I've heard of you. You used to be at Greyfriars, I believe?"

"Yes!" said Levison shortly.

"You had to get out?"

"I left!" said Levison, still more shortly. Levison did not like to be reminded of the circumstances in which he had left Greyfriars. "I heard you'd been to school before. Were you at Greyfriars?"

"Oh, no! A school in the North." Cardew did not volunteer the name of the school, however.

"Then I don't know how you know anything about my having been at Greyfriars," said Levison, not very cordially.

"I knew a chap there," explained Cardew. "He's still there, I believe—chap named Skinner. I was with him one holiday, and he told me a lot about Greyfriars, and mentioned you, and that you'd changed your school. That's how I know."

"Skinner wasn't a friend of mine," said Levison dryly.

"I understand that you had some good times together," said Cardew, with a smile. "You were a bit given to kicking over the traces."

"Perhaps I was," assented Levison. "I know I was an ass."

Tea proceeded, with Cardew chatting away quite cheerfully. When it was finished the table was cleared and Clive and Levison settled down to prep.

"Are you going to do any prep, Cardew?" asked Clive.

"Mr. Lathom didn't mention it," said Cardew.

"I'm not bound to, I suppose, the first evening?"

"I suppose not."

"Then I shan't! No good looking for work."

Cardew sat down in the armchair and crossed his legs and yawned as the studymates went on working. His eyes dwelt curiously on Ernest Levison several times. What he had heard from Skinner of Greyfriars on the subject of Levison had evidently interested him. He took out his silver cigarette-case and selected a smoke.

Clive looked up.

"We don't smoke here," he said.

"Really?"

"Yes, really!"

"We live and learn," said Cardew, laughing.

"I seem to have dropped into a Sunday-school by mistake."

"Oh, don't be an ass!" said Clive gruffly. "You won't find anything goody-goody in this study; but we don't play the fool."

Cardew's eyes gleamed. He was by no means slow to quarrel, as his encounter with Harry Hammond had shown. But he checked the angry

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reply that rose to his lips. Perhaps he realised that it would be a bad beginning to start with a row in his own quarters.

"So you object to a fag in the study?" he said.

"Yes, we do."

"You, too, Levison?"

"Yes," said Levison, without looking up.

"You've changed a bit since you left Greyfriars, haven't you?" asked Cardew.

"Yes."

"Well, I suppose it goes by the majority," said Cardew, and he threw the cigarette into the fire. "I don't care twopence either way."

He sat and yawned, and regarded the two workers, till Clive, having finished his prep, rose. He left the study, and Levison worked on alone till he was finished. Then he yawned and sat back in his chair.

"Finished?" asked Cardew.

"Yes. Coming down to the Common-room?"

"No hurry. What kind of a chap is that—Clive. I think you call him?"

"First-rate. A South African," said Levison.

"You get on with him?"

"Certainly!"

"I suppose you were spoofing about the smokes?" asked Cardew. "It isn't like what I heard about you from Skinner."

"I've changed a bit in some ways since I knew Skinner," said Levison calmly. "I've chucked up smoking, and taken up footer, and some other things."

"You feel better for it?" asked Cardew sarcastically.

"Heaps!"

"No accountin' for tastes. I was lookin' forward to makin' your acquaintance, Levison, when I came here."

"Thanks! Well, you've made it."

"I was goin' to try to get into the same study. I thought we should pull together."

"I don't see why we shouldn't," said Levison.

"Hallo, come in!" he added, as a tap came at the door.

The door opened, and Levison minor of the Third came in, with a book under his arm.

He hesitated, however, as he saw Cardew.

"Come in, Frank," said Levison. "This is Cardew, my new studymate. My minor, Cardew! Did you get on all right with Selby at prep, Franky?"

"Not first-rate," said Frank ruefully. "If you'd like to give me a hand with Eutropius—"

"Like a bird," said Levison. "Sit down, kid!" Cardew stared at them.

"Do you spend your spare time coachin' fags?" he asked.

"Yes, when the fag happens to be my minor."

"My hat! I've dropped into a refuge for noble youths!" grunted Cardew. "I never knew St. Jim's was like this. I don't know how I shall stand the high moral atmosphere of this place, I'm dashed if I do!"

"Oh, you'll get used to it!" said Levison, laughing. "If you don't like it, get along to Racke's study—No. 7, in the Shell. You'll most likely find a game of bridge going on there."

Cardew opened his eyes.

"Oh! You're not all plaster saints, then?" he said.

"Ha, ha, ha! No. Some of us are asking to be sacked, and only waiting to be found out.

Better run along and see Racke, if you want to join the merry crowd."



"Gweat Scott!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus as Cardew came in. "What on earth's happened?" asked Tom Merry. The new junior's face was striking in its aspect. Both eyes were blackened, his nose swollen, his lip out, and there were dark bruises on his face.

"What sort of a chap is this Racke?"

"A swanking bounder! His father rolls in money, and Racke's pockets bulge with it."

"Is he in a good set here?"

Levison chuckled.

"No fear! He's the great chief of the merry blades—otherwise the shady blackguards! If you want to be in a good set you'll have to leave smoking and bridge alone, and take up footer and playing the game! That's a tip for you, as you're a new chap!"

"Oh!" said Cardew slowly. "I think I see! I don't think I'll trouble Racke. Ta-ta!"

He sauntered out of the study, and Levison and his minor worked at Eutropius uninterrupted. Cardew went down to the Common-room, where he was the recipient of a good many glances.

New boys, as a rule, did not attract much attention; but all the School House fellows recognised that Cardew was not cast in the usual mould of new boys.

Tom Merry & Co. had not been favourably impressed by Cardew, but they made it a point to speak to him and be agreeable.

It was to be observed, however, that Arthur Augustus did not seek after the society of his distant relation. It was possible that the fastidious swell of St. Jim's had begun to wish that his distant relation was a little more distant.

CHAPTER 6.

Cardew to the Rescue!

"YOW-OW! Leggo, Cutts, you beast!"

Cardew looked round.

It was the following day, and lessons were over. Tom Merry & Co. had gone down to the footer ground for a little practice before dark, and Levison and Clive were with them.

Cardew had looked on for some minutes without thinking of joining in, and then had strode away across the quad. He was passing under the old elms when that sudden howl burst upon his ears.

It proceeded from Levison minor.

Cardew recognised the fag who had come to Study No. 9 the previous evening. Frank was wriggling in the grasp of a big Fifth Former, who was pulling his ears.

The Fifth Former was Cutts, quite a prominent personage at St. Jim's, though Cardew was not aware of it. The dandy of the Fifth was not a good-natured fellow; but he was not a bully, as a rule. But he had a special down on the two Levisons.

Levison of the Fourth had been very useful to him at one time in the way of smuggling smokes into the school, and taking messages to places of shady repute. But since his reformation Levison had had nothing to do with Gerald Cutts.

This was naturally annoying to the great man

of the Fifth, who missed Levison's services, and regarded his new attitude as sheer cheek. So Cutts seldom saw Levison minor without cuffing him, Levison major being rather a dangerous customer to cuff, though only a junior.

"Leggo!" howled Frank. "You rotter! I'll kick your shins!"

Cardew came up quickly.

"Let the kid alone!" he said.

Cutts stared at him.

"Oh, you're the new fag!" he said. "I've heard of you! Cut off before I kick you round the quad, you cheeky little beast!"

"Let the kid alone!" said Cardew coolly. "What are you bullyin' him for?"

Cutts did not reply, but he twisted the fag's ears agsin, and Frank gave a yell of anguish.

Cardew strode forward, grasped the Fifth Former by the arm, and fairly dragged him away from the fag.

Cutts was so surprised by his action that he went unresistingly.

Levison minor jerked himself away, and stood rubbing his ears, and blinking at the two. Then he caught Cardew by the arm.

"Hook it!" he said tersely.

Cardew did not move. He did not intend to hook it. He looked coolly at Cutts, who was panting with rage. The junior had laid hands on Cutts just as if Cutts was another junior like himself, and not a great man at all!

"You cheeky little sweep!" gasped Cutts at last. "Why, I'll—I'll smash you!"

"Hook it, you ass!" said Frank shrilly, dragging at Cardew's arm.

Cardew shook him off.

He put up his hands like lightning as Cutts sprang at him, and the Fifth Former, to his astonishment, found himself stopped.

Cutts was a good head taller than the Fourth Former, and he was an athletic fellow, and a good boxer.

Grundy of the Shell, who was a very powerful fellow, sometimes cheeked Cutts, but the other juniors generally gave him a wide berth. For a Fourth Former to stand up to Cutts like this was amazing, but Cardew was doing it with perfect coolness.

"Oh, my hat!" ejaculated Frank.

Cardew had to give ground under Cutts' rush, but his defence was sound. It was evident that he had little to learn about boxing. He was no match physically for the Fifth Former, but he faced him with perfect coolness.

Cutts was far from intending anything so undignified as a fight with a junior of the Fourth Form. He had intended to administer a licking. But it was pretty clear that the licking could not be administered otherwise than by fighting.

He piled furiously in on Cardew, forgetting all

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caution in his rage, till a fist came lashing into his face, and Cutts staggered back.

In an instant Cardew was springing forward; his right hand crashed on Cutts' chin, and his left followed it up instantly, landing in the Fifth Former's eye.

Cutts went with a crash to the ground.

"Oh crumbs!" gasped Levison minor.

Cutts, more astonished than hurt, lay gasping on the ground. He had been fairly knocked down by a Fourth Former! Cutts really found some difficulty in realising it.

"Hook it, Cardew, before he gets up!" yelled Frank, catching at his champion's sleeve.

"Rats!"

"You can't fight him—a Fifth Former!"

"I wouldn't run if he were a Sixth Former!" said Cardew disdainfully. "Let go my arm, you young ass!"

"Look here! Don't be an ass, you know!" urged Frank, in alarm.

Cardew pushed him aside and stood on his guard, his teeth set, his eyes gleaming, but his face quite calm. It was evident that the new junior had plenty of pluck. Cutts was scrambling to his feet, his face pale with rage and a deadly look in his eyes.

He did not speak a word, but came on savagely, throwing all his strength and skill into the conflict now, fighting the junior as if Cardew were a fellow of his own weight.

Frank looked on in alarm.

Cardew was putting up a great fight, but he was naturally no match for the senior, and he was being savagely handled. Gerald Cutts hit with all his strength.

There was a dark shade round Cutts' eye, and he knew that it was going to be discoloured—he could feel that. The bare idea of going about with a black eye—administered by a junior—made Cutts wild with rage. There was a crash as Cardew went to the ground, knocked spinning by a right-hander full in his flushed handsome face.

"Now, you young scoundrel!" said Cutts, between his teeth.

He grasped the junior by the collar, dragged him up, and began to box his ears right and left.

Frank Levison rushed valiantly into the fray, hammering at Cutts with his little fists, but a backhander sent him spinning.

But Cardew was not finished yet.

He was fighting hard again, and Cutts had to defend himself. The two had closed now, and Cardew's head went into chancery.

Cutts, forgetful of everything but his own fury, was hammering him with savage force.

Cardew struggled with all his strength, but he could not break loose, and Cutts hammered him till he was out of breath, and then pitched him to the ground.

Cardew lay where he fell, gasping weakly.

The Fifth Former looked down at him savagely, and then turned and strode away. He disappeared through the trees.

Frank ran to Cardew, and knelt by his side.

"I—I say!" he stammered.

He gazed at the junior's face in horror. Both Cardew's eyes were closing, his nose was swollen, his face was bruised and stained with blood. He blinked feebly at the fag.

"He's gone!" said Frank. "I—I say, let me help you up, old chap! It was ripping of you to stand up to him. But—but—"

"Oh, by gad!" muttered Cardew. "I feel pretty bad!"



Detective Kerr
Investigates

No. 17.

The
A. R. P.
Mystery!

BERNARD GLYN, the amateur inventor of the Shell, startled his chums, Noble and Dane, by announcing that some plans for a new air defence invention he had been working on had disappeared. The value of the plans was perhaps problematic, but the theft suggested that somebody thought them worth having. On top of this, Baggy Trimble came to Glyn to say he had seen the plans lying on the table in Herr Schneider's study. Tom Merry called on the German master on Glyn's behalf, and found Herr Schneider more than willing to restore the plans. The Herr said he knew nothing about them—and, hoping to get to the bottom of the mystery, "Detective" Kerr investigated.

KERR: Excuse me, Herr Schneider—
HERR SCHNEIDER: Is it tat you vish to speak vix me, Kerr, mein poy?

KERR: I'd like to ask you about Glyn's A.R.P. invention, sir, if you won't think it too much of a nerve on my part?

HERR SCHNEIDER: On your part, Kerr, I perceive only to pest intentions. You are vun clear-headed poy and villingly I talk to you. Te plans, I found zem lying on a pile of exercise papers dis afternoon—

KERR: Had you been absent from your study, Herr Schneider?

HERR SCHNEIDER: Ja, I had been down to te hall for dinner. Afterwards, I spoke vix Mr. Railton, and I did not go to my study till after tree o'clock. In tat time, te plans must have been placed in my room—

KERR: Do you suspect anybody in particular, sir?

HERR SCHNEIDER: Nein, nein. I have no enemy at St. Jim's, so far as I know. I am te peaceful man, and I do not like being mixed up vix troubles. Already I have heard whispirings tat I am te spy. It is ridiculous!

KERR: I agree with you, sir. But if the plans were planted in your study, somebody must have done it to throw suspicion on you. Who have you punished lately?

"You shouldn't have fought him!" said Frank, in distress. "But there's one thing jolly certain, Cutts will get sacked for this as soon as the House-master sees your face!"

Cardew sat up weakly.

"Sacked!" he muttered. "What rot! Why should he be sacked?"

"You wait till Railton sees your chivvy and it comes out that Cutts did it!" said Frank vengefully. "He'll have Cutts up before the Head at once!"

He helped Cardew to his feet. The junior,

HERR SCHNEIDER: Nopody. Except tat I set Scrope a Sherman exercise to re-write yesterday. But it was very easy, even for a pack-ward poy like Scrope. He should have handed it to me dis afternoon—

KERR: Was Scrope's exercise on your table when you found Glyn's A.R.P. plans, Herr Schneider?

HERR SCHNEIDER: I did not notice, Kerr. I was quite excited to find drawings on my table, when I expected exercises. It was almost dark in my study, being such a dull afternoon, and I plundered against te table before switching on te electric light—

KERR: Thank you, Herr Schneider!

KERR: Oh, Glyn! Did many fellows know about your A.R.P. invention?

GLYN: Very few. Noble and Dane, of course. And Tom Merry and Lowther and Manners. Oh, and Trimble looked in with Scrope yesterday evening!

KERR: Wait for me, Scrope.

SCROPE: I've an invitation to one of Racke's little parties, and I've no time to spare.

KERR: I see. Have you been with Racke all the afternoon?

SCROPE: No. I went out with Clampe of the New House.

KERR: Hadn't you an exercise to re-write for Herr Schneider?

SCROPE: I had—but I gave it a miss. Ten to one the Herr will forget to ask me for it. And I wanted a stroll.

KERR: Any objection to telling me where you went?

SCROPE: As far as the village. Ask Clampe if you don't believe me.

KERR: Remember what time you were in the village?

SCROPE: I won't pretend my watch was going, Kerr, because you know it was broken yesterday when Trimble collided with me—but as it happened, I did notice we were in Rylcombe at half past three by the old sundial outside the village hall. You've seen it?

KERR: Yes, I remember seeing the sundial.

SCROPE: Clampe will corroborate everything I've said.

KERR: I expect so, as he's your crony. But I've already got a useful slant on the mystery of Glyn's A.R.P. invention, I think.

(How does Kerr prove that Scrope is the culprit? Turn to page 33 for his solution.)

weak, panting, almost sick with exhaustion, leaned against the tree.

"Let me help you in," said Frank.

Cardew shook his head.

"You've got to have your face seen to," urged Frank. "My aunt! It will give Railton a fit when he sees it!"

Cardew blinked round him through his swollen eyes. The elms had hidden the scene from the House, and there was no one at hand. Most of the juniors were on the footer ground, making the most of what daylight remained.

"So Cutts would be sacked, you think?" said Cardew.

"Sure to be," said Frank savagely; "and serve him right! The beast was going for you like a hooligan!"

"Well, I asked for it," said Cardew, with a twisted grin. "I don't want the fellow to get into a row. You keep your mouth shut, young 'un!"

"But, I say——"

"Don't say a word about it!" said Cardew sharply.

"No need to say a word about it," said Frank, with a grin. "Do you think a chap is allowed to go about the school with a face like that? As soon as you're seen there will be a fearful row. Cutts lost his temper, or he wouldn't have been fool enough to paste you like that. It will finish him here."

"As soon as I'm seen?" said Cardew.

"Yes; and you can't keep out of sight, I suppose?"

Cardew did not reply. He remained silent for several minutes, dabbing at his streaming nose with his handkerchief.

Frank watched him curiously.

"Haden't you better come in?" he said at last.

"I suppose the fool lost his temper," said Cardew. "Still, I punched him. I'm not going to get him into a row. Go and see whether there's anybody near the gates, and come back and tell me."

"But——"

"Do as I tell you!" snapped Cardew.

An order in that tone would have roused the fag's ire at once on any other occasion. But Cardew had received a terrific licking on Frank's

account, and Frank was grateful. He ran through the trees, and came back in a couple of minutes.

"Figgins & Co. are jawing at the gates," he said. "Old Taggles is outside his lodge, too."

What does it matter?"

"Then I can't get out that way."

"Get out?" repeated Frank.

Cardew looked round again.

"Can I get over the wall without bein' seen?" he asked. "You know the lie of the land better than I do."

"Yes; but——"

"Show me the way, then."

"But, I say——"

"Buck up! I don't want to be spotted like this, you young fathead!"

"But I don't see——" said Frank, in wonder.

"No need for you to see," said Cardew coolly. "Come and give me a bunk up, and keep your head shut!"

Levison minor led the way, and, keeping in cover of the trees, they reached the school wall, where it bordered the road.

Frank was lost in astonishment, unable to guess what was in Cardew's mind.

"Bunk me up!" said the Fourth Former.

"You're going out like that?"

"Yes; and mind you don't say a word about Cutts!"

"Oh, all right!"

Where the slanting oak shaded and hid the wall the fag bunked up the Fourth Former, and Cardew drew himself over the wall under the branches and dropped into the road on the other side.

Frank, in a state of amazement, took his way to the School House.

CHAPTER 7.

Pleasant for Cutts!

BAGGY TRIMBLE of the Fourth met Tom Merry & Co. as they came in in the dusk.

Baggy was chuckling.

"You chaps seen Cutts?" he asked gleefully.

"Haven't seen him," said Tom Merry. "What's the matter with Cutts?"

"He's got a black eye!" chortled Trimble.

"Bai Jove! Cutts with a black eye!" ejaculated D'Arcy.

"Yes, rather!" Trimble exploded in a series of gleeful cackinnations. "He, he, he! Cutts, you know! A giddy black eye! I heard him tell Railton he'd had a fall from his bike. Railton believed him—but I don't! He, he, he! Cutts has been fighting somebody! He, he, he!"

"Oh, my hat! What a treat we've missed!" exclaimed Blake regretfully. "Who was the happy man?"

Trimble shook his head.

"I don't know; must have been a senior."

"Pretty serious for seniors to get fighting and to adorn one another with black eyes!" grinned Monty Lowther. "It means a painful interview with the Head. More likely Grundy has been cutting up rusty!"

"Yaas, wathah! More like Gwunday," said Arthur Augustus. "Bai Jove, here he is! Have you been fightin' Cutts, Gwunday?"

Grundy of the Shell shook his head.

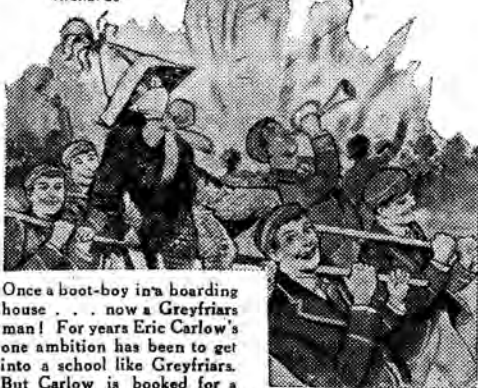
"No; I'm ready to, if it comes to that," he answered.

"Bai Jove! It wasn't Gwunday, then!"

"Let's go and see him and sympathise," chuckled Monty Lowther. "If Cutts has got a black eye he will be in need of sympathy."

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PROFESSOR SKIMPOLE'S HOROSCOPE

This Week:
MARIE RIVERS
(The St. Jim's Nurse).



"Ha, ha, ha!"
"Wats! I wegard such a pwoceedin' as beneath a fellow's dig, Lowthah! I wufuse to take any notice of Cutts!"

"Bow-wow!" said Lowther.
Monty Lowther was too much of a humorist to be troubled with considerations of dignity.

If Cutts had a black eye Lowther meant to see that black eye. Cutts was very unpopular with the juniors, especially with Tom Merry & Co., with whom he had had many rubs.

Quite a little crowd of juniors followed Lowther to the Fifth Form passage to see Cutts' black eye, which was already growing celebrated.

"Mind, you're to sympathise with him. This is a visit of sympathy," said Monty Lowther, as they reached Cutts' study. "But be ready to dodge. Cutts mayn't like sympathy. He's rather an ungrateful beast!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"
Lowther tapped on the door and threw it open. The juniors crowded round the doorway, grinning, but they did not enter.

They were only too well aware that the dandy of the Fifth was not likely to show a due appreciation and gratitude for that sympathetic visit.

Cutts was in the study with St. Leger. His left eye was hidden by a huge bandage, which apparently enclosed a beef steak. His aspect was somewhat peculiar.

What could be seen of his face was not agreeable to look at. A black eye was bad enough for the elegant, fastidious dandy of the Fifth, but that was far from being the worst of Cutts' troubles.

He was cool again now, and he realised the seriousness of the tremendous thrashing he had bestowed upon the junior. For Cardew and his injuries he did not care a rap—excepting in regard to the consequences.

But the probable consequences made Cutts shiver. He knew that Cardew's face must be a mass of bruises, from the way he had hammered it in his fury. He could have kicked himself for his folly. What would happen when the Housemaster saw it and learned that those injuries had been inflicted by a senior?

There was no excuse that Cutts could make—no explanation, excepting that he had lost his temper and hammered the junior like a brutal hooligan.

That kind of explanation would not serve him much with the Head. The least he had to expect was a severe flogging—he, Cutts of the Fifth, the dandy of St. Jim's, the glass of fashion and the mould of form in the school!

It was quite probable that the Head would not consider that a flogging would meet the case—would hold that the fellow who had acted so brutally should be expelled from the school.

With such happy thoughts in his mind, Cutts was not exactly in a humour for Lowther's visit. He glared savagely with one eye at the crowd of juniors.

"What do you fags want?" he snarled.
"Only called to inquire after your health, my lord," said Monty Lowther meekly. "How is the eye getting on?"

"Is it black but comely?" asked Levison.

"Ha, ha, ha!"
"Who handed it out?" inquired Dig. "Tell us who it was, Cutts, and we'll give up a testimonial for him."

"Get out!" roared Cutts.

Lowther looked pained.

"But we've come to sympathise!" he exclaimed.

"Don't be ungrateful, Cutts! Won't you accept our condolences?"

THIS week I have been in the school sanatorium with a chill, under the care of Marie Rivers, Talbot's friend of the old days, who is now the school nurse. Miss Rivers has tended me so well that I am on the high road to recovery already. She smiled when I asked which month she was born in. "Really, Skimpole, you must keep quiet and rest," said Miss Rivers, half jestingly.

However, she finally admitted to being a subject of Capricorn, the Goat (all birthdays between December 22nd and January 19th). People born in this period, by the way, are the very opposite of "goats" in the accepted sense of the word. Miss Rivers shows the ruling impulse of those Capricornians also coming under Venus—that is, a generous desire to protect the weak, and a deep sympathy and patience with suffering. She conquers by tenderness. With boys born in this period, one would expect a scorn for underhandedness, and a quiet strength both in work and sport.

Miss Rivers accepted my reading with some interest, but shook her finger at me in mock severity. "I feel sure you are trying to flatter me, to get me to let you stay up a little later," she said. "Now, Skimpole, you must get some more sleep. You are due back in the class-room to-morrow morning, remember!"



Cutts caught up a ruler from the table, with a furious look out of one eye. The other was not available.

There was a sudden scampering of feet in the passage, and the juniors vanished, with a yell of laughter.

Cutts kicked the door savagely shut.

"It's all over the, House already!" he said between his teeth.

"Well, it wasn't likely to be kept dark," said St. Leger. "You've stuffed up Railton, and that's the chief thing!"

Cutts threw himself savagely into his chair. He had lied to the Housemaster certainly; but what was the use of that after Cardew's face was seen? It was only a respite, leading to nothing.

"But who gave you that eye?" asked St. Leger. "You haven't been rowing with Kildare surely?"

"No, ass!"

"A New House senior?" asked St. Leger. "You must have been an ass to get mixed up in a House row like a fag!"

"Do you think I'm such an idiot?" snarled Cutts. "It was a junior."

"Oh crumbs! You let a junior give you a black eye?" yelled St. Leger.

"I half killed him for it!" said Cutts between his teeth.

St. Leger became suddenly grave.

"More fool you!" he said curly. "Is that what

(Continued on next page.)

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you're scowling about? Have you put your foot in it with your beastly temper?"

"Yes, I have!" growled Cutts.

"Who was it?"

"That new kid, Cardew."

"He's a cheeky little beast! I've noticed that," said St. Leger. "But—but you don't mean to say you've really hurt him, Cutts, you born idiot?"

"I—I lost my temper," muttered Cutts. "Look at my eye! I—I rather hammered him. He stood up to me, and—and I fought him—"

"Fought a kid in the Fourth, and hurt him?" said St. Leger, with a curl of the lip. "Better not tell anybody outside this study."

"No need to tell anybody when he's seen, and—and I suppose he's seen already," muttered Cutts wretchedly. "I—I was a fool; I lost my temper. His face must be a picture. Mine is nothing to it. I fairly smashed him."

"You ass!" said St. Leger.

"I left him on the ground," said Cutts, glancing towards the window, which was darkening. "I—I suppose he's come in. There was a fag with him."

"Do you mean to say that it's so bad that he mayn't have been able to come in?" exclaimed St. Leger, aghast.

"I—I never meant to hit so hard. I—I lost my temper."

"Must have lost your senses, too, I should say. This may mean the sack."

"Do you think I don't know that?" snarled Cutts. "Don't jaw me. Get out, and see whether the whelp has come in. Try to fix it with him to keep it dark, if you can. Promise him anything. I'll stand him a fiver if he likes—anything!"

"I'll try," said St. Leger.

"And buck up!"

St. Leger left the study. He was absent about a quarter of an hour, and Cutts waited savagely and anxiously for his return.

He came back at last.

"Well?" said Cutts eagerly.

"He's not come in."

Cutts' face paled.

"Why hasn't he come in? Have you been to his study?"

"Yes. Levison and Clive haven't seen anything of him."

"Levison minor was with him. See if you can find him."

"The Third are at prep now in the Form-room."

"Hang it! After all, Cardew may have gone out."

"The gates were locked long ago."

Cutts gritted his teeth.

There was silence in the study; and the thoughts of the hapless senior were not enviable.

CHAPTER 8.

In the Limelight!

"THAT new kid is looking for trouble again," Clive remarked.

Levison nodded.

Levison was not wholly pleased with the new-comer in Study No. 9. In his reckless days he would have welcomed a fellow like Cardew with open arms. Cardew would have been a pal after his own heart.

Levison had read his character well. Reckless, undisciplined, cool, and cynical; something

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of a blackguard in his way, but without the meanness of Racke & Co., which had worried Levison's sensitive nerves even in his worst days, when he was hand-in-glove with Racke.

But things had changed with Levison, and he was not looking for a companion who revelled in reckless escapades.

"He's missed call-over, and it's only his second day here," said Clive. "Must be an ass!"

He shrugged his shoulders.

There was a knock at the study door, and Kildare of the Sixth looked in.

"Hasn't Cardew come in yet?" he asked.

"I haven't seen him," said Levison.

"Do you know where he has gone?"

"Not an idea."

"He must be out of gates," said the prefect.

"I suppose so. I haven't seen him since he was looking on at the footer."

Kildare frowned, and went down the passage.

"The young ass will get a licking," said Clive uneasily. "He ought to know he can't play the giddy ox like this. St. Leger's been inquiring after him, and now Kildare."

"I don't quite see what St. Leger wanted with him," remarked Levison. "Nothing to do with the Fifth. Well, it's his own funeral."

And Levison went on with his work.

Other fellows besides Study No. 9 were interested in Cardew's curious proceedings. To miss calling-over on his second day at St. Jim's was



"Why shouldn't you be sacked?" said Cardew coolly. "Your the whole, I think I shall like St. Jim's better without a fellow of your Cutts appealing!"

rather a cool proceeding. It was easy to see that the new junior had a careless disregard for authority, but this was asking for trouble.

Tom Merry & Co. were chatting in the hall, on the subject of Cardew, when the new Fourth Former came in at last. All glances turned upon him, and there was a general exclamation. "Gweat Scott!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus.

"Cardew," exclaimed Tom Merry, "what on earth's happened?"

Cardew's face was striking in its aspect.

Both eyes were blackened, his nose was swollen, his lip was cut, and there were dark bruises on his face. The time that had elapsed since the hammering by Gerald Cutts had caused his injuries to swell and darken. His handsome face was almost unrecognisable.

He must have been suffering severe pain—that was evident—but his manner was as cool as usual as he nodded to the juniors.

"I'm rather late, I suppose?" he remarked.

"Yaas, wathah! But what's happened, deah boy?" exclaimed D'Arcy. "Have you been wun ovah?"

"Scrapping with a tramp?" asked Blake.

St. Leger was in the passage, and he hurried away to Cutts' study.

Cutts was there, in an anxious and despondent mood, not thinking of work.

"He's come in, Cutts," said St. Leger hurriedly.



y. "Your sweet temper might break out again any time. On fellow of your sort here! Ta-ta!" "Cardew——" exclaimed appealingly.

Cutts started up.

"What—what does he look like?"

"Simply awful!"

"I—I'd better see him. Where can the young fool have been all this time? Try to get him to come here, St. Leger."

"I don't suppose he'll come."

"Try—try, anyway—before he's seen!"

"Oh, I'll try!"

St. Leger hurried back to the hall, where Cardew was surrounded by the juniors, all concerned and eagerly inquiring.

Cardew's appearance had caused a sensation. St. Leger hurriedly joined the group.

"Come with me, Cardew, will you?" he said.

Cardew blinked at him with his swollen eyes.

"I've got to report to Mr. Railton," he said.

"Cutts wants to speak to you first."

Cardew grinned.

"I'll come, if you like."

He followed St. Leger.

The juniors exchanged glances.

"What on earth does Cutts want to see him for?" said Monty Lowther. "My hat! Cutts didn't have anything to do with his chivvy getting like that, surely?"

"Cutts has a black eye," said Blake.

"But—but surely——"

"Bai Jove! If Cutts tweated him like that, the wotah ought to be kicked out of the school!" said Arthur Augustus wrathfully.

"He will be if he did it," said Tom Merry dryly. "But it seems rather too thick even for Cutts. Cardew hasn't mentioned him, anyway."

The juniors were left in a state of wonder and surprise. Cardew followed St. Leger to the study in the Fifth Form passage.

Cutts of the Fifth started at the sight of him. In his worst anticipations he had not supposed that the junior looked like this. At that moment Cutts felt something like remorse, as well as apprehension for himself.

"You wanted to see me?" said Cardew calmly. "Like to look at your handiwork, dear boy? Rather a corker, isn't it?"

"I—I never meant to paste you like that!" stammered Cutts.

"But you did, all the same!"

"Shut the door, St. Leger! Look here, Cardew, you provoked me; look at my eye!"

"Yes, I'm glad to see that," said Cardew, with a nod. "I wondered whether it would be black. It's a beauty!"

St. Leger grinned, and Cutts gritted his teeth. The cool insolence of the junior was intensely exasperating to the Fifth Former, but he could not venture to give rein to any anger at that moment. Cardew held the whip hand now.

"There'll be a row when your face is seen," said Cutts. "I—I suppose you know that?"

"I suppose so. Your kind of hooliganism can't be allowed here," said Cardew. "But you can tell the Head I gave you a black eye, you know. And tell him what I did it for—because you were ill-using a fag."

"I want you to keep it dark," muttered Cutts. Cardew laughed.

"I've got to go in and report to Railton. Shall I put on a Guy Fawkes' mask? Do you think he would notice it?"

"Don't be a young idiot!" snarled Cutts.

"You can spin him some yarn——"

"Why should I?"

"I—I'll make it worth your while."

Cardew seemed to reflect.

"What sort of yarn shall I spin him?" he asked. "Give a chap some tips. I dare say you're more used to lying than I am."

"Tell him you've been out of gates, and—and got into a fight with a villager, or something."

"How simple!" said Cardew. "Of course, a lie or two more or less doesn't matter to you, Cutts, does it?"

"I'll make it worth your while. I'll stand you a quid if you like," said Cutts.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Cutts stared savagely at the junior as he burst into a hearty laugh.

"Look here, what do you say to a fiver?" said Cutts desperately. "I've got it here. I'll stand it if you'll stuff up Railton and let the matter drop."

And Cutts took a five-pound note from his pocket.

Cardew glanced at it.

"Only one you've got?" he asked.

"Yes. That doesn't matter."

Cardew laughed again, and took out his pocket-book. He opened it, and displayed to the astonished eyes of the Fifth Formers a roll of banknotes.

There were three or four fivers and a wedge of currency notes.

"That's how much I want your fiver!" said Cardew contemptuously.

Cutts thrust his banknote back into his pocket. Bribery was evidently out of the question. The junior had half a dozen times as much money as Cutts of the Fifth, wealthy as he was.

"My hat!" said St. Leger, with some respect in his manner. "You're jolly well fixed for a Fourth Form kid, Cardew!"

Cardew smiled, and slid the pocket-book back into his pocket.

"Anythin' else to propose?" he asked.

"I—I'd be obliged if you'd keep it dark," muttered Cutts wretchedly. He had felt sure that a five-pound note would dazzle a junior of the Fourth. But it was nothing to Cardew, and Cutts had no resource left but to appeal to the junior's generosity. "It will be awfully serious for me if it comes out—you don't want to get a fellow sacked. I'm sorry—I've said so—"

"You'd be obliged if I'd go to Railton and tell him a bushel of lies?" asked Cardew satirically.

"You—you could spin him a yarn. Fellows often spin a Housemaster yarns. Almost any tale would do. He'd never suspect it was a St. Jim's fellow handled you like that unless you tell him—"

"No; he wouldn't guess there was such a rotten hooligan in the school. I dare say," assented Cardew. "Sorry, but I'm not goin' to tell him any lies. I'm rather particular on some points, you know, and that's one of them."

"Look here, Cardew—"

"Besides, why shouldn't you be sacked?" said Cardew coolly. "It would be a good thing for the school, I should say. Your sweet temper might break out again any time. On the whole, Cutts, I think I shall like St. Jim's better without a fellow of your sort here! Ta-ta!"

"Cardew—" exclaimed Cutts appealingly. The dandy of the Fifth had thrown pride to the winds now. He would almost have gone upon his knees.

But the junior walked out of the study without a glance back.

Cutts sank into his chair, pale and harassed.

"That means it's all up!" he muttered.

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"What could you expect?" said St. Leger, with a shrug. "The kid wants to get even with you for handling him like that; it stands to reason. And, dash it all, Cutts, I must say you don't deserve anything better."

"Oh, shut up! Don't jaw me!" snarled Cutts. "I shall get enough of that from the Head."

St. Leger gave another shrug, and left the study. His opinion was that Cutts was booked for the order of the boot, and that Cutts fully deserved it.

CHAPTER 9.

Fals!

CARDEW grinned—a black-and-blue grin—as he came back along the passage.

The news of his plight had spread, and there were a score of fellows in the hall, and all of them stared at Cardew. The new junior was the centre of attraction, the eyefore of all eyes, and his taste for the limelight made him enjoy it, uncomfortable and painful as his condition was.

"What did Cutts want, Cardew?" asked Baggy Trimble inquisitively.

"The pleasure of a little talk with me," said Cardew calmly. "I'm rather an entertainin' chap."

"How did you get like that?" demanded Tom Merry.

"Fightin'."

"I can see that, fathead! But who with?"

"Oh, a chap!"

"A St. Jim's chap?" asked Blake.

"Now you're askin' questions," said Cardew. "I'm afraid I must tear myself away. Railton wants to see me. Rather a surprise for him, this chivvy—what?" And he sauntered off.

"Dashed if I can make him out!" said Blake. "He must be hard as nails, anyway. Precious few fellows would be chortling, with a face like that."

"He will be a picture for weeks," said Talbot. "Don't you know anything about it, Levison? He's your studmate."

Levison shook his head.

"I don't know, but I can guess. It was Cutts, I should say. Cutts has a black eye, and he wanted to see Cardew before Railton saw him. It looks pretty clear to me."

"But Cardew's been out of gates," said Digby. "I heard the bell ring when Taggles let him in. Cutts was indoors."

"Yes, that's queer. If Cutts did it, Cardew must have gone out after—with a chivvy like that!" said Levison. "It's jolly odd, but I think it was Cutts."

Levison returned to his study to get on with his prep. He had to help his minor when his own work was done. The other fellows remained downstairs in excited discussion.

Meanwhile Cardew had tapped on Mr. Railton's door, and the Housemaster's voice bade him enter.

Mr. Railton had a cane lying handy on the table. But the Housemaster forgot all about his cane as he saw the junior's face.

He started to his feet with an exclamation of horror.

"Cardew! What is the matter?"

"Sorry I was late for call-over, sir," said Cardew calmly. "I've been out of gates, and I got back rather late."



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PEN PALS COUPON

12-11-38

"How did you get into that shocking condition, Cardew?" asked Mr. Railton.

"It wasn't my fault, sir. I got into a fight with a chap much bigger than myself," explained Cardew.

"Who was it?"

"I'd never seen him before, sir."

"It must have been some utter ruffian, to treat you in that way!" the Housemaster exclaimed angrily. "This is a matter for the police. How did the quarrel arise?"

"I saw the rotter pitching into a kid, sir, and chipped in."

"Oh! That was quite a proper proceeding," said the Housemaster. "But it was somewhat reckless, Cardew. Can you give a description of the ruffian?"

Mr. Railton little dreamed that the ruffian was a member of the Fifth Form at St. Jim's, and the affray had taken place within the school.

Cardew had no intention of telling him that. His statement that he had been out of gates—true enough in itself—had given the Housemaster a false impression.

"Well, I've never seen the fellow before to-day, sir," said Cardew—another statement that was strictly true. "I suppose I could describe him. He was about five feet nine, and a regular hooligan."

"Probably one of the loafers who frequent the Green Man," said Mr. Railton, knitting his brows. Cardew was silent.

"Your description is scarcely sufficient for the police to trace him, Cardew."

"I'm sorry, sir. I don't want to complain about it. I gave him as much as I could, though I didn't have much chance against him, of course."

The Housemaster frowned.

"Such a matter cannot be allowed to end here!" he exclaimed. "You must try to think, Cardew, whether you cannot give a more accurate description of the man. But no matter now. Go to the House dame at once, and ask her to do what she can for your injuries. I will speak to you again to-morrow. You must be feeling very unwell."

"I've got rather a headache, sir," confessed Cardew.

"Go to Mrs. Mimms at once, my boy!"

"Yes, sir."

Cardew left the study, leaving Mr. Railton frowning. His anger with the junior had quite evaporated; it was directed now towards the unknown hooligan who had hammered a St. Jim's boy in such a merciless manner. It did not cross

Mr. Railton's mind for one moment how near to him that hooligan was.

Cardew did not go to the House dame; he did not want to be fussed over, as he would have expressed it. He went up to the Fourth Form dormitory to bathe his face.

He was followed there by a crowd of juniors. They wanted information, but information was exactly what Cardew did not intend to give.

"What are you keeping it dark for, you fathead?" Blake asked. "Why can't you tell us whether it was a St. Jim's chap or not?"

"Least said soonest mended!" said Cardew.

"Bai Jove, I weally think it must have been Cutts of the Fifth, aftah all."

"Go hon!"

"Have you been fighting with Cutts?"

"Better ask Cutts!"

"What did you tell Railton?"

"Better ask Railton!"

"Weally, Cardew——"

"Rats!"

"Blessed if I see anything to keep it dark for!" said Racke. "If Cutts handled me like that, I'd go straight to the Head!"

"I dare say you would," assented Cardew.

"In the cires, I should approve of such a pwoceedin'," said Arthur Augustus. "You do not owe Cutts any considewation, deah boy, if he has handled you in that wascally, wuffianly way."

"Bow-wow!"

"Perhaps Cardew asked for it," suggested Crooke, with a grin.

"Perhaps I did," assented Cardew coolly.

"Anyway, I've got it, and I'm not going to sneak about the chap who did it, that's all!"

"It would hardly be sneakin' in the cires, Cardew."

"That's my view."

"Then I wegard you as an ass!"

"Same to you!"

"Howevah," said Arthur Augustus, after some reflection, "pewwaps you are wight, deah boy. It would be wathah unpleasent to be the cause of a fellow gettin' sacked frowm the school. Upon the whole, I approve."

"After which there's nothing more to be said," remarked Monty Lowther, "so we can all go and get on with our prep."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Weally, Lowthah——"

The juniors returned to their studies; there was evidently nothing to be got out of Cardew. There was little doubt in their minds that it was Cutts of the Fifth who was responsible for the new junior's injuries, and they could not help feeling a certain admiration for the fellow who had taken so terrible a punishment, and refused the easy opportunity of revenging himself upon his assailant.

Cardew had only to speak out to crush his enemy. He refused to speak. But it was in accordance with his peculiar nature that, while he refrained from the vengeance that was within his power, he had left the wretched Cutts in a state of terror and apprehension.

In these same moments Gerald Cutts was pacing his study restlessly, in a frame of mind that was far from enviable, expecting every minute a summons into the presence of the Head to answer for his brutality.

The summons did not come, but it was long before Cutts dared to allow himself to believe

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that the junior had not betrayed him, and that he had nothing to fear.

Cardew looked at his face in the glass after he had towelled it, and grinned at his reflection. He was likely to be a conspicuous object in the school for more than a week to come, at least.

His head was aching dully, and his eyes pained; his nose felt as though it had been shut in a door. But he was quite cool as he came into Study No. 9, where Levison and Clive had just finished their work.

They smiled as he came in.

Cardew's face was very striking.

"I suppose I look rather a picture?" said Cardew.

"You do, rather," said Clive. "I hope it doesn't hurt very much?"

"It hurts like the merry dickens!"

"Why haven't you made Cutts sit up for it?" said Levison. "Whatever you did, he would be kicked out of the school for handling a junior like that!"

"I haven't said it was Cutts."

"Oh, rats! I know it was!"

"I don't want to keep it secret in this study," said Cardew; "only don't jaw it outside. I'm not goin' to give the brute away. It's all in a day's work. Railton doesn't suspect, and he's not goin' to. Let it drop. Besides, Cutts has a black eye, too."

"But did you fight with him—a Fifth Former?" exclaimed Clive.

"Yes."

"More duffer you!" said Levison. "You knew you weren't within a hundred miles of being a match for him!"

"Yes; I knew that, of course."

"Yet you stood up to him?"

"Exactly!"

"Was he bullying you?" asked Clive.

"Oh, no!"

"You mean that you tackled a Fifth Former of your own accord?"

"Just so!"

"Well, I think you're an ass, then!"

"Thanks!"

"Same here!" said Levison.

"Thanks again!" said Cardew, unmoved. "I wonder whether Latham will excuse me if I don't do any prep? I think I'll chance it, anyway."

Clive left the study to go down to the Common-room.

Levison sat on the corner of the table, waiting for his minor to come in.

There was a tap at the door soon afterwards, and Frank Levison came in, with his books.

He gave a start at the sight of Cardew, and uttered an exclamation of horror.

"Oh crumbs! I—I didn't know it was so bad as that, Cardew! I—I'm awfully sorry!"

"Oh rats!" said Cardew. "Don't waste your sorrow on me! You've kept your head shut about it, I hope?"

"Yes. I did just as you asked me. But——"

Levison of the Fourth looked at his minor in amazement.

"Do you know anything about it, Frank?" he ejaculated.

"Yes. I was there, Ernie."

"And you saw that silly ass stand up to Cutts of the Fifth?" said Levison, with a grin.

"He wasn't a silly ass!" exclaimed Frank warmly. "Hasn't he told you? He stopped Cutts from bullying me; that's why Cutts pitched into him."

(Continued on page 36.)



Miss Meadows, the pretty schoolmistress of Cedar Creek, is mystified when she finds herself overwhelmed with proposals of marriage! She little guesses that she is the—

VICTIM of VENGEANCE!

by Martin Clifford.

Astounding!

"HALLO, there's somebody with Beau!" said Frank Richards.

"And it's a Chin," remarked Bob Lawless.

Frank and Bob cantered up the trail from the Lawless Ranch to the fork where they were accustomed to meet their chum, Vere Beauclerc, on the way to Cedar Creek School.

Beauclerc was waiting for them at the fork of the trail. He was not alone this morning: A fat man in loose garments, with a yellow complexion and almond eyes and a pigtail, was standing in the trail, talking to him with many gestures.

The man was evidently a "Chin," one of the Chinese laundrymen who washed and mended for the citizens of Thompson Town.

He saluted the two schoolboys as they rode up and jumped down from their ponies.

"Goodee-mornee!" he said.

"Good-morning, John!" said Bob Lawless cheerfully. In the Far West all Chinamen are "Johns."

Vere Beauclerc turned a puzzled look on his comrades.

"This is jolly queer, you fellows!" he remarked.

"What is it?" asked Frank.

"I met Ching Ling on the trail," said Beauclerc.

"He's going to the school."

"Me goee!" grinned Ching Ling. "Oh, yes! Some!"

"And he's told me what he's going for," continued Beauclerc. "I think he must be a little potty."

"Chinee allee light," said Ching Ling. "Allee samee Melican man."

"Well, what's he going to the school for, then?" asked Bob Lawless. "Laundry work, I suppose?"

"No. He's going to propose to Miss Meadows—he says so, at least."

"What?" yelled Frank Richards and Bob Lawless simultaneously.

The Chinaman nodded and grinned expansively.

Evidently Ching Ling, the laundryman of Thompson, did not see anything extraordinary in

his journey to Cedar Creek School to propose to Miss Meadows, the Canadian schoolmistress.

"Allee light," he said. "What you tinkee? Me poppee question. Some!"

"My only hat!" ejaculated Frank Richards. "Is he dotty?"

"He must be, I think," said Beauclerc. "Miss Meadows will be annoyed if the howling ass does anything of the sort. I've tried to persuade him to give up the idea."

"Look here, Chin," exclaimed Frank, "you can't do this, you know!"

"Oh, yes!" said Ching Ling. "Me goee. Oh, yes! What you tinkee?"

"You'll be fired out," said Bob warningly. "Can't you see it's like your cheek, you blessed heathen?"

"Chinee good fellee," said Ching Ling warmly. "Miss Meadee wantee husband."

"What?"

"Beautiful Missee Meadee sayee so," said Ching Ling. "Lots Melican man in Thompson goee poppee. Me first catchee nicee Canadian girlee. What you tinkee?"

The three schoolboys gazed blankly at Ching Ling. The laundryman of Thompson was evidently in earnest.

"Miss Meadows said so?" repeated Beauclerc blankly.

"Yes; in papee—advertisement."

"What?" yelled Bob Lawless. "If you're not mad, tell us what you mean, you heathen jay! If you say that our schoolmistress has been advertising in such a way we'll roll you in the mud and cut your pigtail off!"

Ching Ling jumped back in alarm.

"Allee lue!" he exclaimed. "Chinee tellee luth. You lookee."

From a pocket Ching Ling produced a greasy and crumpled copy of the "Thompson Press," the local paper in that section of the Thompson Valley.

"Miss Meadows has an advertisement in that paper," said Frank Richards, with a nod. "I took it to the office for her a couple of days ago."

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I understand that it was for a handyman to take Black Sam's place while he is laid up."

"You lookee," said Ching Ling.

He unfolded the paper and held it out, pointing to the paragraph at the top of the "Matrimonial Column."

That column was a new enterprise of Mr. Penrose, the pushing editor of the "Thompson Press." It was full of matrimonial advertisements, some of them genuine, and some of them fictitious, the work of jokers in Thompson.

The three schoolboys read the special paragraph to which Ching Ling pointed with a yellow finger. They fairly gasped at they read it, for it ran:

"SCHOOLMISTRESS, age twenty-three, tall, considered good-looking, would be glad to hear from a bachelor, with a view to matrimony. Photographs exchanged.—Miss Meadows, Cedar Creek School, Thompson Valley."

"Great Scott!" gasped Bob Lawless.

The schoolboys could scarcely believe their eyes. It was there in plain print, but it was simply incredible that Miss Meadows, the grave schoolmistress, could have inserted such an advertisement.

"It's a spoof!" exclaimed Frank, at last.

"But Mr. Penrose knows Miss Meadows," said Beauclerc. "He would know it was spoof, and he wouldn't put it in."

"My hat! That's so, too."

It was an utter puzzle to the three chums. But to Ching Ling it seemed quite comprehensible. He saw no reason why Miss Meadows should not look upon him as an eligible bachelor.

Frank Richards knitted his brows.

"That must be the advertisement I took to the newspaper office in Thompson for Miss Meadows the other day," he said quietly. "I remember Mr. Penrose was astonished when he saw it, and I couldn't understand the reason then. You fellows remember I told you. It was on Tuesday, when you stayed to help Mr. Slimmey split logs. That cad Gunten lassoed me on the trail and tied me to a tree for an hour."

"I remember," said Beauclerc. "This must be the advertisement you took, then. But—but what can be the meaning of it?"

"I can't understand."

"It beats me, too," said Bob Lawless. "All the same, I'd advise you to hop off home, Ching Ling."

"Me goee."

The chums of Cedar Creek strode on up the trail towards the school, Frank and Bob leading their ponies. Vere Beauclerc walked with them; he had no horse. Ching Ling trotted along with them, smiling expansively.

The Chinaman evidently hoped for a favourable reception from Miss Meadows at Cedar Creek. He was taking the first opportunity of answering the advertisement in order to be first in the field and have first chance.

The four of them arrived together at the gate of the school, Ching Ling fat and satisfied, Frank Richards & Co. puzzled and mystified.

"Ching Ling," said Frank, as they reached the school, "don't let the fellows see that paper here."

"Why nottee?"

"Well, you'd better not," said Frank uneasily. "Miss Meadows would be offended if the kids saw it."

Ching Ling nodded.

"Allee lightee; no showee papee."

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A Disappointment for Ching Ling!

IT was close on time for morning lessons, and most of the Cedar Creek fellows had arrived and were in the school ground. Some of them gathered round the Chin as he came in smiling.

"Hallo, who's your Oriental pard?" grinned Eben Hacke.

"It's the laundryman from Thompson," said Chunky Todgers.

"Me comee see Missee Meadec," said Ching Ling.

Kern Gunten and Keller, the two Swiss schoolboys, came forward. There was a peculiar expression upon Gunten's heavy, sallow face.

"You want to see Miss Meadows, John?" he asked.

"What you tinkee? Me comee poppee question," said Ching Ling calmly.

Evidently Ching Ling was prepared to take the whole wide world into his confidence on that subject.

"What's that?" exclaimed Tom Lawrence.

"You cheeky heathen!" shouted Chunky Todgers.

Gunten laughed.

"Miss Meadows is in the porch," he said.

"This way, Chin!"

"Tankee!"

"Shut up, Gunten!" growled Bob Lawless.

Gunten, unheeding, led the Chinaman to the schoolhouse porch, where Miss Meadows could be seen chatting with Mr. Slimmey, the assistant master. Ching Ling trotted contentedly after the Swiss.

He left the crowd of schoolboys in a buzz of astonishment. Most of them gathered round to look on.

Gunten was evidently pleased. The rogue of the lumber school had a bitter animosity towards Miss Meadows. Only a few days before, the schoolmistress had caught him gambling, and Gunten had been severely punished.

"I've a jolly good mind to punch that foreign cad's head!" growled Frank Richards.

"Why don't you?" said Bob cheerily. "I'd have snatched him baldheaded if he'd roped me to a tree, as he did you the other day."

"He made me promise to let it drop before he untied me," said Frank. "I was taken by surprise and lassoed."

"He tied you to a tree and left you there," said Vere Beauclerc thoughtfully.

"Yes; for an hour in the timber."

"You had Miss Meadows' letter to the 'Press' office with you?"

"Yes; I was on my way to Thompson with it."

"Did Gunten touch the letter?" asked Beauclerc very quietly.

Frank Richards started.

"Yes, Beau. He took it away from me and pretended that he was going to deliver it himself, and leave me tied to the tree all night. He came back afterwards, and let me loose, though."

"Had he tampered with the letter?"

"I—I think not. It looked just the same." Frank Richards drew a quick breath. "Beau, you don't think he could have—"

"I know that's a very extraordinary advertisement for Miss Meadows to have put in the paper," said Beauclerc.

"But the letter hadn't been opened, so far as I could see," said Frank, "or so far as Mr. Penrose could see either."

"Gunten is a cunning beast!"

"But—he wouldn't dare—"

"Hallo! Ching Ling's getting down to business," said Bob Lawless. "This is going to be funny."

Half Cedar Creek was looking on, as Ching Ling entered the porch. Miss Meadows gave him an inquiring look.

The Chinaman took off his hat and bowed to the surprised schoolmistress.

"Beautiful missee!" he murmured.

"What!" exclaimed Miss Meadows.

"Lovelee missee!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" came from the school ground outside. Miss Meadows frowned.

"Is the man intoxicated?" she exclaimed in amazement.

"He must be, I should think," said Mr. Slimmey, blinking at Ching Ling over his gold-rimmed glasses. "Get away at once, my man!"

Ching Ling did not heed. He was there to propose to Miss Meadows, and he had his way of doing it. Certainly he was not to be stopped.

"Lovelee Miss Meadee, with eyes like blight staree!" he said. "Ching Ling lovee Miss Meadee. Lovelee missee makee Ching Ling velly happy if takee. Ching Ling goodee Chinee. Make first-late husband!"

Miss Meadows almost tottered.

"The—the man must be mad!" she exclaimed, aghast.

"No maddee!" exclaimed Ching Ling anxiously. "Me lovee beautiful missee! Missee Meadee wantee husband. Ching Ling wantee wiffee. Is it a thade? What you sayee?"

"Bless my soul!" was what Miss Meadows said.

"You sayee yes!" said Ching Ling. "What you tinkee? Chinee lich man—good laundry in Thompson, thlee Chinee workee for Ching Ling—seven hundled dollar in bankee. Nicee housee, allee samee Melioan man. You sayee yesee, and Ching Ling goee to mission and fetchee parson. What you tinkee?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Ching Ling had no objection to making his flattering proposal in public. Miss Meadows' face was crimson as she heard the howl from the school ground.

"Ching Ling, go away at once!" she exclaimed. "How dare you speak to me like this? You must have been drinking!"

"No dlinkee," said Ching Ling eagerly. "Chinaman teetotallee. You marry with Ching Ling, lovelee missee, me velly happye."

"Will you go away?" exclaimed Miss Meadows angrily.

Ching Ling looked deeply disappointed.

"No wantee Ching Ling?" he asked sorrowfully.

"Certainly not, you stupid man!" said Miss Meadows severely. "Go away at once!"

"Chinee solly!"

And Ching Ling, with a downcast face, bowed again and trotted away. Miss Meadows went into the house, crimson with vexation.

"Poor old John!" gasped Bob Lawless. "He's got it in the neck. Miss Meadows wasn't advertising for a Chinese husband, at any rate."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The rejected suitor disappeared, and the school bell began to ring. The Cedar Creek fellows were grinning as they went into the school-room.

Miss Meadows appeared a few minutes late to take her class. And that morning the usually kind and good-tempered schoolmistress was a little sharp.

Cedar Creek settled down to work. But the incidents of that morning were not yet over.

Another Suitor!

"H E M!"

Miss Meadows was busy with her class when the door of the big school-room opened, and that loud cough was heard in the doorway.

The schoolmistress glanced round sharply. She was already vexed.

A big man in heavy boots, leather crackers, and a red shirt stood framed in the doorway. He took off his huge stetson hat and ducked his shock head respectfully to the schoolmistress.

"Morning, marm!" he said in a deep, gruff voice.

"What do you want here?" asked Miss Meadows.

"Skuse me, Miss Meadows. You know me—Bill Sanders of Thompson," said the red-shirted gentleman.

"Well, what is wanted?"

"P'r'aps you could step out hyer for a minute!" suggested Mr. Sanders. "It's rather a dellykit matter."

"Very well," said Miss Meadows impatiently. She left the class and went out into the porch, Mr. Sanders respectfully retiring before her.

The big-limbed, heavily bearded frontiersman was a little red in the cheeks. His manner was hesitating.

"Well?" said Miss Meadows.

"P'r'aps you'd rather I said it a bit private-like," suggested Mr. Sanders, with a glance towards Miss Meadows' sitting-room.

"Surely you can say here what you have to say," said Miss Meadows. "You have interrupted school lessons, Mr. Sanders. Make haste, as I must return to my class."

"Skuse me, marm," said Mr. Sanders, his rich colour deepening. "P'r'aps I've come at an orkard moment. But I was afraid some of the boys might be afore me. Half the Thompson galoots will be on this, I calculate."

"To what?" exclaimed Miss Meadows impatiently. "I do not understand you. What are you alluding to?"

"Course, I ain't used to tokin' to purty gals," confessed Mr. Sanders. "No offence, marm. Bill Sanders' manners may be rough, but his heart is in the right place. No galoot can say that Bill Sanders—that's me—was ever rough to a woman, marm. I ain't what you'd call a beauty, marm, and I knows it; and I don't wear store clothes like them dudes east. But, though I says it, I'll make as good a husband as you'll scare up between the Rockies and the Pacific coast!"

"Wha-a-at!"

"Hearin' that you wanted a husband, marm—"

"What!" shrieked Miss Meadows.

"No offence, marm," said Bill Sanders. "Maybe I'm a bit rough, but you'll get used to that. Hearing, marm, that you wanted a husband, I says to myself, 'Bill, you're on in this

(Continued on the next page.)



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game, you are,' I says. 'That little bit of goods up at the school is jest wot you want. I—'

"How dare you!" exclaimed Miss Meadows, her face aflame.

Bill Sanders looked astonished.

"No offence, marm. I may be a bit rough, but I've got the dust. Six hundred dollars was my last clean-up, after three months in the Gold Range. I says to myself, 'With that, Bill, you want to get married and settled, and open a licker saloon at Kamloops,' says I. Marm, how would you like to perside over a licker saloon at Kamloops—high-class, too, mind you? And, you take my word for it, Bill Sanders is the husband you want!"

The honest frontiersman was speaking with great earnestness.

Miss Meadows, bereft of the power of speech, could only gaze at him. She was acutely conscious that every word uttered in the powerful voice of Bill Sanders could be heard all over the school-room.

"So say the word, marm," said Bill cheerily, "and I'll hustle down to the mission and rope in the chin-music man, and we'll be hitched as soon as you like."

"Goodness gracious!" gasped Miss Meadows faintly.

The pretty schoolmistress had, as a matter of fact, received a good many proposals in her time, but certainly she had not had two in one morning before—and from such remarkable suitors.

"Is it yep, marm?" asked Bill.

"No," gasped Miss Meadows, "certainly not!" Bill's face fell.

"You don't cotton to me?" he asked.

"I—I suppose you are serious?" stammered Miss Meadows. "But the answer certainly is 'No!' Good-morning!"

Bill Sanders made a move to the door, and then he turned back.

"Skuse me, marm. If you should change your mind, I'm always to be found at the Red Dog Saloon in Cedar Camp, till I go on the trail again."

And Bill Sanders took his departure.

With a heightened colour, Miss Meadows returned to the school-room. The persecuted lady affected not to notice the half-suppressed smiles among her class.

Fortunately, the morning finished without any further claimants for Miss Meadows' hand arriving at Cedar Creek.

School was dismissed at last; but as the Cedar Creek fellows streamed out of the log schoolhouse there was the sound of a wild uproar at the gates.

"Hallo! There's a scrap on!" yelled Bob Lawless. "Come on!"

And there was a rush to the scene of the conflict.

Rivals!

"TAKE that, you galoot!"

"I guess I'll lay you out, you jay!"

"Oh yeah!"

"Yeah!"

Frank Richards and the rest gathered round in utter astonishment. Two powerfully built fellows were locked in deadly conflict in the gateway of the school. Some of the fellows recognised them.

One was a big-limbed cattleman who rejoiced in the name of Sam Huggins; the other was a tall man in store clothes, who was a bartender

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at Gunten's store in Thompson, and was called 'Frisco Bill.

Why they had chosen the school gateway as the scene of a fight was a mystery, but the fight was in deadly earnest.

They were clutching and thumping one another at a terrific rate. Both noses were streaming crimson, one eye of each was closed, and they were gasping, panting, and threatening furiously.

"Hallo! What's the game?" shouted Bob Lawless.

"Go it, 'Frisco!"

"Lam him, Sammy!"

The Cedar Creek fellows gathered round in great excitement. Mr. Slimmey came hurrying down from the schoolhouse.

"My good fellows, you must not fight here!" he exclaimed. "Please desist at once!"

The combatants did not heed Mr. Slimmey. That gentleman essayed to separate them; it was an unfortunate attempt.

A powerful drive from Sam Huggins, intended for 'Frisco Bill's nose, landed upon Mr. Slimmey's jaw instead. The unfortunate schoolmaster went spinning away and collapsed in a heap on the ground, gasping.

The fight in the gateway went on uninterrupted.

"Dear me!" gasped Mr. Slimmey, sitting up and feeling his jaw. "Bless my soul! Where are my glasses? Thank you, Richards."

Mr. Slimmey did not interfere again; he realised that he was not quite equal to the task.

But Miss Meadows had observed the scene from her window, and she came hurrying down to the gates with knitted brows. Miss Meadows was really having a most exciting morning.

"Stop this at once!" she exclaimed authoritatively.

The combat ceased as if by magic at the sound of Miss Meadows' voice. Sam Huggins and 'Frisco Bill, exchanging mutual glares of defiance, separated and stood panting for breath.

"How dare you fight at this school!" exclaimed Miss Meadows indignantly. "Where the boys and girls can see you! Are you not ashamed?"

"Skuse me, marm," said Sam Huggins in a gasping voice. "I kim hyer as peaceful as any lamb, but that slab-sided, bottle-nosed galoot—"

"I guess I came hyer quiet and peaceful as the pastor at the mission, marm," said 'Frisco Bill; "but that sneakin', mouse-coloured mugwump said—"

"I wouldn't have let you see me like this hyer, marm, not for all the gold-bricks in the Cascade Mountains," said Mr. Huggins in real distress. "I guess I'm as quiet and law-abiding a citizen as any you could dig up north of the line, marm. But that bottle-nosed galoot—"

"Well, please go away," said Miss Meadows.

"But I guess I'm hyer on business, marm."

"Same hyer, marm," chimed in 'Frisco Bill. "And the same business, too. And when I found that that lantern-jawed apology for a Digger Injun was hyer to cut me out, I socked it to him. Any gentleman would have, I guess."

"The cheeky, pink-eyed rabbit is hyer to cut me out!" roared Sam Huggins. "And I guess I ain't takin' a back seat to any mugwump from 'Frisco—not Sam Huggins!"

"Look hyer, you bonehead—"

"Look hyer, you greaser—"

"Stop!" exclaimed Miss Meadows, as the combat was evidently about to recommence. "Stop at once!"

"What you says, marm, goes," said 'Frisco Bill. "But for your presence, marm, I'd lay him out as flat as the top of a cask!"

"If it wasn't for you looking on, marm, I'd tie him up in so many knots he'd never get himself untangled!" said Mr. Huggins.

"Please be quiet!" exclaimed the distressed schoolmistress. "If you have any business here, tell me what it is."

"I'll tell you what, marm!" exclaimed Mr. Huggins, as if struck by a bright idea. "You see us hyer, marm, and you shall choose. That's fair."

"I guess I'm agreeable to that," said 'Frisco Bill promptly. "The schoolmarm has too much hoss-sense to choose a scraggy, bottle-nosed—"

Cedar Creek fellows. The epidemic of proposals was evidently spreading.

Miss Meadows' face was crimson.

"Choose, marm," said 'Frisco Bill.

"Say I'm the man, marm!" urged Mr. Huggins.

"Will you please go away?" exclaimed Miss Meadows with asperity. "I never heard of anything so ridiculous! I suppose it is not your intention to insult me?"

"Insult you, marm!" exclaimed Sam Huggins in astonishment. "Let me catch any galoot insulting you, marm, and I'll let daylight through him so's you'd think he was a colander!"

"You're insultin' the schoolmarm, you bandy-legged son of a coyote!" said 'Frisco Bill scorn-



As Mr. Slimmey essayed to separate the combatants, a powerful drive from Sam Huggins, intended for 'Frisco Bill's nose, landed on the schoolmaster's jaw instead. Mr. Slimmey went spinning away and collapsed in a heap.

"What do you mean?" exclaimed Miss Meadows, her heart sinking.

"Marm, we happened along together," said 'Frisco Bill. "I was for knocking that mug-wump out. But it's your funeral; you're to choose. Marm, I'm a bartender at Gunten's store in Thompson, with enough dust saved to open a store of my own. I guess, marm, that if you take me, I'll look arter you like I would arter a prize bull pup. That's my say-so!"

"And hyer's me, marm," said Sam Huggins persuasively. "I'm foreman on Lawrence's ranch, with a nice little cabin, firewood found, and three acres of garden, with a Chinaman to look after it. Marm, you wouldn't throw yourself away on a blue-nosed bartender from 'Frisco!"

There was an irrepressible chuckle from the

fully. "That's what the schoolmarm means. I'm the man—ain't I, marm?"

"Certainly not!"

"Oh gosh! Then who's the man?"

In spite of her vexation, Miss Meadows could hardly repress a smile.

"Neither!" she exclaimed. "I'm not thinking of anything of the kind, and I wish you would both go away quietly!"

"Burn my socks!" exclaimed Sam Huggins, in surprise. "But hearing as you wanted a husband, marm—"

"How dare you!" exclaimed Miss Meadows angrily.

"No offence, marm, but the galoots in Thompson said—"

"Kindly say no more! I have asked you to go away!" said the schoolmistress tartly.

"Sure, marm! 'Frisco, old sport, we've been lambasting one another for nothin'," said Mr. Huggins dejectedly. "Get a move on, pard! We ain't wanted here!"

And the two suitors plodded away on the trail to Thompson, probably to seek consolation at 'Frisco Bill's own bar.

Without a glance at the boys Miss Meadows went hurriedly back to the house. She was in a troubled and distressed state of mind. This sudden eruption of proposals was utterly inexplicable to the schoolmistress.

"Well, my hat!" said Frank Richards, after Miss Meadows was gone. "This is getting rather thick. I suppose there'll be more."

"You bet!" grinned Bob Lawless. "Miss Meadows is the greatest catch in this section. The boys won't let a chance like this slip."

"Blessed if I see why she should cut up so rusty," said Chunky Todgers. "Gunten's got a copy of the 'Thompson Press,' and there's Miss Meadows' advertisement in the matrimonial column there. I've seen it."

"So have I," said Lawrence. "It beats me. It isn't like Miss Meadows!"

"It's a trick," said Beauclerc quietly.

"A trick?" exclaimed Gunten. "How could it be a trick?"

"I fancy I know," said Beauclerc contemptuously; and he turned away, leaving the Swiss shrugging his shoulders.

More and More!

AFTER dinner another visitor arrived at the lumber school. It was Poker Pete, the smooth-faced, well-dressed, silky-mannered cardsharpener of Thompson.

The schoolboys watched him as he went into the schoolhouse. They could guess why he had come.

He came out in about two minutes, with a dark and angry face. Evidently Poker Pete's suit had not prospered.

The cardsharpener cast an angry look at the grinning schoolboys as he strode away to the gate. He jumped on his horse and rode away, followed by a general chuckle.

"Who'll be next?" grinned Bob Lawless.

Afternoon lessons came next. During lessons several visitors were heard to arrive, but Miss Meadows had given instructions to Sally, and they were sent away.

Lessons passed off without interruption.

Miss Meadows' temper was not so sweet that afternoon, as was not to be wondered at, in the circumstances. She was mystified and vexed.

Mr. Slimmey glanced at her very curiously once or twice, and coloured deeply when he caught her eye.

After lessons, when the school was dismissed and Miss Meadows retired to her study, Mr. Slimmey followed her there, and tapped at the door. The schoolmistress' voice bade him enter.

"Excuse me, Miss Meadows," said Mr. Slimmey, blushing deeply. "I—I have twice had the honour to ask you—" He began to stammer. "I—I— You are aware, Miss Meadows, that—that I should be honoured and glad if you would consent—"

"Really, Mr. Slimmey, as I have twice answered your question in the negative, it is somewhat inconsiderate to ask me again," said Miss Meadows.

Meadows, with much less kindness than she usually showed to the assistant master of Cedar Creek.

Mr. Slimmey's blush deepened.

"Forgive me," he said. "I—I should not have repeated my question, only—only—"

"Only what?" asked Miss Meadows, with what was perilously like a snap.

"Only, as I saw the 'Thompson Press' this morning, I—I—"

Mr. Slimmey floundered hopelessly.

Miss Meadows raised her eyebrows.

"What has the 'Thompson Press' to do with it?" she asked.

"Nothing!" gasped Mr. Slimmey; and he retired hastily.

He brushed against a plump, pink-nosed gentleman in the porch. It was Mr. Penrose, the editor, publisher, and printer of the local paper in Thompson.

Mr. Slimmey glanced with some surprise at the editorial gentleman. The proprietor of the "Thompson Press" was not usually troubled by any idea of editorial dignity. He dressed as carelessly as any man in Thompson.

Now he was clad in store clothes, and was neat and trim from head to foot. He wore a white collar, his boots were shiny, and he carried gloves in one hand. Even his nose, which had been reddened by long devotion to the potent firewater, had been dabbed with powder, to tone down its rich hue.

"Good-day to you, Mr. Slimmey!" said Mr. Penrose. "Is Miss Meadows at home?"

"Yes," gasped Mr. Slimmey.

He could guess what Mr. Penrose wanted now, and what his unaccustomed finery meant. It was another proposal that was hanging over Ethel Meadows. And others could guess, too, for Mr. Slimmey caught sight of several grinning faces outside the porch.

Mr. Penrose tapped at Miss Meadows' door and entered.

Paul Slimmey sank on a seat in the porch, with a pale face, and polished his glasses nervously. Poor Mr. Slimmey had been a humble and devoted admirer of Ethel Meadows ever since he had come to Cedar Creek as assistant master.

Such rivals as Bill Sanders, 'Frisco Bill, and Poker Pete he did not fear; but he wondered whether Mr. Penrose would have better luck, and the thought was anguish to the unfortunate young man.

Without giving a thought to Mr. Slimmey, the editor of the "Thompson Press" presented himself in the schoolmistress' study.

Miss Meadows greeted him civilly, without showing her surprise at the unusually gorgeous "get-up" of the man from Thompson.

"Possibly you can guess the object of my call, Miss Meadows," said Mr. Penrose genially.

The schoolmistress started, and compressed her lips. It was evidently "another of them."

"Really, Mr. Penrose—"

"Madam, I have the honour to ask you to be my wife!" he exclaimed. "Miss Meadows—Ethel—will you accept—"

Miss Meadows' eyes flashed.

"If this is meant as a joke, Mr. Penrose, I can only say that it is in the worst of taste!" she exclaimed angrily.

Mr. Penrose started.

"A—a joke, Miss Meadows!" he stuttered.

"Yes; I consider—"

"Could you suspect me of joking upon such a

subject, madam?" said Mr. Penrose, more in sorrow than in anger.

"Then what does it mean?" exclaimed the exasperated schoolmistress. "The whole day I have been persecuted by proposals from men I hardly know by sight. Since you have added yourself to the number, Mr. Penrose, you may be able to explain what it all means."

Mr. Penrose fairly blinked.

"Madam, I have long adored you," he said. "I should never have ventured to put my fortune to the test, however, having little to offer but a devoted heart, but for the encouragement I received—"

"Encouragement?"

"Certainly, madam!"

"How can you possibly say so, when I have not spoken to you twice in as many months?" exclaimed Miss Meadows.

"But—but your advertisement, madam, in the 'Press'!" said Mr. Penrose, in bewilderment. "Surely I had a right to take that as an encouragement!"

"My—my advertisement!"

"Yes, madam, in my own paper, set up in type by my own hands," said Mr. Penrose. "If that is not an encouragement, I guess I do not know what is."

Miss Meadows looked bewildered.

"But—but what has my advertisement to do with it?" she exclaimed. "What encouragement could anyone draw from an advertisement for a handyman?"

"For a what?" yelled Mr. Penrose.

"An odd-job man required at the school—"

"I have received no advertisement from you, madam, for an odd-job man or a handyman," said Mr. Penrose dryly.

"You must be mistaken. Richards assured me on Tuesday that he had delivered the advertisement at your office, and he brought me your receipt."

"Undoubtedly; but that was not the advertisement you describe. That advertisement, madam, appeared in our matrimonial column."

"In—in what?" Miss Meadows sank back into her chair, aghast.

"In our matrimonial column, madam. Here it is—read for yourself."

Mr. Penrose was never without a copy of his paper. He drew it from his pocket, unfolded it, and placed the matrimonial column under Miss Meadows' eyes.

The schoolmistress' eyes dilated as she read:

"SCHOOLMISTRESS, age twenty-three, tall, considered good-looking, would be glad to hear from a bachelor, with a view to matrimony. Photographs exchanged.—Miss Meadows, Cedar Creek School, Thompson Valley."

The Guilty Party!

THERE was dead silence in the room for some minutes. Mr. Penrose gazed curiously at the schoolmistress. He could not understand.

"Good heavens!" said Miss Meadows at last, faintly. "You—you have dared to insert that wicked, false advertisement in my name, Mr. Penrose?"

Mr. Penrose coloured.

"Madam, that is the advertisement handed to me, with an accompanying letter written by yourself, by the lad Richards on Tuesday."

"Impossible!"

"Madam!"

"It is some wicked trick!" exclaimed Miss Meadows, recovering herself. "Have you the letter with you?"

"I have it here!"

Mr. Penrose laid a letter on the desk. Miss Meadows recognised her own letter, written two days before. It ran, in her well-known handwriting:

"Dear Mr. Penrose,—Please insert the enclosed advertisement in this week's 'Press.' I should very much like it to appear this week, if possible.—Yours sincerely, E. MEADOWS."

"That is my letter," said Miss Meadows steadily. "It was accompanied by an advertisement for a handyman for the school."

"That is the advertisement I received!" gasped Mr. Penrose. "Here is the original."

Miss Meadows glanced at the pencilled sheet he handed her.

"That writing is something like my own," she said. "It is not mine, however. The advertisement was, in fact, written by Mr. Slimmey." She stepped to the door. "Mr. Slimmey, please step in here!"

The young man came in.

"Mr. Slimmey, you drew up my advertisement for the 'Thompson Press,'" said Miss Meadows—"the one that was taken by Richards?"

"Yes," said Mr. Slimmey. "You refer to the advertisement for a handyman, to take Black Sam's place while he is ill?"

"Quite so. There was no other."

"No other!" exclaimed Mr. Slimmey.

"None."

"But—but—" stammered Mr. Slimmey.

"Mr. Penrose, how many advertisements did you receive from me?"

"Only one, madam!" said Mr. Penrose.

"Then you can see what has happened," said Miss Meadows, with a flash in her eyes. "The advertisement enclosed in my letter to you was taken out and destroyed. This wicked advertisement was put in its place."

"Oh!" gasped Mr. Penrose.

"Good heavens!" exclaimed Mr. Slimmey.

"How could you imagine that I would insert such an advertisement in your paper?" exclaimed Miss Meadows, with vexation.

"I—I confess I was very much surprised," said Mr. Penrose. "I remember questioning the boy Richards. But—but there was your letter with the enclosure. I knew your hand well—and there was certainly no sign that the envelope had been opened."

"What an infamous trick!" exclaimed Mr. Slimmey.

Miss Meadows compressed her lips.

"The boy Richards took the letter to Thompson," she said. "It must have been opened, and the advertisement changed, while in his hands. Heaven knows why that boy should have played so mean and cowardly a trick upon me! I have never given him, or anyone else, cause to take so cowardly a revenge."

"By gum!" said Mr. Penrose. "I—I can only apologise, Miss Meadows. I—I don't know what to say—"

"I cannot blame you, as you had my written authority for the advertisement," said Miss Meadows.

"The boy Richards is to blame," said Mr. Penrose, taking up his hat. "I am sorry I have troubled you this afternoon, Miss Meadows—but

(Continued on page 36.)

THE FUND THAT BECAME FUN!

Tuckey's Furnishing Fund!

By OWEN CONQUEST.



Enconced in an armchair, Tuckey's smile grew more and more expansive as one after another fellows dropped something into the biscuit-tin for the furnishing fund.

Tuckey Doesn't Go to the Head!

"I'M going to the Head!"

"Dry up!"

"I tell you—"

"Cheese it!"

"I'm going to the Head, I tell you!" roared Tuckey Toodles.

Morning classes had ended on board the Benbow, and the St. Winifred's Fourth had been dismissed by Mr. Packe. Three members of the Fourth had repaired at once to Study No. 8—Jack Drake, Dick Rodney, and Tuckey Toodles. The other fellows were on deck, or on the shore of the Chadway; but Jack Drake & Co. had no leisure on their hands just then. There was work to be done in Study No. 8.

Never had a study at St. Winifred's looked so dismantled as Study No. 8 looked. Drake and Rodney wore grim and angry frowns as they surveyed the wreck of their quarters, and Tuckey Toodles was loud and emphatic in his wrath. Tuckey really had the least cause for complaint, as few things in the study belonged to him; but perhaps he prized them all the more on that account. At any rate, Toodles was more wrathful and indignant than both his studymates together.

"Everything mucked up!" exclaimed Tuckey breathlessly. "The table in pieces and the chairs in bits. I'm going to the Head!"

"You're not!" growled Drake.

"Somebody's got to pay for this!" snorted Tuckey. "Are we going to have our study

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The juniors of St. Winny's are unusually eager to contribute towards Tuckey Toodles' fund for refurnishing Study No. 8. But it remains to be seen what their generosity is worth!

.....

wrecked, and take it lying down, I'd like to know?"

"Not if we can find the rotter that did it," said Rodney. "But we're not going sneaking to the Head!"

"The Head would make an inquiry——"

"Oh, bosh!"

"And find out the rotter——"

"Chuck it!"

"We know who it was!" snapped Drake. "It was Daubeny of the Shell—I'm sure of that, though we can't fix it on him."

"Rot!" said Toodles. "I was having supper with Daub at the time it was done. I'm friendly with old Daub."

"Ring off, you ass!"

"We've got to get the place to rights somehow," said Rodney, looking round him ruefully. "Everything's busted up. The books have nearly all gone. They must have been thrown out of the window into the river. I suppose even Daub wouldn't steal them."

"It wasn't Daub," said Tuckey. "Daub's all right. He stood me a ripping supper last night. You fellows never do."

"What did he stand you a supper for?" said Rodney suspiciously. "Looks to me as if he wanted you there to be a witness for him."

"Not at all. I'm rather a popular chap, you know. Fellows ask me to supper," said Toodles, with dignity. "I make a party go, you know."

"The party would have made you go if they hadn't had precious good reason for keeping you," grunted Drake. "I know it was Daub who ragged our quarters."

"It was done about nine o'clock, and Tuckey says Daub was at supper at nine," said Rodney thoughtfully. "Daub may have spoofed him about the time."

"I looked at the clock," said Tuckey.

"The clock may have been put back or something. Anyhow, I suspect Daub," said Rodney. "Still, as we can't prove it, I suppose we can't very well give him tit for tat. We'd better pile in and do what we can."

"My desk is busted——"

"Well, all our things are busted. For goodness' sake, be quiet!"

"I'm going to the Head. That desk was a jolly valuable one!" exclaimed Toodles. "I shall want paying ten guineas for that desk. It was really an antique——"

"It certainly looked antique enough. Jolly old, anyway, and not much good."

"Why, you ass, you don't know anything

about old furniture!" said Tuckey Toodles scornfully. "That desk was solid mahogany."

"What's left of it is common deal, anyhow."

"Oh, you're an ass! It was an old piece of furniture in the Toodles family—handed down from generations."

"You silly ass!" roared Jack Drake. "You bought it last term for ten bob at the furniture shop in Chade. I remember it."

"Oh, I—I forgot! I—I mean, I didn't—"

"Shurrup!"

Rodney and Drake commenced operations on the wrecked study. The apartment certainly needed tidying up, and there was a good deal of useless lumber to be removed. It was rather a question what would remain, after the useless lumber had been taken away, so thoroughly had the ragers done their work.

"You can't do much good," said Tuckey Toodles morosely. "We want to find out who did it, and make him pay for it—pay through the nose, you know. We could make him pay no end, if he's got the dibs. If the Head takes it up, he'll make him pay."

"Rats!"

"Well, I'm going to the Head!"

Tuckey Toodles rolled forward. Drake and Rodney immediately ceased their occupation, and laid violent hands upon Master Toodles.

Exasperated as they were by the havoc wrought in the study, they had no intention whatever of laying complaints before Dr. Goring on the subject. And they did not intend to allow Toodles to lay complaints, either.

"Now, you fat rotter—"

"Leggo!" roared Toodles.

"Are you going to shut up?"

"Yow-ow! No!"

"Bump him!" growled Rodney.

"Help!"

Bump, bump!

Drake and Rodney, sufficiently exasperated already, were in no mood to be bothered by Tuckey Toodles. The plump form of Toodles smote the deck planks forcibly twice, and at each smite Tuckey let out a terrific yell.

"Is that enough?" demanded Drake breathlessly.

"Yow-ow-ow!"

"Are you going to sneak now?"

"Yow-ow! I'm going to the Head. I'm going to say—Yoop!"

Bump!

"I—I say, leggo!" shrieked the hapless Tuckey. "I was only j-j-joking! I'm not going to the Head. I wouldn't go to the Head for anything! Yaroooh! I don't want to see the Head—I don't, really! Yow-ow!" Leggo!"

"Better give him another—"

"Yaroooh! I'm not going to the Head—honour bright! Leggo!"

"Mind you don't, then!" growled Jack Drake, releasing the grubby junior at last. "If you do, I'll lay into you with a fives bat till you won't be able to sit down for a week! Understand?"

"Ow-wow—yes! Certainly, dear old chap! All right!" gurgled Tuckey. "I—I understand, old fellow. Wow-wow!"

"Then shut up!"

Drake and Rodney resumed their labour in the wrecked study, and Tuckey Toodles sat on the planks and blinked at them for some minutes, while he recovered his wind. Then he crawled away. But he did not go to the Head.

His lesson had been severe enough, and he did not want the fives bat in addition.

The chums of Study No. 8 worked hard until dinner, and by that time they had reduced the study to something like order. Most of their furniture was quite useless, and it was relegated to the lumber-room in the hold of the Benbow. The room was tidy at last, but it was decidedly bare. There was no table; there were no chairs; the rug was a rag; even the blind had to be pinned together. The two juniors looked round the room, tired and rueful and dismayed.

"We can borrow some books up and down the Fourth till we can get some new ones," said Rodney. "I—I suppose we can do our prep in the Form-room till we get some furniture. I say, this is a go!"

Drake gritted his teeth.

"If I were only sure it was Daub, I'd make him rig out the study afresh," he said. "But we can't without any proof. We shall have to stand it ourselves, and money's short."

"It's rotten!"

"Oh, it's beastly, just when I was trying to work hard for the scholarship exam, too!" said Drake savagely. "A chap must have a study to work in, and we can't work here unless we sit on the floor. I can't ask my people for money—that's impossible. There's none to spare at home."

"Same with me; I couldn't stick the mater for an extra half-crown," said Rodney. "I'd rather sit on the floor than worry her about it. The cad who did this trick knows all that. We're dished this time. Hallo, there goes the bell!"

The chums of the Fourth joined the crowd going to dinner, not in a cheerful mood. It was in his wealthy days that Jack Drake had furnished Study No. 8, and he had done it in reckless disregard of expense. But even a small expense was a serious matter to him now.

It looked as if the chums would have to finish out the term in an unfurnished study, unless the matter were brought to the knowledge of the Head, and a strict inquiry instituted, and the culprit discovered, and forced to pay for the damage. But neither of the juniors thought of that. Furnished or unfurnished, Study No. 8 was a law unto itself.

A Brief Friendship!

TUCKEY TOODLES surprised his Form-master that afternoon by wearing a thoughtful and serious look in class.

Generally, Tuckey was far from being a thoughtful youth, and he often failed to conceal the fact that he regarded lessons as a horrid bore, and Mr. Packe as a still more horrid bore than lessons.

His attention was often devoted to a bag of aniseed balls under his desk, or a chunk of toffee in his pocket. Often and often it would wander during lessons and dwell upon the comestibles in the ship's canteen, kept by Mr. Capps.

Now, for once in a way, Tuckey was serious, thoughtful, and had his eyes fixed attentively upon his Form-master. As a matter of fact, Tuckey was staring quite absently at Mr. Packe. He was thinking deeply, but he was not thinking about the valued instructions imparted by the master of the Fourth. The lamentable state of

affairs in Study No. 8 was the subject of Tuckey's unusually deep reflections.

Drake and Rodney's determination that the matter should not be laid before the Head excited Tuckey's wrath and indignation. He wanted the culprit found; he was prepared to draw up a bill of damages that would make the culprit open his eyes to their fullest extent. He hoped that it would turn out to be a wealthy fellow—the wealthier the better.

Indeed, Tuckey would not have been sorry if it had turned out to be Daubeny of the Shell, in spite of the handsome supper Daub had stood him the previous evening. For Daub had heaps of money, and would certainly have been made to pay. But without the Head's intervention it did not seem probable that the ragger would ever be discovered.

So Tuckey had plenty of food for reflection, quite apart from the interesting details Mr. Packe was giving him and the rest of the Form concerning the ancient Romans.

After lessons, Tuckey joined his study-mates as they came on to the deck of the Benbow. The sun was sinking behind the brown woods, and a red light lay on the river. Drake and Rodney paused by the rail to look at it; but Tuckey had no thoughts for scenery. He jabbed Drake in the ribs to draw his attention, and Drake turned with a gasp.

"Look here, Drake—" began Toodles.

"You fat ass, you've nearly punctured me!" growled Drake.

"I want to know what's going to be done about the study," said Tuckey Toodles firmly.

"Nothing."

"You don't want me to go to the Head—"

"I'll scalp you if you do."

"I suppose we can't sit on the floor in the study and do our prep on our knees?" hooted Toodles.

"You can go and eat coke!"

"The study's got to be rigged up again. It looked quite rejerkly before it was wrecked," said Toodles. "I'm accustomed to decent surroundings if you're not, Jack Drake. That study's going to be made to look as rejerkly as it used to."

"Do you mean recherche, you burbling ass?" inquired Rodney, with a laugh.

"I mean rejerkly," answered Toodles. "You don't know much about French, Rodney. The study's got to be refurbished. I was thinking of writing to my father for fifty pounds—"

"Oh, do!"

"Of course, he'd send it like a shot. But, on second thoughts," said Tuckey, with dignity, "I feel I oughtn't to stick my pater for it. He may not be able to spare fifty pounds all at once."

"Very likely, I think."

"But something's got to be done. I can't be cleared out of house and home like this. All my valuable property—"

"A ten-bob desk and a ha'penny pen," said Drake. "Don't be an ass, Toodles. You've lost next to nothing."

"If you mean that you paid for most of the things, Drake—"

"Well, didn't I?" demanded Drake.

"I think it's rather bad taste to allude to it. Swank, you know. But if most of the things were yours that's all the more reason why you should replace them, isn't it? Are you going to write to your pater for some tin?"

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"No!"

"Perhaps your mater would be better," assented Tuckey. "When are you going to write to your mater, Drake?"

"Never, on that subject."

"It's rotten to be hard up. Are your people as hard up as Drake's, Rodney?"

"Quite!"

Tuckey Toodles gave a snort of disgust.

"Then it's going to be left to me to refurbish the study, is it?" he demanded indignantly.

"That's it," said Drake. "Get a fiver each from your rich relations that you talk so much about, old chap. That will do the 'rick."

Tuckey Toodles did not seem to hear the suggestion.

"I suppose I can borrow the money," he remarked.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I'd like to know what you're cackling at?"

"Well, if you can find a chap at St. Winny's to lend you more than a tanner, I'd like to know his name."

"I'm going to ask old Daub," said Tuckey loftily. "I'm very friendly with Daub—like brothers, in fact."

Drake frowned for a moment, and then laughed.

"Right-ho!" he said. "Cut off and ask Daub if you like. Anyhow, give us a rest."

"Yah!"

With that elegant retort, Tuckey Toodles rolled away along the deck of the Benbow.

Daubeny & Co. of the Shell were chatting in a group by the foremast, and the fat Fourth Former hastened to join them.

Vernon Daubeny had been exceedingly gracious to Tuckey the previous evening—for reasons of his own. But Tuckey did not know anything about his reasons, and he attributed Daub's graciousness entirely to his own personal accomplishments and fascinations. He had, in fact, decided to spend a good deal of his time with old Daub, and to become a regular member of that very select circle known as the bucks of St. Winifred's. There was a rude awakening in store for Tuckey.

"Hallo, old tops!" he greeted genially, as he joined Daubeny, Torrence, and Egan, and bestowed upon the three elegant knuts his most expansive smile.

To Tuckey's surprise, there was no expansive smile in return.

Egan and Torrence stared at him, and they neither smiled nor nodded; while Vernon Daubeny extracted an eyeglass from his waistcoat pocket, jammed it into his eye, and took a survey of Tuckey Toodles, quite as if the fat and grubby junior had been some curious zoological specimen.

Toodles was not a sensitive youth; but he was a little disconcerted.

"Nice afternoon, isn't it, old fellows?" he said, somewhat uneasily.

"Is it?" yawned Daubeny.

"For the time of year, you know," murmured Toodles.

"Really?"

Daub & Co. moved on along the deck, leaving Tuckey Toodles rooted to the planks.

They stopped at a little distance, and resumed their conversation as if no longer aware of the grubby junior's existence.

This was a great change from their gracious manners of the previous evening, and for some moments Tuckey stood and blinked at them in

surprise and indignation. Then he rolled after them again.

"I say, Daub—" he said.

"Would you mind not barging into a fellow's conversation?" inquired Daubeny, with great politeness.

"Look here—"

"Buzz!" said Egan, less politely and more forcibly.

"Why, you rotters!" gasped Toodles, greatly incensed. "You—you were jolly chummy yesterday, you cads!"

"Not at all," said Daubeny calmly. "We found it amusin' to watch you feed—"

"What?"

"We've paid to see the animals feed at the zoo. Watchin' you was just as amusin'. That was all. Buzz off!"

Tuckey Toodles spluttered with wrath.

"Why, you swanking cad—" he gasped.

Daubeny took the fat junior's ear between finger and thumb, and compressed the finger and thumb like a vice. There was a dismal howl from Rupert de Vere Toodles.

"Yow-wow-wow-wow!"

The bucks of the Shell walked away again, and this time Tuckey Toodles did not follow them. He remained rubbing his ear. Evidently his new friendship with the great Daub was at an end; he was dropped with a bump. Even upon Tuckey's obtuse mind there dawned the realisation that Daubeny had been making use of him, and it was a sadder and wiser Tuckey who rolled away—rubbing his ear.

Tuckey's Bright Idea!

"HOW much?"

Jack Drake asked that question with a grin. The chums of Study No. 8 were going in to tea when Toodles rejoined them; there was no tea in Study No. 8 that day. They were going in to the school tea, with the other fellows who preferred having tea at the expense of the school, or who were short of that necessary article, cash.

"How much?" echoed Rodney.

Toodles blinked at his studymates.

"Eh? What?" he asked. "Wharrer you mean, you dummies?"

"Haven't you raised a big loan from your pal Daub?"

"Nunno!"

"He hasn't stood you twenty quids?" asked Drake.

"N-no."

"Only a fiver?" chuckled Rodney.

"The rotter hasn't lent me anything—I didn't ask him. He—he pulled my ear before I could ask him—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I mean, on second thoughts, I shouldn't care to ask such a cad for a loan. Daub's rather too much of a rotter for me to mix with," said Tuckey Toodles. "I'm sorry now I went to supper with him last night. It was only my good nature. I can't help going easy with chaps who press for my company; I always was like that. That's my fault; I'm too easy-going. I don't see anything to grin at, Rodney. I've decided to have nothing to do with Daubeny of the Shell."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Tuckey Toodles grunted and followed them into the dining-room. He did not see why his lofty remarks should be greeted with disrespectful merriment.

Tuckey Toodles did full justice to the school tea. He was in hopes of wedging in to tea in some Fourth Form study afterwards, but meanwhile he wisely left nothing to chance. There was room for several teas inside the ample circumference of Rupert de Vere Toodles.

After tea, Drake and Rodney repaired to the Form-room to work. Work in the study was not quite feasible under present conditions. So far as books were concerned the chums had been able to borrow what they wanted, but they could not borrow chairs and tables. Tuckey Toodles followed them to the Form-room, but not to work.

"You fellows doing your prep here?" he asked.

"Yes, you'd better do the same," answered Rodney.

"Oh, I shall do mine in some pal's study," answered Toodles airily. "Any fellow in the Fourth would be glad to have me. That's what comes of being popular."

"Well, any fellow in the Fourth is welcome to you, at any rate," said Drake. "Cut along and see your numerous pals, then."

"About the study—"

"Oh, bother the study!"

"It's got to be furnished—"

"Dry up; there's work to be done."

"But the study—"

"Hand me that ruler, Rodney," said Drake.

Tuckey Toodles backed to the doorway.

"I say, I'm going ahead!" he exclaimed. "It's left to me—everything's always left to me. I'm going to make a collection."

"A—a what?" howled Drake.

"A collection—from all the fellows, you know," said Toodles. "Go round with the hat, you know."

"You silly chump! If you do anything of the kind, I'll—"

"Rats!"

Tuckey Toodles departed from the Form-room. Drake half-rose, but he sat down again. Prep had to be done, and he had no time to waste on Master Toodles.

Prep was not much in the mind of Tuckey Toodles, however. Perhaps he did not think he needed it so much as his studymates—though certainly Mr. Packe did not agree with him there. But Tuckey was not bothering about Mr. Packe just then; he seldom did bother in advance about anything. The refurnishing of Study No. 8 being left to him, Tuckey was determined to set about it in his own way.

Half an hour later Tuckey's preparations were

DETECTIVE KERR INVESTIGATES.

Solution :

KERR: It was not difficult to see that Scrope had a reason for wanting to get even with Herr Schneider, and that, as he had seen Glyn's A.R.P. plans, he might have taken them and put them in Herr Schneider's study. The necessary proof was forthcoming when Scrope said he had been out of gates all the afternoon, and that he had noted the time by the old sundial at Rylcombe. Herr Schneider had previously reminded me that it was a very dull afternoon, and he had had to switch on the light to see in his study soon after three. On a dull afternoon there would be no sun to cast a shadow on the sundial. Hence Scrope's story was false—and Herr Schneider's delight that he could no longer be suspected of being a spy was so great that he forgot to punish him!

complete. On the table in the Junior Common-room stood an old biscuit-tin, with the lid wired on quite securely. In the centre of the lid was a slit, for the admission of the coins. Propped up against the tin was a sheet of cardboard, with a very effective manifesto daubed upon it, in large letters, with a brush.

It ran:

"STUDY NO. 8 FURNISHING FUND.

"Members of the Fourth Form are respectfully requested to contribute to a fund for refurnishing the above study, which has been ragged, recked, and roined by some unknone rotter. Small contribewtions thankfully received, also large. Raly round and play the game.—Sined, Rupert de Vere Toodles."

Tuckey Toodles was very pleased with that idea, and the other fellows in the Fourth seemed to be pleased, too, to judge by their smiling countenances.

Quite a crowd gathered round the table to read over Tuckey's manifesto and chortle over it.

Tuckey ensconced himself in an armchair, at a little distance, whence he could keep an eye on the collecting-tin. And the expansive smile on his plump face grew more and more expansive as he heard the sound of a musical clinking from the direction of the biscuit-tin.

Clink! Clink!

The news seemed to be spreading, for fellows came from near and far to "raly" round. Fellows even left their prep when they heard what was on and came into the Common-room to slip a contribution into the tin.

Clink! Clink!



"That'll teach you not to be superstitious, Bill!"

Half-a-crown has been awarded to G. English, 74, Rue Prince Ibrahim, Ibrahimieh, Alexandria, Egypt.

Even Pierce Raik, who was popularly supposed to be the meanest fellow in the Fourth, came up to the table and his hand hovered over the tin, and there was a clink.

Tuckey Toodles beamed on him. He had never liked Raik, but he felt at this moment that there was good even in the cad of the Fourth.

Raik frowned round at him.

"You in charge of this, Toodles?" he asked.

"What-ho!" answered Toodles.

"Half-crowns any good?"

"My dear chap, certainly. Even shillings and tanners are welcome."

"Oh, all right!"

Clink!

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 1,604.

"Here, give a fellow room!" exclaimed Newson. Clink! There was quite a competition to get at the collecting-tin, and the clinking was almost incessant. The fat face of Tuckey Toodles beamed like a full moon. Even fellows from the Shell came in and added contributions, and some of the fags of the Third and Second. One or two Fifth Formers dropped in also.

But at last the crowd cleared off, and Toodles decided to take away the tin. It weighed a good deal as he lifted it from the table. Even if the contents were mostly copper, the sum could not be a small one. With beaming countenance, Tuckey Toodles carried the tin off to the Form-room.

Drake and Rodney were still at prep when Tuckey Toodles came in and clanked down the heavy tin.

Clank!

"What the merry dickens!" ejaculated Drake. "You thumping ass!"

"What on earth have you got there?" demanded Rodney.

"Cash!"

"What!"

"It's my collection," explained Tuckey Toodles loftily. "I've taken a collection in the Fourth for refurnishing the study."

"My only hat!"

"Lots of fellows paid up," said Tuckey. "I saw Tomlinson and Wake of the Fifth putting something in. Currency notes very likely, as they're Fifth Formers."

"You silly ass!" roared Drake. "Do you think we're a set of dashed mendicants, to ask fellows for their money?"

"Look here—"

"My hat! Going round asking fellows for coppers like a clown at a fair!" exclaimed Drake, greatly exasperated. "You silly, fat duffer, I've a jolly good mind to bust the tin on your silly napper!"

Tuckey Toodles stared at him.

After he had taken the trouble to think out this gorgeous idea, and after it had met with such gorgeous success, this was the gratitude he received. Truly, it seemed a thankless world!

The grubby junior was speechless for some moments. He could not find words adequate to the situation, or breath to utter them if found.

"Take it away!" snapped Drake.

"Tut-tut-take it away!" stammered Toodles at last.

"Yes, ass!"

"Why, I—I— You—you—you—" spluttered the incensed Tuckey. "You—you—you— I—I—I—"

Rodney burst into a laugh.

"It's a rotten idea, Tuckey," he said. "We can't take money from the fellows. You're an awful ass. You'd better ask them to take the cash back again."

"And the sooner the quicker!" said Drake.

Tuckey gasped.

"Catch me! You cheeky asses, after I've done this for the study! Is this what you call gratitude, I'd like to know?"

Drake's frowning face broke into a grin.

"I suppose you meant well, you duffer," he said, "but Study No. 8 isn't going to be refurnished on charity. Take it away!"

"Oh, all right!" exclaimed Tuckey, in great indignation. "I jolly well won't furnish the study now! I'll jolly well stand a feed in the canteen with the money, and you fellows shan't come! Yah!"

MORE "FOOTER-STAMPS" and the Rules!

RULES: 250 Footballs will be awarded in the November contest to the readers declaring and sending in the largest number of "goals" scored with "Footer-Stamps." The Editor may extend or amend the prize list in case of too many ties, and no reader may win more than one prize in "Footer-Stamps."

Each "goal" must consist of a set of "Footer-Stamps" Nos. 1 to 6, inclusive—and all claims for prizes to be made on the proper coupon (to be given later). No allowance to be made for any coupon or stamps mutilated, or lost or delayed in the post or otherwise. No correspondence! No one connected with this paper may enter, and the Editor's decision will be final and legally binding throughout. (N.B.—"Footer-Stamps" may also be collected from the following papers: *Magnet*, *Modern Boy*, *Champion*, *Triumph*, *Boy's Cinema*, *Sports Budget*, *Detective Weekly*, *Thriller*, and *Wild West Weekly*.)

FIVE "FOOTER-STAMPS" HERE—Other on Page 2!



And with that Tuckey Toodles clutched up the weighty biscuit-tin and marched out of the Form-room, snorting with indignation.

Not a Spread!

"GENTLEMEN, chaps, and fellows—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Go it, Toodles!"

Most of the Fourth were in the Common-room, prep being over, when Tuckey Toodles rolled in with the biscuit-tin under his arm and his fat face red with excitement.

"Follow me, you chaps!" exclaimed Toodles. "I'm standing a spread—the biggest spread ever stood at St. Winny's."

"Bravo!"

"I've decided not to use this money—"

"That what?" asked Raik.

"This money. I've decided not to use this money for refurbishing Study No. 8. I've been treated ungratefully by my studymates, and I refuse to do anything for them—anything at all!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"This money," said Toodles, smiting the biscuit-tin with his fat fist, causing it to clink and clank loudly—"this money is going to be spent on a spread for the Fourth—every shilling of it. Come on, you fellows! Follow me to the canteen!"

"Hurrah!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

There was a burst of cheering mingled with loud laughter from the juniors. The cheering Tuckey could understand, but the laughter puzzled him a little. He did not see anything to laugh at.

With one accord the juniors followed Tuckey Toodles, chortling as they went. Mr. Capps was about to close his canteen amidships when the crowd of juniors swarmed in, Tuckey with his biscuit-tin at their head.

Mr. Capps looked surprised by such an irruption of customers so late, but he was ready for business.

Tuckey planked the biscuit-tin on the counter with a loud clang.

"Give your orders, you fellows!" he said

joyfully. "Serve everybody what he asks for, Capps—excepting Rodney and Drake. They're not on in this show. I'm paying."

Mr. Capps gave the fat junior a rather stony look.

"You needn't be afraid about the money, Capps," said Toodles, with lofty scorn. "I've got it here—plenty of it!"

"I'll see it afore I hands out food to the young gentlemen," remarked Mr. Capps dryly.

Tuckey Toodles sniffed.

"Lend me something to jerk this wire off!" he snapped. "The lid's wired on. Thanks!"

Mr. Capps handed him a pair of pliers, and Tuckey Toodles jerked off the wire, the Fourth Formers watching him breathlessly.

"Here you are!" said Tuckey.

He jerked off the lid of the biscuit-tin and upended it on the counter.

There was a jingling, a jangling, and a clanking, and the contents of the tin rolled out.

Tuckey Toodles smiled a beaming smile. But the next second that smile seemed to be frozen upon his face as he saw the collection! For it was not money! The only coin present was a French penny, and that was bent. The rest consisted of nails, buttons, old keys, a number of used-up pen-nibs, a few brace-buckles, and any number of similar small articles! Certainly that collection, large as it was, would not have gone far towards refurbishing Study No. 8!

Tuckey gazed at it as if mesmerised by it. Old Mr. Capps' face broke into a grin. From the crowd in the canteen burst a terrific roar.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The juniors streamed out of the tuckshop, leaving Tuckey Toodles still staring blankly at his weird and wonderful collection.

Ten minutes later there was a splash in the river beside the Benbow. It was the last that was heard of Tuckey Toodles' Furnishing Fund!

Next week: "EASY TERMS!"

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 1,604.

A COOL CUSTOMER!

(Continued from page 22.)

Levison jumped.

"My hat! So Cutts was ragging you?"

"Yes. He often does, the beast! And Cardew chipped in like a real brick! And—and I'd like to go to the Head and get Cutts flogged or sacked! And I'd have done it, only Cardew asked me—"

"Oh, rot!" growled Cardew. "What's the good of tellin' tales and complainin'? I can stand a punch or two, I suppose. I'm not made of butter!"

"You got handled like that standing up for my minor?" asked Levison, staring at the new junior.

"Well, I chipped in to stop Cutts raggin' him."

VICTIM OF VENGEANCE!

(Continued from page 29.)

it has, at least, led to clearing up the matter. An explanation shall be inserted in the 'Thompson Press' in a prominent position."

"That is the least you can do."

"Madam, a second edition of this week's paper shall be printed!" exclaimed Mr. Penrose. "The story shall be told plainly, and this unfeeling trick exposed. I will see about the matter this very evening."

And Mr. Penrose departed hastily.

Miss Meadows sank into her chair again. The colour burned in her cheeks.

"It is infamous!" she said. "Mr. Slimmey, will you kindly see whether that boy has left the school yet? If not, bring him here to me!"

"Certainly, Miss Meadows!" said Mr. Slimmey, glad to be able to do something. And he hurried away.

But he returned in a few minutes alone.

"The boys are all gone, Miss Meadows."

"It matters little," said Miss Meadows quietly.

"I shall see Richards to-morrow morning. Thank you, Mr. Slimmey!"

grunted Cardew—"not that it was any bizney of mine, if you come to that."

"It was jolly decent of you!" said Levison.

"Thanks!" said Cardew, yawning.

Levison was silent for a moment.

"You said something yesterday when you came about having wanted to know me," he said. "You wanted to be in the same study—"

"And pal with you?" said Cardew. "Yes, that's so."

"Well, if you still feel the same, I'm your pal for as long as you like!" said Levison.

"Done!" said Cardew at once.

He held out his hand, and Levison grasped it.

It was the beginning of a new friendship for Levison of the Fourth, but whether that friendship was to be for good or ill only the future could show.

Next Wednesday: "CARDEW MAKES AMENDS!"

Mr. Slimmey left the room and closed the door behind him. The young master's feelings towards Frank Richards were far from amiable as he went slowly towards his cabin by the creek.

Meanwhile, Frank Richards and Bob Lawless were riding cheerily on the home trail, after leaving Beauclerc, as usual, at the fork.

Bob was chuckling over the epidemic of proposals at the lumber school that day—Bob's eyes were always keenest to see the comic side of any occurrence.

But Frank Richards was thoughtful. The more he thought of it, the more he realised that that advertisement in the matrimonial column of the "Thompson Press" could not have come from Meadows. It was simply incredible.

It followed, therefore, that the letter had been tampered with while it was in his charge. Only Gunten could have done it, and he had never suspected it. If it were so, there would be stern inquiry, and what proof could he adduce that the Swiss had ever touched the letter at all?

Frank Richards did not feel happy at the possible outcome of the day's events at the lumber school. And, if he had only known, he had ample reason for his misgivings.

Next Week: "UNDER SUSPICION!"

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