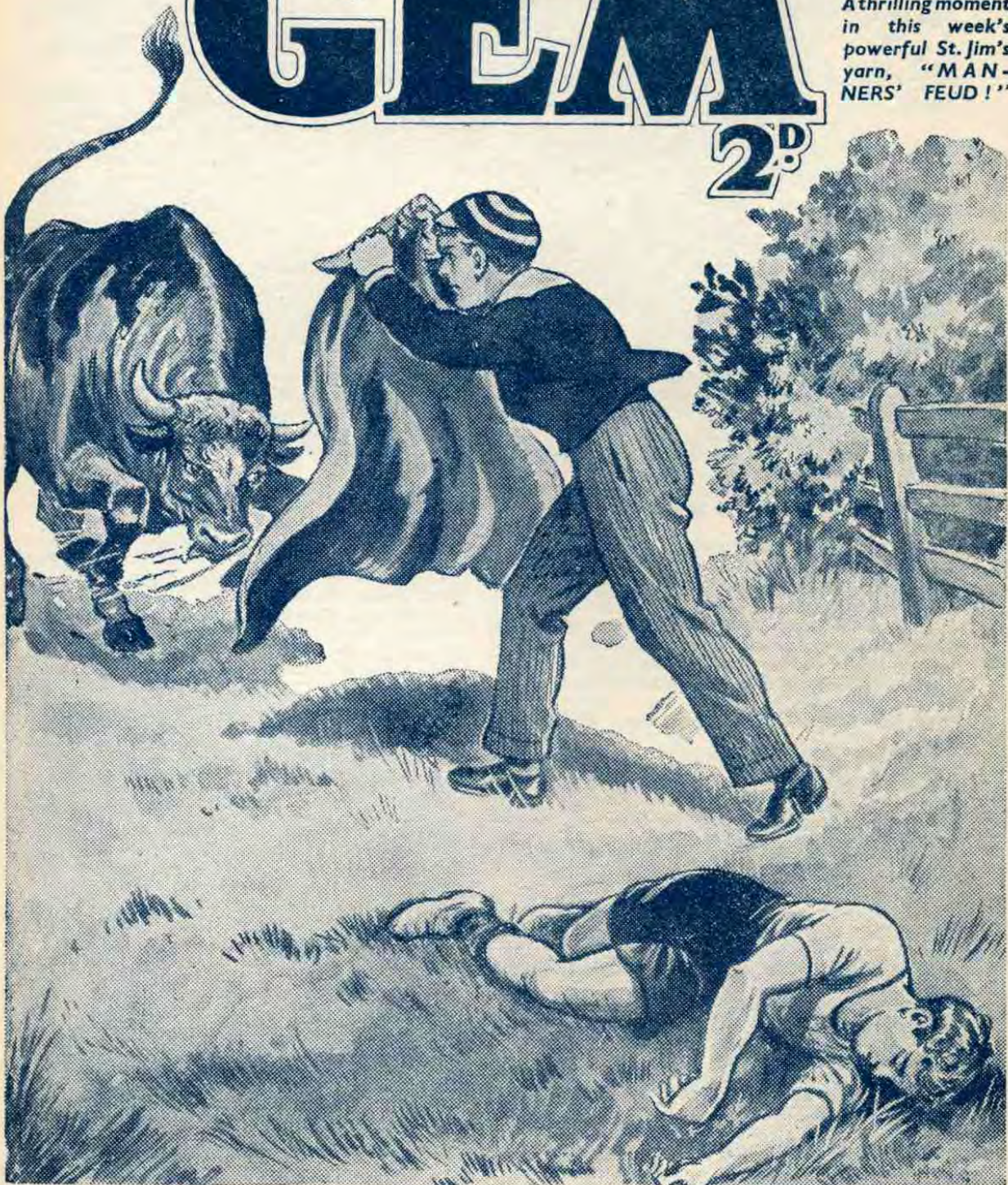


**THREE STUNNING SCHOOL STORIES—INSIDE!**

# *The* **GEM** 2<sup>D</sup>

**THE SCHOOL-BOY BULL-FIGHTER!**

*A thrilling moment in this week's powerful St. Jim's yarn, "MANNERS' FEUD!"*







# Blake Answers Back!

Jack Blake's here to answer your letters and deal with your queries. Write to him c/o The GEM, Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4. Be as candid as you like—Jack Blake likes a plain speaker, being by nature a John Blunt himself! But keep your letter SHORT, and enclose if possible a photo of yourself for reproduction on this page. No photos can be returned and no replies given by post.

"Two Good Mixers," of Littlewick, write:

We two would like this point settled. Two boxers deliver a knock-out to each other at the same moment, so that they both go down for the count. What is the correct verdict?

ANSWER: *This is known as Miracle No. 1 in boxing circles. The result is a draw, and an immense feeling of relief for each man when he comes round and discovers that, though he was knocked out, he was not beaten.*

"Mathematician," of Preston, writes:

If a bottle plus cork costs twopence-halfpenny, and the bottle costs twopence more than the cork, what does each cost?

ANSWER: *Without calling in Manners, the mathematical expert of the Shell, I can tell you the bottle cost twopence farthing and the cork cost a farthing. Surely you haven't been letting a little thing like that worry you!*

"Farmer's Boy," of Reading, writes:

I had £100, and with it I bought 100 animals—cows at £5 apiece, sheep at £1 apiece, and pigs at a shilling each. How many of each did I buy?

ANSWER: *I won't guarantee to answer too many questions of this sort—you really ought to come in one morning during maths class. I make it 19 cows (£95), 1 sheep (£1), and 80 pigs (£4).*

W. A. Orman, of Bull's Green, Knebworth, writes:

1. Why can't cads like Racke and Crooke be so completely squashed that they won't try any more of their tricks?

2. Could we have charts giving names, ages, and hobbies of St. Jim's people?

3. In a recent story, how did Lowther recognise his £1 note on its production from Racke's pocket? Wishing you all the best!

ANSWER: 1. *Any gardener will tell you you can never quite get rid of the weeds. According to our new Fifteen-Year Plan, we hope to have Racke, Crooke & Co. completely squashed by 1954—or thereabouts.*

2. *You could, if you went without the stories for a few weeks. But would everybody care for page after page of fidgety figures? Gosh, I wouldn't! I'd have to compile them!*

3. *I asked Lowther, and he says the fact that it was brought out with the other stolen articles from Racke's pocket was sufficient for him. 'Nuff said.*

Wishing YOU all the best!

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J. D., of Cononley, Yorks, writes:

I'd like a list of studies in the Fourth and their occupants to begin with. Then could you answer these: 1. Who is best at English in the Fourth? 2. Who is most poetic? 3. When was the School House founded? 4. Also the New House? 5. How old is Gussy, exactly? 6. From which University does Mr. Railton hail?

ANSWER: *At the risk of boring stiff those readers who don't care a hoot who inhabits which study in the Fourth, here goes. School House: No. 1. Lumley-Lumley, Durrance. No. 2. Mellish, Buggy Trimble. No. 3. Bates, Macdonald. No. 4. Tompkins, Mulvaney. No. 5. Hammond, Kerruish, Reilly, Julian. No. 6. D'Arcy, Digby, Herries, and self. No. 7. Contarini, Roylance, Smith minor. No. 8. Lorne, Wyatt. No. 9. Levison, Cardew, Clive. No. 10. Jones minor. Richard Brooke, the day boy, has no study. New House: No. 1. Koumi Rao. No. 2. Robinson, Clarke. No. 3. Pratt, Digges. No. 4. Figgins, Kerr, Wynn. No. 5. Redfern, Owen, Lawrence. No. 6. Chowle.*

Replies to questions: 1. Brooke, probably, or Manners. 2. No real claimant to this title, though Gussy fancies he pens a pretty verse. 3. About 1540, when St. Jim's, as a school, was founded on the site of the old abbey, destroyed by Henry VIII. 4. The New House is only "new" by comparison—it has been built well over 100 years. 5. 15 years 3 months. 6. Mr. Railton is an M.A., and went to Oxford.

End of Volume 1, *Encyclopedia St. Jimica*. O.K.? Next, please.

Maurice Williams, of Coleford, Glos., writes:

I am anxious to know whom I should most resemble at St. Jim's? My height is 5 ft. 4 ins., weight 7 st. 4 lbs, age 13 years 2 months. I am very strong-headed and a pretty good fighter, good in all kinds of sport. P.S.—Sorry I have no photograph.

ANSWER: *You would be in the Third at St. Jim's, though you are taller than many fellows in the Fourth. In fact, you could look down on a chap like Mellish, who is five foot nothing, and probably dot him on the nose in safety if you liked! I don't think we have your exact counterpart at St. Jim's, though Grundy is strong-headed and a good fighter and thinks he is good at all kinds of sport. P.S.—Keep up the sport, and let me know if you put up any records.*

(Continued on page 22.)



# MANNERS' FEUD!

"Roylance, you cad, you lying rotter! Take that!" exclaimed Manners. — And the Shell junior's fist crashed into the New Zealander's face and sent him spinning across the study.

## CHAPTER 1.

### Manners Says "No"!

"YOU fellows comin' along?" asked Arthur Augustus D'Arcy of the Fourth Form.

The swell of St. Jim's was dressed in plus-fours, and he looked quite a picture as he stood in the doorway of Study No. 10.

His celebrated monocle was turned inquiringly upon the Terrible Three.

Tom Merry, Manners, and Lowther were in the study, debating whether to spend that afternoon on "Tom Merry's Weekly" or not. The "Weekly" was overdue—it generally was!

"That depends, Gussy," answered Tom Merry. "Coming where?"

"Abbotsford, de aah boy!"

"Anything on at Abbotsford?" inquired Monty Lowther.

"Yaas, wathah! We are goin' to see the League match."

"Oh, good!" said Tom Merry at once. "That's

better than sticking indoors, you chaps. The 'Weekly' can wait another week."

"Not a bad idea," agreed Lowther. "It's cold, but it's ripping weather for a bike ride. We'll come, my infant!"

"Can we go round through Rylcombe?" suggested Manners.

"I suppose we could, Mannahs. But why?"

"I want a new film for my camera," explained Manners. "I'd like to take some snapshots of the game."

"Oh, bother your camera!" murmured Lowther.

"Fathead!" was Manners' polite reply.

"All sewenc!" said Arthur Augustus. "It won't take much longah to go through Wylcombe, and I'm sure Woylance won't mind."

Manners started.

"Roylance?" he repeated.

"Yaas; we're goin' with Woylance."

"Oh!" said Manners, compressing his lips.

Tom Merry and Lowther looked at their chum rather uneasily. They had hoped that the trouble between Manners

*Unable to forget the licking he has received from Dick Roylance, Manners nurses a bitter grudge against the boy from New Zealand. Yet Roylance doesn't hesitate to return kindness for malice in a moment of peril for Manners' minor!*

by

**MARTIN CLIFFORD**

and Roylance, the new fellow in the Fourth Form, would blow over. Somehow it hadn't, though.

"Blake and Hewwies and Dig are not comin'," continued Arthur Augustus. "They have already awganged to go out with Levison and Cardew. I thought you thwee fellows might like to come along."

"I'd rather not come," said Manners.

"Bai Jove!"

"I think I'll get on with the 'Weekly,' after all. You fellows go, if you like," added Manners.

"Weally, Mannahs, I twust you are not keepin' up your wiculous aversion to Woylance!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus warmly. "I had forgotten about that; but weally I supposed you had more sense, you know—"

"Br-r-r-r!" said Manners.

"I do not wegard that as an intelligible wemark, Mannahs."

Manners turned to the table and dipped his pen in the ink. His mind was evidently made up.

"Well, is anybody comin'?" asked Arthur Augustus, with a glance of strong disapproval at Manners.

"Yes, two, anyway," said Tom Merry. "I'd like to."

"Same here!" said Lowther at once.

"Wight-ho! Start in a quartah of an hour, bikin' it," said Arthur Augustus, and he sauntered gracefully away.

There was silence in Tom Merry's study after the swell of the Fourth had gone. Manners was scratching away industriously with his pen without looking at his chums.

Tom Merry knitted his brows.

"Look here, Manners," he said, at last, "I don't see why you can't come."

"I'd rather not, thanks," said Manners, without looking up.

"Because you don't like Roylance, do you mean?"

"If you want to know—yes."

"Why don't you like him?"

"Because I don't."

There was no arguing with that. Tom Merry made a gesture of annoyance and rose to his feet.

"I think you're an unreasonable ass!" he said.

"Thanks!"

"It's ridiculous!"

"Really?"

"Yes, ridiculous!" exclaimed Tom hotly. "It's nearly a fortnight since Roylance came here, and you had a fight with him. Time enough for you to have got over it, I should think."

The colour crept into Manners' cheeks. But he did not answer, and he did not look up.

"It's all rot!" continued Tom Merry. "I understand about your being down on him at first, when you thought he had bullied your minor. You found out that Reggie was to blame, and Roylance let him off lightly. Reggie told you so himself, and you apologised to Roylance. I thought that was the end of it."

"Did you?"

"Yes, I did! As for your fight with him, what does that matter? Surely you're not owing a chap a grudge because he got the upper hand in a fair fight?"

"Jolly mean if you are!" said Lowther bluntly.

"Not at all!" answered Manners.

"You can't say the chap's crowed about it—he's never mentioned it," said Tom. "Nobody would even know that you got the worst of it if you hadn't said so yourself. And the fight was due to

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a misunderstanding, anyhow. Everybody likes Roylance in the House."

"Yes; I've noticed he's rather popular," said Manners, with a sneer.

"Why shouldn't he be, when he's a thoroughly decent chap in every way? I can't see why you can't get on with him."

"Well, I can't."

"You owned up that you were in the wrong in your row with him."

"I was in the wrong, so I was bound to own up," said Manners quietly. "It wasn't pleasant, but I had to do it, and I did it. Fellows have been saying ever since that I did it because I was afraid of getting another licking."

"No fellow with any decency would say so. Racke or Crooke, I suppose, or Trimble," said Tom scornfully. "It's not like you to take any notice of cads like that!"

"I don't take any notice. They say it, all the same."

"And you're going to dislike Roylance because a cad like Racke chooses to say caddish, untrue things?"

Manners laid down his pen, swung round on his chair, and faced his chum.

"It's no good jawing," he said. "I don't like the fellow. I don't say there's anything wrong with him. I dare say he's all right. But I don't like him; that's the long and the short of it. As I don't like him, I don't want his company."

"You can be civil to a fellow you don't like, I suppose?"

"I'd rather not see him at all, and I'm not going to. Let it drop. I'm not stopping you fellows going."

"It makes it beastly awkward when we're on good terms with the chap."

"That's your look-out, if you're in such a hurry to throw over old friends for new ones," said Manners bitterly.

"Oh, don't talk rot!" exclaimed Tom sharply. "Roylance isn't our pal, and you know it; but he's a decent sort, and I like him, too."

"Well, if you like him get along and go with him. I'll get on with the 'Weekly' while you're gone."

Tom Merry hesitated.

"Oh, come on!" exclaimed Lowther impatiently.

"If Manners is going to sulk we may as well clear off."

"Who's sulking?" shouted Manners.

"You are! You've been sulking ever since Roylance came here!" snapped Lowther. "You want us to cut a chap who's never done any harm, and we're jolly well not going to. You've admitted you were in the wrong in rowing with him, and that ought to make an end of it. Owing grudges and bearing malice is acting like a pig—so you can put that in your pipe and smoke it!"

And with that Monty Lowther strode out of the study; and Tom Merry, after one uneasy glance at Manners' lowering face, followed him. Manners sat down to his work again.

He was in the wrong—and he knew it. There was no good reason for disliking Roylance. But the fact remained that he did not like him.

## CHAPTER 2.

### On the Road!

"HOLD on, kid!"

It was just like Wally of the Third to address Tom Merry, the junior captain of the school, in that cheeky way.

Wally D'Arcy, Reggie Manners, and Levison



minor were coming upstairs and they met the two Shell fellows on the landing.

"Hallo!" said Tom rather gruffly. "What do you want?"

"Don't bite a chap's head off!" answered D'Arcy minor. "What's ruffled the serenity of your noble highness?"

"You cheeky young ass!"

"You old ass!" retorted Wally independently.

Tom Merry burst into a laugh.

"That's better!" said D'Arcy minor approvingly. "That's my dear little Tommy again, as Miss Priscilla would say."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Reggie Manners and Levison minor together, and Monty Lowther chuckled.

Tom Merry made a movement to pass on, but D'Arcy minor stopped him.

"We want you!" he said.

"Can't stop. D'Arcy and Roylance will be waiting for us," replied Tom. "Another time, whatever it is."

"Oh, my major can wait!" said Wally. "And Roylance is only a new kid, anyway! We want you to start us."

"Eh?"

"It's the Third Form paper-chase," explained Levison minor. "We're starting in a quarter of an hour, and you're going to start us. See?"

"It's an honour for you, you know," remarked Manners minor. "Kildare started us last time. He's playing footer now, though."

"And I'm second best?" said Tom, with a smile. "Ask Manners; he's in the study. I really must get off now."

"Oh, Manners will do!" assented Wally. "You're not the only pebble on the beach, dear boy. Come on, kids! We'll bag your major, Reggie."

"Right you are!"

The three fags went on up the stairs; and Tom Merry and Lowther descended and went round for their bicycles. They found Arthur Augustus D'Arcy and Dick Roylance at the bikeshed.

Roylance greeted them with a cheery nod.

"Manners coming?" he asked. There was certainly no sign of animosity about the New Zealand junior.

Manners had owned up frankly that he was in the wrong in their old quarrel, and Roylance was ready to let bygones be bygones. He had not come much into contact with Manners since then; but as they were in different Forms, that might have been chance.

Tom Merry coloured a little.

"Manners is writing stuff for the 'Weekly,'" he explained. He felt very uncomfortable as he said it; for, although it was true enough, it was not the whole truth.

Roylance's eyes gleamed for a moment, and then he nodded carelessly and turned to his machine.

"Weady, deah boys?" said Arthur Augustus, wheeling out his handsome jigger.

The four juniors wheeled their machines down to the gates and out into the road, there they mounted and pedalled away.

It was a cold and sharp but sunny afternoon, and a spin through the country lanes was very enjoyable. Tom Merry and Lowther did not enjoy it so much as might have been the case, however. Manners ought to have been a member of the party; the Terrible Three were generally inseparable.

Manners' reproach, unfounded as it was, remained in Tom Merry's mind. It was absurd to

suggest that he was throwing over an old friend for a new one, and it was rather exasperating that the matter should present itself to Manners' mind in that light.

Tom liked the New Zealand junior—who was a cheery, good-natured fellow—as he liked a dozen other fellows, that was all. Roylance, in fact, was the very fellow Manners himself would have liked, but for that unfortunate trouble on Roylance's first day at St. Jim's—a trouble that was due to Reggie of the Third.

Manners' reproach was unjust; but it worried Tom a little while he was riding through the lanes with Roylance, and Manners was left on his own in the study, with only his own company for the afternoon. It was Manners' fault—the fault of his unreasonable temper—but it troubled Tom somehow, all the same.

The captain of the Shell was almost glad when there came a sudden pop! from his tyre and the machine dragged. He jumped off, and the other fellows slowed down and dismounted.

"Bai Jove! You've got a puncture, deah boy," remarked Arthur Augustus.

"Go hon!" murmured Monty Lowther. "Did you work that out in your head, Gussy?"

"Weally, Lowthah—"

"It's a beastly burst!" said Tom Merry ruefully. "I ought to have seen to that tyre before really. By Jove! It's serious!"

He turned the machine up and examined the tyre. It was a bad burst, and the mending was likely to be a slow and laborious operation. The juniors looked at one another.

"The match starts at thwee," remarked Arthur Augustus.

"You'll have to get on without me," said Tom. "Can't be helped. I shall have to wheel my bike back."

"It's rotten!" said Roylance.

"I'll stay with you, Tommy," said Monty Lowther at once. "Sorry, Roylance! You don't mind?"

"Not a bit."

"You should be weally more careful with your tyres, Tom Mewwy," admonished Arthur Augustus. "Howevah, we had bettah be off, or we shall be late. Ta-ta, deah boys!"

"Cheerio, old scout!"

Roylance and D'Arcy remounted and rode on, leaving the two Shell fellows together.

"It's rather a corker," remarked Lowther, looking at the damage. "We can wheel it into Woodford from here; there's a cycle shop there."

"Best thing to do," agreed Tom.

Lowther gave him a rather curious look.

"You're not very sorry it happened," he remarked.

"Well, no, not very," agreed Tom frankly. "It's rot, of course, but after what Manners said, I'd just as soon not go to Abbotsford this afternoon."

"Manners was talking out of his hat."

"I know, but—"

"I never thought old Manners was such an ass!" said Lowther. "I thought he'd have come round before this. Well, let's get along."

The two Shell fellows tramped away to Woodford.

Meanwhile, Arthur Augustus D'Arcy and Dick Roylance were making good speed. Roylance had a rather thoughtful expression on his sunburnt face, and he rode for a long time in silence. He broke the silence at last.

"I'm a new chap at St. Jim's, D'Arcy, but you

know those three fellows pretty well," he remarked.

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Do you know whether Manners is still keeping up a grudge against me?"

Arthur Augustus coloured rather uncomfortably. He had good reason to know it.

"Weally, Woylance—"

"I don't see why he should," said Roylance. "We had a row, but there was a misunderstanding. Those three fellows are pretty close chums, I understand?"

"Yaas."

"It's rather awkward, you see. If I'd known that Manners was still keeping rusty, I wouldn't have thought of asking them for this afternoon. I didn't know it; in fact, I'd jolly nearly forgotten I'd had a row with Manners at all," said Roylance, smiling. "But if he is keeping it up, I shall have to be a bit more careful with his friends."

"Mannahs is wathah an ass, deah boy," said Arthur Augustus. "It is weally vewy unlike him to keep up a thing like this. He is weally a vewy good chap. But—but to be quite fwank, I feah that he has not forgotten the little twouble."

Roylance nodded.

"All serene, now I know," he answered.

And he rode on in silence again. But the fact that Manners of the Shell still regarded him with dislike had no effect upon the New Zealand junior's sunny spirits, and the two Fourth Formers thoroughly enjoyed the football match at Abbotsford that afternoon.

### CHAPTER 3.

#### The Third Form Paper-chase!

**M**ANNERS of the Shell did not look specially pleased when his minor, Wally D'Arcy, and Levison minor presented themselves in the study.

He was doing his photographic article for "Tom Merry's Weekly," but not getting on with it very well.

He was feeling down that afternoon.

Manners was a conscientious fellow, and he was not satisfied with himself for keeping up a dislike of the new junior, Roylance. When he had believed Roylance guilty of bullying Reggie, it had been different. But that had been explained away by Reggie himself. But that very explanation increased poor Manners' discomfort in connection with the matter. For he had chipped in quite unjustly, as it turned out, and picked a quarrel with the new fellow, who was only shaking the fag for having cruelly hacked his shin; and he had been most ingloriously defeated in a stand-up fight—by a fellow, too, in a lower Form. The whole affair was unpleasant to Manners; and, though he knew that it was unjust to visit the unpleasantness upon Roylance's unoffending head, he could not help the feeling. In spite of his better nature, the bitterness remained in his heart, and found expression in words and actions.

And the fact that the New Zealander was a cheery, good-natured fellow, and very popular in the House, somehow added to his bitterness, because it deprived him of any excuse for it.

In that frame of mind, Manners was not feeling happy or comfortable, and the glance he gave the fags was not a welcoming one. Reggie was the cause of all the trouble—Reggie, whose perverse temper had led him into a row with the

new junior, into which Manners had plunged without knowing the facts, thereby making an ass of himself, as even Reggie had pointed out to him with brotherly candour.

But Reggie had almost forgotten the incident. His manner was quite cheerful, and he did not even notice the cloud on his major's brow.

"Hallo! Sticking at swotting?" demanded Reggie. "We want you."

"The other two duffers have gone out," remarked Wally. "We want you to come and start our paper-chase, Manners."

Levison minor, who was rather more observant than his comrades, gave Manners a rather curious look, and added:

"Not if you're busy, Manners."

"Rot!" said Reggie at once. "How can he be busy on a half-holiday? Lines can wait!"

Manners rose to his feet.

"I'll come," he said briefly.

"Good!" said Wally. "Got any scent you can give us? Old exercise-books, Latin grammars, pamphlets, or articles for the 'Weekly'? All's grist that comes to the mill."

"We're a bit hard up for scent," remarked Manners minor.

"Can we have this, Manners?" asked Wally D'Arcy.

"This" was Manners' half-finished article for the "Weekly."

"No, you young ruffian!"

"All right. Keep your wool on! What's this?" Wally picked up another paper from the table. "Lowther's merry comic column. I suppose we can have this? It will be a joke to use that for the scent. And, as Lowther's a great joker, he's bound to see the point."

Before Manners could interfere, Wally ruthlessly ripped up Lowther's humorous paper, and jammed it into the bag he was wearing on a strap over his shoulder. His comrades chuckled.

"Here, out you get!" exclaimed Manners.

And he hustled the three Third Formers out of the study before they could lay hands on any further scent.

The Shell fellow went down to the quadrangle with the three cheery fags. In the quad quite a little army of fags had gathered. School House and New House were well represented, and a few Fourth Formers had joined the crowd, though, as Wally expressly stated, it was a Third Form run.

"Oh, here you are!" called out Jameson. "I thought you'd mistaken it for bed-time, and gone to sleep somewhere."

"Rats!" exclaimed Wally. "Don't we want a starter, you New House ass?"

"Old Taggles could have started us."

"Old Taggles be bothered! Now, then, line up!"

"Not much good having young Manners for a hare," remarked Hobbs. "Young Manners can't run."

Reggie gave Hobbs a ferocious glare.

"Oh, I shall buck him up!" answered Wally.

"You'll get a dot on the nose if you begin bucking me up!" retorted Reggie.

"If you're going to be cheeky, Manners minor—"

"Poof!"

"Hadn't you better get started?" inquired Manners of the Shell mildly. "Is this a paper-chase or a jawing match?"

"It's between young Manners and Levison minor for the other hare," said Wally. There

was no doubt about Wally for the post of distinction. He had settled that for himself, as monarch of all he surveyed in the Third. "I don't care which it is; but if young Manners is going to be cheeky——"

"Oh, I don't mind!" said Frank Levison at once.

"Young Manners won't be much good," said Jameson, with a solemn shake of the head. "Anyhow, toss up for it."

"Look here, I'm going to be hare!" roared Reggie. "Levison minor can't run for toffee."

"Oh, can't I?" exclaimed Frank warmly.

"No, you can't! You run like a tomcat!"

"You cheeky ass——"

"Toss for it!" said Wally decidedly. "I think young Levison would be better myself. Anybody got a penny?"

A penny was produced.

"Heads, Levison; tails, Reggie," announced Wally. "Chuck it up, Jameson, and let it drop."

The coin spun in the air and clinked to the ground. There was a general craning of necks to look at it.

"Heads!" announced half a dozen voices. "It's Levison!"

Wally held out the second bag of scent.

"Here you are, Frank."

Frank hesitated.

"If Reggie wants——" he began.

"Never mind what Reggie wants!" interposed Wally autocratically. "He isn't the king pin of St. Jim's, I suppose? Shove the bag on, fathead!"

Wally slung the bag over Frank Levison's

shoulder. Reggie was looking sulky, as he generally did when his lofty will and pleasure were crossed.

"Line up!" snapped Wally.

"It won't be much of a run!" granted Manners minor. "I shall soon catch you two duffers!"

D'Arcy minor sniffed.

"If you catch me I'll give you my new pocket-knife!" he said scornfully. "Don't swank, Reggie; it doesn't suit your style of beauty! Line up!"

The fags lined up at last. Manners of the Shell took out his watch.

"Five minutes start," said Wally.

"Right-ho!"

Wally and Levison minor trotted out of the gates, and the array waited for the interval to elapse.

"Time, isn't it?" exclaimed Manners minor impatiently, at length.

"Another minute," answered his brother.

"Of course, you're bound to stick it out till the very last second!" said Reggie sarcastically.

Manners looked at him.

"I'm bound to start you fair," he replied.

"Don't be a young cad, Reggie!"

"Oh rats!"

"Manners minor wants to win Wally's pocket-knife, bedad!" grinned Hooley of the Third.

"Sure, and you won't win it in a month of Sundays, Reggie! You'll be pumped before the finish, and dead beat!"

"I'll keep on longer than you do!" growled



Wally paled as he turned back and saw the bull only three yards behind Frank. Quick as a flash, he tore off his half-filled bag of scent and hurled it at the bull's head.



Reggie. "If I don't keep in to the finish you can punch my nose as hard as you like!"

"Done!" grinned Hooley.

"Time!" called out Manners.

"Come on!" shouted Jameson.

The crowd of fags swept out of the gates. Manners put his watch back in his pocket and walked away to the School House. He returned to his photographic article. But he threw that up after a time and went down to footer practice, where he found Kangaroo and Clive, and Figgins & Co. of the New House. It was rather livelier than amateur journalism in the study. But even footer practice could not quite banish the clouds from his brow, and he wished that he had gone, after all, with his chums, even with the obnoxious Roylance thrown in. It was with a moody brow that he strolled away from the school in the late afternoon.

## CHAPTER 4.

### Danger!

"EASY does it!" grinned D'Arcy minor.

Frank Levison slackened down, smiling.

The two hares had had it all their own way so far. Leaving the track of torn paper behind them, they had crossed the field and wound by paths through the wood, and gone over the hill, and now they were crossing a section of the wide moor within sight of the smoke of Wayland.

The pack, so far, had had little chance.

Once or twice they had sighted the hares, and Jameson's bugle had rung out; but Wally and Frank were easily the best runners in the Third, and they had soon outdistanced the pursuers again.

Wally halted on a high knoll and looked back. In the distance he could see some straggling members of the pack. The wind had scattered the trail, and the hounds were searching right and left for it.

But, as Wally grinned at them from the distance, Jameson's bugle rang out again, showing that he had been seen.

"Come on!" said Frank.

Wally ran down the slope.

"Half of 'em have tailed off," he said. "But Reggie's sticking it out."

"Which way now?" asked Frank.

"Keep on."

"That's through the Moor Fields," said Levison minor.

"All right! That's easy running."

"Lots of cattle there."

"If you're funky of cattle, young Levison—"

"Fathead!" answered Levison minor. "I heard that Mr. Griggs, of Wayland, was chased by the black bull the other day in these fields. That bull is a regular corker. There's a board up."

"We're going through the Moor Fields!" answered Wally stubbornly. "The bull isn't there now."

"How do you know?"

"I've got eyes!" exclaimed Wally.

The two hares had reached the fence that bounded the field. There were cattle grazing in the field beyond, but the black bull was not to be seen. A board in a very prominent position by the stile announced that trespassers would be prosecuted, by order; and Wally, having time on his hands, paused a minute to pencil the word "Rats" under that announcement.

Then Wally led on through the field, dropping

the trail of torn paper with a careless hand. But by the time the fags were half-way across the field Wally discovered that he was in error on the subject of the dreaded black bull.

From a hollow in the corner of the field screened by willow-trees a bulky form emerged, and a bellow floated on the wind. Levison minor jumped.

"Wally," he shouted, "the bull!"

"Oh, don't bull me!" said D'Arcy minor. "He won't hurt us."

"Look here, I'm jolly well going to run!"

"No hurry! The pack's half a mile off!"

"I'm thinking of the bull, ass!"

"Blow the bull!"

Wally persisted in progressing at an easy trot to show Levison minor and the universe generally that he wasn't afraid of bulls. As a matter of fact, however, he quickened his trot a little as he heard a deeper and louder bellow from the corner of the field. The black bull evidently resented the invasion of his special domain.

A loud thudding sounded as he started in the direction of the two fags. Frank Levison was running, with one eye on the bull, and his heart beat faster as he saw the bulky animal in motion.

"Wally," he panted, "put it on!"

"Rats!"

"He's coming for us!" shouted Frank.

Wally looked round then.

"Oh, my hat!" he ejaculated. "Cut for it!"

Wally broke into a terrific burst, and Levison minor was hard put to it to keep pace with him now. The fags ran fast, but the bull, excited and angry now, ran faster, and a snorting bellow sounded terrifyingly close behind.

Wally reached the fence and bounded over. Levison minor reached it, but he was too breathless to jump, and he clambered over wildly. His comrade turned back on the safe side of the fence, and his face paled as he saw the bull only three yards behind Frank.

Quick as a flash, Wally tore off his half-filled bag of scent and hurled it at the bull's steaming jaws.

The animal swerved, and then caught the falling bag with his horns, and gored it savagely. Levison minor clambered into safety, Wally helping him. He stood panting on the safe side.

The bull, bellowing, was tearing the bag to tatters, and scattering what remained of the scent far and wide.

"My only Aunt Jane!" murmured Wally.

"You idiot!" gasped Frank Levison. "We might both have been gored to death!"

D'Arcy minor realised only too clearly that he had been obstinate and foolhardy and that it might have cost both him and his companion dear.

"Perhaps I was a bit of an ass," he admitted.

"A silly, thumping ass!" answered Frank.

"Well, now you've told me, you can cheese it. No bones broken, anyway; and"—Wally chuckled—"we've beaten the pack. They won't come across the field now. We can take it easy home."

"I'm not going to take it easy till we're out of these fields!" growled Frank. "There may be some more bulls."

"Oh rats!"

"Well, I'm going."

And Levison minor went, and Wally, on second thoughts, ran, too. From a hedge that bordered the dangerous field on another side, where a lane ran beyond the willows, two juniors waved their hands from their bicycles; but the fags did not see them. The two hares kept up a rapid run till



they were well out of the Moor Fields, and then dropped into an easy walk through the wood for home.

CHAPTER 5.

"Fools Rush In—"

"**H**OLD on!" yelled Jameson. The pack had reached the stile giving access to the Moor Fields. Reggie Manners was ahead, and he had one leg over the stile when Jameson shouted to him.

Reggie looked round.

"This way!" he called back.

The pack struggled up. There were not more than seven or eight fellows still in the running. It was rather a long run across the country, and the fags had tailed off.

Reggie was not one of the best runners by any means, but he was sticking it out. His pride was aroused, and he was determined to be in at the death.

"That's right, Jameson!" panted Hooley. "The paper goes on through that field. Look at it!"

"I know it does, fathead!" replied Jameson. "But there's a bull in that field—"

"Blow the bull!" said Reggie disdainfully.

"We're going round," said Jameson.

"I'm not going round!" declared Manners minor. "Wally and Levison have gone through."

"More fools they! I'm going round. Suit yourself, and if you get gored don't blame me!" And with that Jameson turned away. "Come on, you chaps; it's a good way round by the lane, but it can't be helped. Put it on!"

The fags followed Jameson, with the exception of Reggie Manners. Reggie remained on the stile, hesitating.

Though the bull in the distance looked a rather ugly customer, he had often passed bulls in safety before. This bull certainly had a bad reputation; but then, Wally and Frank had gone that way.

"They'll cackle at me for being frightened by a bull when they know that was the reason I didn't catch them!" growled Reggie savagely.

That consideration was enough to decide the wilful fag. He jumped down from the stile on the inner side and started following the trail of paper fragments towards the opposite fence, a quarter of a mile on.

The bull was moving about restlessly in the field, which the fag might have guessed indicated that he had been recently disturbed and irritated. But he had his tail to Reggie and did not see him at first.

As he got farther and farther from the stile Manners minor was drawing nearer and nearer to the bull, who was only a dozen yards from the footpath in the middle of the field.

And as he drew nearer and nearer Reggie felt less and less comfortable. He was close on the middle of the field, the bull still ahead of him, when the animal looked round.

The bull made a sudden movement as he saw the fag, and his tail lashed. Reggie felt his heart leap.

"Oh, the horrid beast!" he muttered.

His feet dragged to a halt. With all his reckless bravado, his legs refused to carry him any nearer to the terrible animal. A deep, echoing bellow came from the bull, and it made the fag's hair almost stand on end.

Reggie stood frozen for the moment as he saw that the bull was actually advancing upon him. And that he meant mischief was only too evident from the lashing tail and the red gleaming eyes.

Reggie cast a wild glance round. He could not keep on without rushing upon the danger he recognised too late. And behind him the stile lay two hundred yards away. He knew he could not run that distance, or half of it, before the bull reached him.

Away to his right, nearer than the stile, was the hedge bordering a lane that ran along the side of the field, a narrow lane with high hedges, much used by the St. Jim's fellows as a short cycling cut on the way to Abbotsford.

Reggie did not think it out. He acted instinctively. As the bull careered towards him he turned sharply from the path to the right and bolted for the hedge.

He ran as he had never run on the cinder-path. The fag did not need to look round. Behind him he could hear the heavy thudding of hoofs.

The snorting of the savage animal came to his ears, and fast as he ran it grew even louder and louder.

Yet his feet seemed scarcely to touch the grass as he flew. He was already tired with a long run; but his fatigue vanished. He ran untiringly, frantically, his breath coming in great gasps.

He was suddenly aware of a voice calling from the lane through the high hedge. Someone there had seen his danger. He hardly heard it, he did not heed, for all his thoughts and energy were concentrated upon the task of escaping from the bull.

The hedge at last. It rose before him. Only a few more yards—two or three. Then, feeling rather than knowing that the savage head was lowered behind, charging him, he bounded desperately to one side, and the bull went thundering by and crashed on the hedge.

The hapless fag sank in the grass, overcome.

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There was a bellow of wrath from the bull, crashing on the hedge in his wild charge; but he swerved back, looking with bloodshot eyes for his victim.

Reggie staggered up dazedly.

He bolted wildly along the hedge, the bull after him. Closer and closer, and then his strength failed him, and he pitched forward in the grass.

Helpless, scarcely able to move a limb in his terrible exhaustion, he lay at the mercy of the bull. It was too much, and it was no wonder that the fag's senses failed him, and he lay in the grass in a dead faint, with the black bull thundering down upon him.

## CHAPTER 6.

### In Direst Peril!

"THE weckless young ass!"

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy made that remark in mingled wrath and relief.

Roylance and D'Arcy were cycling home from Abbotsford, when from the lane they caught sight of Wally and Frank Levison running from the bull in the field adjoining the lane.

They halted at once, in great anxiety, and ran up into the hedge to see what would happen.

To their great relief the two hares escaped into the next field—too far off all the time for aid to be lent if it had been needed.

"The weckless young asses! They might have been gored!" Arthur Augustus exclaimed breathlessly. "I shall box Wally's yabs for this! Bai Jove, it has thwown me into quite a fluttah!"

"The young duffers!" agreed Roylance.

Arthur Augustus went back to the road and picked up his bike.

"Come on, deah boy!"

"Hold on a minute!" said Roylance thoughtfully. "Those kids are hares in a paper-chase."

"Yaas. It's the Third Form papah-chase today."

"Then the pack will be after them soon."

"I pwesume so."

"It won't be safe for them to cross the field."

"Bai Jove, you're wight, Woylance!" said Arthur Augustus. "We could get wound and stop them. I know the way. It's wound by those twees, and past the pond, and then by the dip."

Roylance smiled.

"You know this part," he said, "I don't. You cut round and tell the young duffers to keep clear, and I'll watch here, in case you miss them, or don't see them in time. If a young duffer gets into this field, he will want help."

"Yaas, that is so. I'll wejoin you here, deah boy."

Arthur Augustus jumped on his bike, and rode back the way the juniors had come, to get round to the stile, and warn the pack off when they arrived there. Roylance squeezed himself into the hedge, and watched the field.

If any reckless fag ventured into the field as the hares had done, he would be in fearful danger. Roylance knew that, and the New Zealand junior was not the fellow to leave anyone in danger unaided.

He unfastened the waterproof cape from his saddle, and threw it over his arm, and posted himself in the hedge again, to watch.

He had not long to wait. Long before Arthur Augustus could get round by the devious way

to the stile the pack arrived there. The halt they made caused Roylance to hope that they saw the danger, and had decided to keep clear of it.

He set his lips as he saw a single fag entering the field to follow the paper trail.

"The young fool!" he muttered angrily.

Even at this distance he recognised Manners minor, the fag whose peevish temper had caused his trouble with Manners of the Shell on the day he came to St. Jim's.

From the fact that Reggie came on alone, and that the rest had gone a different way, he could guess that the fag's wilful temper was at work again. But all thought of that was swallowed up in his anxiety.

He shouted a warning; but the distance was great, and the wind was against him. Reggie did not hear.

With deep anxiety Roylance watched the fag's progress across the field. He began to hope that Reggie would get past without attracting the attention of the bull.

But that hope was soon dashed to the ground. With starting eyes Roylance watched the chase as Reggie started running for the hedge, with the bull after him.

Closer and closer came the fag, closer and closer the thundering bull behind, and Roylance shouted to Reggie, hardly knowing what he shouted in his wild excitement and anxiety.

He squeezed himself farther through the hedge; but it was thick and strong, and it was a struggle to get through. He heard the fag's gasp of terror as the bull passed him, he heard the crash on the hedge, only a few yards from where he was forcing his way through. With a final effort he burst through, and jumped down into the field.

Reggie, in a dead faint, lay a few yards from him on the left; on the right the bull came charging down on the fallen fag.

Roylance was between.

In less than a minute it would have been all over with the fag, and it needed more than common courage for the New Zealand junior to throw himself in the path of the raging animal. But he did not hesitate.

The heavy waterproof cape was in Roylance's hand. He had reason to be thankful that he had had the forethought to provide himself with it. The bull came thundering on with lowered head, not even seeing the new figure in his path, and Roylance hurled the cape and leaped aside just in time.

His hand had been swift but sure. The cape caught on the lowered horns, and clung there, and dangled over the savage, bloodshot eyes.

There was a muffled roar from the bull as he thundered past within three feet of the junior.

But he did not reach Manners minor. Blinded by the clinging cape, the animal tossed up his head, careering round furiously, bellowing and snorting.

Roylance did not lose a second.

Two bounds carried him to the side of the insensible fag. He bent, and lifted Reggie Manners in his strong arms, and hurried back to the hedge.

Reggie's weight was little to the strong-limbed junior. He reached the hedge, and plunged into the opening he had made in squeezing through.

Behind him the bull was roaring.

"Woylance, deah boy—"

It was D'Arcy's panting voice. He grasped Roylance from the lane, and dragged at him



# LAUGH THESE OFF!

—with Monty Lowther.



Hallo, Everybody!

*University professor says being a poor speller may be a sign of intelligence. Good news for Grundy!*

A reader wants to take up some bright but smooth occupation. What about becoming an apple-polisher?

*Brief story: "Boy, oh boy," exclaimed one comedian to another, "our names are in lights at last! The theatre is on fire!"*

At the Cliff House concert, I hear one critic described Clara Trevlyn's singing as the trill of a lifetime. Vocal girl makes good?

*Saw old Pepper, the Rylcombe miser, in Wayland. He had just been running after a bus, but missed it. "Oh, well," he remarked philosophically, "now I've missed it I shall walk on to the next fare stage, and save a penny." I couldn't help grinning. "Why didn't you run after a taxi?" I asked. "You'd have saved a lot more!"*

and at Reggie. With a final effort they came through into the lane.

A maddened bellow sounded from the field. The bull had at last got rid of the encumbrance upon his head. He tossed it about in his fury till it was almost in ribbons.

"Thank goodness we're out of that!" panted Roylance, reeling against a tree by the roadside.

"Woylance, old chap," exclaimed Arthur Augustus, "it was wippin'—wippin'! I saw it fivom up the lane, and came back instead of goin' on. I—I was afwaid you—"

He stopped, his voice trembling.

"All's well that ends well!" gasped Roylance, trying to smile. "But that kid—he looks in a bad way."

Arthur Augustus bent over the fag, who lay motionless in the grass by the side of the lane in the shadow of the hedge.

"He's fainted," he said. "It's Mannahs minor. We must twy to bwing him wound somehow."

"There's a cottage over there. Let's get him to it," suggested Roylance.

"Good ideah!"

On the other side of the lane was a gate, with a path running to a cottage a dozen yards from the road. A labourer was coming down the path to the lane, having evidently seen the whole affair.

A motorist skidded in Rylcombe High Street, and just touched Mr. Lathom. "Most fortunate, sir!" exclaimed the driver, finding Mr. Lathom unhurt but for a torn trouser. "This is my first accident in twenty-two years." "Indeed, sir?" said Mr. Lathom courteously. "Then let me be the first to congratulate you!"

*A motorist says it is cyclists who take up most of the road. It is hoped navvies will not take this as a challenge.*

Next: The stage actor went up to the film director and asked for a part. "Well," said the film director, "have you had any experience of playing without an audience?" "I'll say I have," replied the actor. "That's why I'm deserting the stage for the screen!"

*"I think I cut rather a good figure," said Grundy, surveying himself in a full length mirror. "Well," said his chum Wilkins tactfully, "of course, there's a lot to be said for both sides."*

A specialist in Hollywood fixes up all the trees on the outdoor sets. Even the director has to "bough" to him.

*I hear wrong facts have been circulated about a film of a mythical kingdom. A few mythistatements?*

The Head's gardener is a marvellous old chap. He knows all about politics, the local council, society gossip, the prospect of the local football teams, international affairs, the servants, and so on. If only he knew a bit about gardening!

*I'll be waiting for you next week, chaps.*

Arthur Augustus called to him.

"Bring him in," replied the cottager. "I'll help you." He opened the gate, and came out into the road to lend a hand.

"Better get a doctor to him, D'Arcy!" muttered Roylance.

"Yaas, wathah! There's a short cut to Wylcombe fwom here—"

"Buck up, then!"

Arthur Augustus jumped on his machine, and pedalled away like the wind. The cottager carried Manners minor indoors, and Roylance wheeled his bicycle into the garden, and then followed him in.

A few minutes later half a dozen juniors came trooping along the lane, and they passed on, little dreaming of the tragedy that had nearly taken place there. Jameson stopped and looked through the hedge into the field.

"Can't see Manners minor there!" he exclaimed.

"He must have got through all right, then," said Hobbs. "He'll cackle at us over this, the cheeky bounder."

"More likely he turned back," said Hooley.

"Two to one he did," agreed Jameson. "Anyhow, let's get on. The hares have done us in the eye, there's no getting out of that."

And the tired and dusty pack went on their way, picking up the paper trail once more on the

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edge of the wood, and following it home—to arrive at St. Jim's half an hour after Wally and Levison minor.

## CHAPTER 7.

### A Shock for Manners!

"HALLO, Manners!"

"Hallo!" Manners of the Shell stopped in surprise.

He was strolling along a shady lane, with his camera slung over his shoulder. Manners was still moody and down, but the footer practice had done him good, and he was feeling all the better for a walk in the keen, clear afternoon.

His face brightened at the sight of Monty Lowther and Tom Merry, on their bikes in the lane. They jumped down at once.

"Fancy meeting you!" grinned Monty Lowther. "Did you get fed-up with photo articles for the 'Weekly'?"

"Yes; I've been playing footer," said Manners. "Then I came out for a trot."

"Don't say you missed us?" smiled Lowther.

"Well, perhaps I did," said Manners, colouring. "What are you fellows doing here, anyhow? Where are the other two?"

"Puncture on the road," explained Tom Merry. "Then you haven't been to Abbotsford at all?" exclaimed Manners.

"No. Roylance and D'Arcy went on to see the match," said Tom. "We've been getting a puncture mended at Woodford."

"Oh, good!" said Manners.

The Terrible Three were glad to be together again. Manners turned back with his chums, and the three walked on together towards the distant school, Tom Merry and Lowther wheeling their machines.

"Did you start the merry fag paper-chase?" asked Monty Lowther.

"Yes. I dare say they'll be pretty nearly home by now," remarked Manners. "If I'd come with you I should have turned back when you did, so it comes to the same thing."

"I s'pose it does," agreed Tom Merry.

Manners hesitated.

"Look here!" he said at last. "I dare say I was a bit ratty when you fellows went. You needn't mind that."

"We don't."

"I—I'm sorry. But—but I don't like that chap Roylance, and that's flat. If you fellows want to be friendly with him, you needn't mind me. But I can't be, and that's settled. I don't want to interfere with you."

"My dear ass, we shouldn't have much to do with a Fourth Form chap, anyway!" said Tom. "And Roylance wouldn't have asked us for this afternoon, only I'm sure he's forgotten all about your row with him. I wish you'd forget it, too."

"Well, I can't."

"Hallo!" ejaculated Monty Lowther, as a bicycle-bell rang on the road. "Here's the one and only. Roylance isn't with him."

"Gussy!" exclaimed Tom.

Arthur Augustus, riding like the wind, his eyes-glass flying at the end of its cord, came whizzing round a turning into the road from a narrow lane.

The chums of the Shell looked past him, expecting to see Roylance; but there was no sign of the New Zealand junior.

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Arthur Augustus jammed on his brakes as he sighted the Terrible Three, and slowed down.

"Bai Jove! You fellows here!" he exclaimed. "Mannahs, deah boy, I'm vewy glad to see you. Your minah—"

Manners started.

"What about him?"

"He's in Bunce's cottage up the lane. I'm goin' for a doctah. Can't stop!"

And Arthur Augustus drove at his pedals again, and dashed on, vanishing down the road like a flash.

Manners stood very still.

"Reggie in Bunce's cottage—a—a doctor!" he muttered blankly. "What has happened, then?"

"Some accident," said Tom uneasily. "Here, take my bike. You know the cottage—up that lane, and bear to the left. Sharp's the word!"

Manners threw himself upon Tom's bike, and dashed away, his face white. He knew that D'Arcy had thrown him that hasty information in passing so that he could go to his minor.

Tom and Monty Lowther looked at one another in dismay.

"What has happened?" muttered Lowther.

"An accident of some sort! Reggie was in the paper-chase," said Tom. "Poor old Manners! If—if it's serious, it will cut him up. Let's get after him."

They hurried after Manners, Tom standing on the footrest of Lowther's bike.

Manners had vanished. The Shell fellow rode frantically, the pedals spinning round like lightning.

He came up to Bunce's cottage gate with a rush.

Hardly noting where the bicycle ran as he jumped off, he threw open the gate, and ran up the garden path. His hand trembled as he knocked at the cottage door. Roylance, from the little window above, looked down on Manners, in amazement. The New Zealand junior was astonished to see him there.

"My hat!" he muttered.

Reggie Manners lay on the little bed, still unconscious. The cottager's wife was beside him, doing what she could for the fag, but he had not come round.

Roylance stepped quickly to the bed-room door. He did not want to meet Manners there. The meeting would be awkward for Manners, in the circumstances.

Roylance left the bed-room quickly as he heard Manners knock at the door below.

He hurried down the little stairs as Mr. Bunce came slowly out of his dusky little kitchen to answer the door.

Roylance went into the kitchen.

He heard the door open and Manners' husky voice speaking:

"My brother is here, I think?"

"Come in, sir."

Manners came in unsteadily. Mr. Bunce gave a curious glance at his white, strained face.

"Tain't very serious, sir," he said comfortingly. "Only fainted. The bull never touched him."

"The bull!" muttered Manners.

"Mr. Lucas' bull was arter him, but the young gent got him away in time. He's upstairs. This way, sir."

Mr. Bunce showed Manners up the narrow, rickety stairs.

Roylance sat down in the kitchen.

He was undecided what to do.

He was needed there no longer, now that





"Mannahs, deah boy, I'm vewy glad to see you!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus. "Your minah——" Manners started. "What about him?" "He's in Bunce's cottage up the lane. I'm goin' for a doctah. Can't stop!" And D'Arcy rode on hurriedly.

Reggie's brother was there, and he did not want to meet Manners. He could guess what the Shell fellow's chagrin would be like, meeting his special enemy in the role of his brother's rescuer. It would be uncomfortable on both sides.

A few minutes later there came another knock at the door, and he heard Mr. Bunce admit Tom Merry and Lowther, and caught their voices, in low tones, as they were taken upstairs.

Roylance made up his mind. He quitted the cottage, returned to his bicycle in the garden, and wheeled it out quietly into the lane. There was nothing to stay for longer, and he was better off the scene.

He mounted in the lane, and rode away swiftly in the direction D'Arcy had taken some time before.

A quarter of an hour later he passed Dr. Short's car, driving at a great rate.

He rode on.  
"Hallo, Woylance!"

Five minutes after passing the doctor's car he met Arthur Augustus D'Arcy on the road, riding at a much more leisurely pace now. Roylance jumped down.

"Are you comin' back?" asked D'Arcy, stopping.

"May as well get on," suggested Roylance. "Manners is there now, with Tom Merry and Lowther. We should only be in the way!"

"Pewwaps you are wight, deah boy; but Weggie——"

"He's all right. He's not hurt, you know."

Arthur Augustus nodded.  
"Wight you are! I am wathah fatigued, as a mattah of fact."

Meanwhile, Dr. Short had arrived at the cottage. He proceeded to attend to Reggie. The fag was coming to now, and his eyes were open, with a wild light in them.

"The bull!" he muttered.  
The doctor answered him soothingly.  
Reggie sat up as he recognised the school medical man.

"Look here, I'm not ill!" he exclaimed.  
Evidently it was the old Reggie again already.  
Dr. Short smiled.

"No, you're not ill," he agreed. "You fainted!"

"I've never fainted in my life!"  
"Quiet, my lad!" answered Dr. Short.

He turned to Manners.  
"There's nothing the matter with your brother, Manners—nothing at all. He had better be kept quiet for an hour, and then he can be taken back to the school. Better get a car."

"I can walk!" grunted Reggie.  
"Dry up, kid!" muttered Manners.

"He's had a bad shock, and fainted, and he had better not exert himself," said the doctor. "I really don't see why Master D'Arcy was so alarmed."

And the medical gentleman, evidently not very

pleased at being called up in a hurry to attend to such a slight matter, gave Manners a few professional directions, and returned to his car.

"I'll go and see about getting a car to take him home," said Tom Merry. "May get one at Lucas' farm."

He went down and Lowther followed him, leaving Manners with his minor. The Shell fellow sat on the foot of the bed, breathing hard. He had had a painful shock, and his relief at finding Reggie almost unhurt was great. He was curious to know what had happened; but, as the doctor had said that the fag was to be kept quiet for a time, he did not question him.

Reggie lay silent, with his eyes closed.

He was feeling sick and weak. But his eyes opened after a time, and he sat up, scowling.

"How on earth did you get here?" he asked.

"D'Arcy called to me as he passed, and told me where you were."

"Did he? How on earth did D'Arcy know? And what the thump was he doing here, too?" grunted Reggie.

"I don't know."

"Who fetched me out of the field?"

"I don't know, Reggie."

"That cottager 'chap, I suppose," said Reggie.

"I say, sir, I'm much obliged to you!"

Mr. Bunce shook his head as Reggie called across the room.

"'Twasn't me, sir," he said.

"What was it happened, Mr. Bunce?" asked Manners.

"I saw it from the winder, sir. This young gent was in the field, and the bull was very nearly on him, when the other young gent got him out just in time. Very brave of him it was," said Mr. Bunce. "I wouldn't 'ave cared to face Mr. Lucas' bull, not if I could 'ave helped it!"

"D'Arcy, I suppose, as he was there," remarked Reggie. "Blessed if I thought he had it in him!"

"I don't know the young gent's name," said Mr. Bunce.

Tom Merry looked in.

"We've got the farmer's car when you're ready," he said.

"I'll carry Reggie down," said Manners.

"You won't!" growled Reggie. "I'm not a baby!"

But Reggie found himself so weak that he had to hang heavily on his brother's arm as he descended the stairs. Tom Merry and Lowther had made a hasty collection between them, and raised the sum of seven-and-sixpence, which was pressed into Mr. Bunce's hand. Then the Terrible Three and Reggie drove away in the farmer's car for St. Jim's.

## CHAPTER 8.

### Shoulder High!

"**B**AI JOVE, I'm wathah tired!" confessed Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

"I've had enough," remarked Roylance.

The two juniors dismounted at the gates of St. Jim's, and wheeled in their machines in the falling dusk.

The bikes were put up in the shed, and they walked round to the School House. There was a deep line of thought in Roylance's brow. He paused as they came towards the House.

"Hold on a minute, D'Arcy!"

"Yaas, deah boy. Anythin' up?"

"I've been thinking. I cleared out of the

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cottage when Manners came, and he didn't see me or know that I was there!"

"Pewwaps that was wathah tactful, deah boy," said Arthur Augustus, with a nod. "Poor old Mannahs! He will feel an awful ass when he knows what you did!"

"That's what I was thinking. I don't see why he should know."

"Eh?"

"No need to tell him, is there?" asked Roylance, flushing.

"But—but—" stammered Arthur Augustus, in surprise. "He's bound to know. He will ask Weggie—"

"His minor can't tell him anything. He hadn't recovered his senses before I left."

"But he will know that somebody got him out of the bull's way, deah boy!"

"It might have been anybody," said Roylance. "Anybody passing would have done it, the same as I did."

"Yaas, I suppose so."

"Well, then, leave it at that. Manners is keeping up a fatheaded feud against me, and it will make him feel an awful fool if he knows!"

D'Arcy chuckled.

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Well, he needn't know. It will be jolly uncomfortable for me, too, placing a fellow under an obligation when I'm on bad terms with him. As it happens, he doesn't even know that I was there, and he needn't know."

Arthur Augustus reflected.

"Weally, Woylance, I am vevy pleased to see that you are not lackin' in tact and judgment," he said graciously. "Pewwaps, as you say, it would be more tactful not to mention that you were on the spot at all. It will avoid an extwemely uncomfy position for both parties."

"That's what I think."

"But you are entitled to the ccredit, you know—"

"Never mind that. I suppose I'm not going parading up and down the school asking fellows to admire me?"

"Ha, ha, ha! No. Pewwaps it would be bettah taste to hide your light undah a bushel, old fellow, in the circs."

"I'm glad you see it," said Roylance, relieved. "No need to say a word about it, you see. Let's get in to tea and keep it dark."

"Wight-ho!"

They entered the School House, and Roylance went to his own study, where Smith minor and Contarini were finishing tea. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy proceeded to look for his minor.

He found Wally & Co. in the Form-room, discussing the absence of Manners of the Third.

"Wally, you young wascal—" began Arthur Augustus severely.

"Hallo, cocky!"

"You cheeky young boundah! I have looked in to speak to you vevy severely. What do you mean by crossoin' a field with a mad bull in it?"

"The bull wasn't mad, ass!"

"Well, he was vevy savage."

"So he was," agreed Wally. "He reminded me of Herr Schneider."

"Worse, if anything," remarked Levison minor.

"You wisked your life, Wally—"

"Well, I didn't lose it," said Wally cheerfully.

"And if I had it would have saved me from being jawed by my major. There's a silver lining to every cloud, you see."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Pway be sewious on a sewious subject, Wally."





## Detective Kerr Investigates

No. 29.

### THE THIRD FORM MYSTERY!

MR. SELBY, the master of the Third, never in the best of tempers in the morning, leaped almost clear of the floor when he opened his desk and a large, slimy toad jumped out! Mr. Selby tried at first to round it up himself, but, hot and bothered, he was obliged to call in Taggles, the porter, who removed the offending reptile. Mr. Selby, breathing fire, questioned his Form without discovering who had put the toad in his desk. He then got the Head to "gate" the whole Form for a month. "Detective" Kerr, appealed to by Wally D'Arcy, cornered several of the fags one after another.

KERR: I say, Jameson, I suppose you are just as mad as the rest of the Third with the unknown who has got you all gated?

JAMESON: Yes, rather. If I knew who it was, I'd jolly soon make him own up!

KERR: You've no idea at all?

JAMESON: Except that it wasn't me, if that's what you're driving at, Kerr. I admit I was sore with Selby when he confiscated my peanuts the other day—but I didn't put that toad in his desk. That's the truth!

D'ARCY MINOR: Oh, Kerr, I forgot to tell you! It was I who gummed up old Selby's history book, but I don't think he has discovered yet that the pages are stuck tight together. But I've no knowledge whatever of the toad in Selby's desk—or I'd own up like a shot!

KERR: All right, Wally.

D'ARCY MINOR: Selby says the toad must have been put in his desk either last night, after prep, or early this morning. We all went to a school meeting after prep last night, and then to bed, so I should think it must have been done this morning, before classes.

KERR: Thanks, Wally!

Mannahs minah was vevy neahly gored by the bull in followin' you."

"By gum! Was he?" exclaimed Jameson.

"Then he didn't turn back, after all?"

"No, Jameson. He was chased by the bull."

"Great pip! I hope he won the race."

"You don't mean to say that young Reggie was gored?" exclaimed Levison minor.

"He was vevy neahly gored."

"Oh, a miss is as good as a mile!" said Wally.

"Young Levison was very nearly gored, if you come to that."

Arthur Augustus frowned. It really did not seem possible to impress Wally's youthful mind with a proper understanding of the seriousness of the matter.

KERR: Wait a sec, Piggott.

PIGGOTT: Can't stop, Kerr. And if you think you're going to fix this on me, you're not—see?

KERR: I've no wish to fix anything on an innocent party. You've had no trouble with your Form-master lately?

PIGGOTT: Haven't I? He caned me the day before yesterday—and now I've got two hundred lines of Virgil to write out for him. I jolly well wish somebody would put a raging lion in his study!

GIBSON: Hallo, Kerr—the very man I wanted to see! Perhaps I can help you. I saw Piggott going towards the Form-room early this morning—

KERR: Where were you?

GIBSON: In the corridor. I asked him if he was eager to get into class, and Piggott said he wanted his Virgil to do some lines—

KERR: Sounds possible.

GIBSON: Yes, but you can never believe a word Piggott says, Kerr. I should remember that, if I were you!

KERR: Hallo, Reggie! You've no grudge against Mr. Selby, I suppose?

MANNERS MINOR: The old hunks made me stay behind after prep last night to do an extra task. I think nothing could be too bad for him. But I'm not the only chap in the Third who would make Selby sit up, if he could! Did you think I was, Kerr?

KERR: Frayne!

FRAYNE: Yes, Kerr!

KERR: I believe I saw you in the Third Form Room as I passed it this morning, fairly early?

FRAYNE: Yes; I had my prep to finish. I was first in class.

KERR: You didn't see anybody pop a toad in Mr. Selby's desk?

FRAYNE: No. They couldn't have done it without my seeing. I get on fairly well with Selby myself, actually. But then I work pretty hard, as I've a lot of leeway to make up!

KERR: Thanks, Frayne. I think you've helped me to clear up the mystery.

*(Who is the culprit? Kerr's solution will be found on page 33.)*

"Is that why Reggie hasn't come in?" asked Hobbs.

"Yaas."

"Well, I said he was an ass at the time," said Jameson. "You fellows heard me."

"Where is he, then?" demanded Wally.

"Lyn' at Bunce's cottage, in a faint, when I saw him last," answered D'Arcy major. "The bull vevy neahly had him."

"A faint!" said Wally scornfully. "Oh, the silly baby!"

"He fell down wight undah the bull's horns, Wally."

"How did he get away, then?"

"A chap jumped in and stopped the bull by

flinging somethin' ovah his horns, and got Weggie away just in time. They came neah bein' killed, both of them."

"Good chap, whoever he was," said Levison minor. "Was it you, Gussy?"

"I?" ejaculated Arthur Augustus.

"Yes. You were on the spot, it seems."

"Good old Gussy!" exclaimed Wally heartily. "You're not the silly idiot you always make yourself out to be, old chap."

"Bai Jove! But it was not I, you young asses!"

"Who was it, then?"

"A—a chap! He pwefers not to be mentioned, you know, bein' a wathah modest chap."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Wally. "I know who's the only modest chap at St. Jim's. His name's Gussy, and he's a howling ass!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Weally, Wally——"

"Three cheers for Gussy!" shouted Wally.

"Hip, pip, hurrah!"

"But it was not I!" yelled Arthur Augustus, in consternation. "It was quite anothah chap!"

"Rats! Gentlemen," said Wally, looking round with a grin, "Gussy has distinguished himself, and he wants to hide his light under a hat. He's saved the life of a member of the Third Form, according to his own account."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I haven't! I didn't! I wasn't!" howled Arthur Augustus, quite at a loss.

"Shoulder high!" shouted Wally.

"Hurrah!"

"You young asses!" shouted Arthur Augustus, as the grinning fags surrounded him. "I wepeat, let go! Let go at once! I tell you— Oh, bai Jove!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Up went Arthur Augustus D'Arcy on the shoulders of the fags. They carried him round the Third Form Room in great triumph.

D'Arcy shouted and expostulated in vain.

"See if the coast's clear, Levison!" shouted Wally, when Arthur Augustus had made the circuit of the Form-room on the shoulders of the fags.

"Right-ho!" grinned Frank.

He ran out, and came back in a minute or less.

"All serene! The light's not on yet, either."

"Good! Come on, you chaps—carry him home!"

"Hurrah!"

Arthur Augustus, wondering whether he was on his head or his heels, was borne shoulder high out of the Form-room. The coast was clear, and he was rushed up the big staircase, fortunately without any masters or prefects coming upon the strange procession.

The crowd of fags rushed along the Fourth Form passage, with the swell of St. Jim's sailing along on their shoulders, yelling.

"What the merry dickens!" shouted Cardew of the Fourth, who was coming in with Clive and Levison major.

"What's the game, Frank?" yelled Levison.

"It's the conquering hero!" grinned Frank.

"We're taking him home in state."

"Hurrah!"

"He's saved the life of Manners minor!" shouted Wally. "At least, he says so, and he ought to know."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I didn't! I wasn't! Oh! Yawwooh! Don't

bump my nappah on the door!" wailed Arthur Augustus.

Hobbs hurled open the door of Study No. 6. Blake, Herries, and Digby were there, late in to tea. The three juniors fairly jumped as the mob of fags poured into the study, with Arthur Augustus shoulder high.

"Hallo!" roared Blake. "What the thump——"

"Wescue!"

"Here he is!" shouted Wally. "He's the conquering hero! He's been killin' mad bulls and savin' lives all the afternoon. Hurrah!"

Plump!

Arthur Augustus was landed bodily on the tea-table, and the fags swarmed out of the study, leaving Blake & Co. blinking at their studymate. Wally chuckled gleefully as he returned with his comrades to the Third Form Room.

"But I say, young D'Arcy, did your major really save Reggie's life?" asked Jameson.

"Blessed if I know! He says he didn't! Blessed if I quite know what he meant!" answered D'Arcy minor cheerfully. "It's stopped him jawing, anyway. He came to jaw, and we stopped him."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

There was no doubt about that. But as to what had really happened to Manners minor the fags had to wait for Reggie's return to learn.

## CHAPTER 9.

### Mysterious!

"HERE they are!"

Blake, Herries, and Digby of the Fourth were waiting at the school gates when a car drove up with the Terrible Three and Manners minor in it.

Taggles had come out to lock the gates, and the juniors were only just in time.

"You kids there?" called Tom Merry, blinking through the wintry dusk. "Lend a hand with these bikes, as you're there."

Blake & Co. took the two bikes that were handed down from the back of the car. Tom Merry got out, followed by Lowther, and Manners helped his minor to alight.

"What 'on earth's happened?" demanded Blake. "Gussy's mystifying everybody."

"We have," answered Lowther. "Anybody here got any money? Chap's got to be paid."

"Lend us some tin, Blake," said Tom, laughing, as Manners went in at the gates with Reggie.

"Right you are!"

Money was forthcoming, and the driver of the car drove off satisfied. Then Tom Merry and Monty Lowther took their machines and wheeled them in. Blake & Co. accompanied them, in great curiosity and surprise.

"Look here, what's been going on?" demanded Blake. "Wally says that Gussy saved young Manners' life, and Gussy says he didn't. Has anything happened to that young waster?"

"Somebody seems to have saved Reggie from being badly hurt, at least," answered Tom. "I conclude that it was Gussy. Hasn't he told you?"

"He won't say a word about it."

"Why not?" demanded Lowther.

"Goodness knows! Tell us what you know about it."

"Easily done," said Tom. "We didn't go to Abbotsford owing to a puncture. Gussy and Roylance went on alone. We walked into Wood-



ford, got the tyre mended, and came home, and met Manners on the Rylcombe Road. Then Gussy suddenly burst on us, riding like thunder for a doctor, and he called out in passing that Reggie was at Bunce's cottage."

"Had he been to Abbotsford?"

"I don't know. I suppose so. It was late in the afternoon."

"Roylance wasn't with him?" asked Digby.

"No. I never saw Roylance after we parted with him on the way to Abbotsford."

"And what did you find at Bunce's cottage?"

"Reggie. The young ass had gone into the Moor Fields and got chased by the bull. Mr. Bunce saw it all from his window. The bull was right on him when somebody jumped in the way and fished Reggie out. It must have been D'Arcy, I suppose, as we found D'Arcy riding for the doctor. But he didn't come back to the cottage, and that's all I know."

"Why doesn't he tell us what's happened, then?" said Blake, mystified.

"I give that up. When we've put the bikes up we'll come along and help you bump him till he does tell."

"Ha, ha, ha! Good wheeze!"

The bikes were put up, and the juniors hurried into the School House barely in time for call-over. They found Arthur Augustus D'Arcy in Hall, looking very thoughtful and serious. Manners joined them, and Tom noted that Reggie was in the ranks of the Third, who were whispering questions to him. Reggie appeared to be answering rather grumpily. The events of the afternoon had not had a pleasant or soothing effect upon Reggie.

After call-over the Terrible Three joined Blake & Co. in Study No. 6. Arthur Augustus looked rather uneasy.

He could see that questions were coming, and his promise to Roylance held him silent on the subject of the rescue of Reggie. Roylance, of course, had known nothing of D'Arcy having passed the Terrible Three on his way to the doctor's, and having sent Manners to the cottage. Arthur Augustus had, in fact, forgotten it himself when Roylance asked him to keep silent concerning the rescue.

So far as Roylance saw, there was nothing to connect either him or D'Arcy with the rescue of the fag, as Mr. Bunce at the cottage did not know their names.

Had he been aware that D'Arcy's connection with the matter was known, at least, he would have taken a different view.

But Arthur Augustus had not happened to mention it. Both the juniors had been tired on their homeward ride, and had not talked much en route, and Arthur Augustus had not thought of it.

But the swell of St. Jim's realised now that the position was awkward.

Wally, half in fun, jumped to the conclusion that Gussy was the noble rescuer, hiding his light under a bushel. And Gussy had, at least, to give some explanation.

Six juniors looked inquiringly at Arthur Augustus, who coughed and coloured, and did not speak.

"Well?" said Tom Merry.

"Well?" repeated Blake.

"Well, deah boys," said Arthur Augustus feebly.

"Tell us what happened this afternoon, Gussy," said Manners quietly. "Reggie has told me that he fell down in front of the bull, and, though he

won't own that he fainted, it's pretty clear that he did. Somebody got him away from the bull by chucking something on the beast's head and turning him aside. It was you, I suppose?"

"Weally, Mannahs—"

"You saw it, anyway?" asked Lowther.

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Were you alone when you saw it?" demanded Blake.

"Natuwally, deah boy."

"Then it was you who did it."

"Wats!"

"Did you or did you not?" demanded Tom Merry.

"Not, deah boy!"

"Then who did?"

"I am wathah fatigued now, deah boys," said Arthur Augustus calmly. "Pewwaps we might postpone this intewestin' conversation for the present."

The juniors stared at him.

"Why don't you want to tell us?" demanded Manners.

"Bai Joye! That is a wathah wotten way of puttin' it."

"Was it Bunce?" asked Digby.

"No, Dig, it was not Bunce."

"Then who was it?" roared all the juniors together.

"I'm sowwy I cannot satisfy your cuwiosity, deah boys!" answered Arthur Augustus calmly.

"I wegwet to say it vevy much, but there you are. Pway let the mattah dwop!"

"You howlin' ass—"

"Weally, Blake!"

"You burbling jabberwock!"

"I wufuse to be called a burblin' jabberwock, Blake!"

"Perhaps it was Roylance," said Herries, after some thought.

Manners started.

"What rot!" he exclaimed.

"Well, Gussy went out with Roylance, you know. Was Roylance with you, Gussy, when you saw Reggie just going to be gored?"

Arthur Augustus smiled. He was able to answer that question in the negative with perfect veracity, for he had been a good two hundred yards away from Roylance at that time.

"No, Hewwies, Woylance was not with me then."

"You had parted with him earlier?" asked Blake.

"Yaas; on the way home."

"When did you join him again? I believe you came in together."

"I met him again latah, deah boy, aftah goin' to Wylcombe for the doctah."

"I knew it wasn't Roylance," said Manners, with a curl of the lip. "That settles that, anyway."

"Roylance might have done it if he'd been there," said Blake rather sharply. "No reason to say he wouldn't have."

Manners shrugged his shoulders.

"I don't think so," he said.

"You have no wight to say that, Mannahs!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus.

"Oh rats!"

"Weally, you cheeky ass—"

"Look here, Gussy, did you get Reggie away from the bull?" exclaimed Manners. "I want to know!"

"I wufuse to answah any furthah questions on the mattah, Mannahs. I have my weasons."



"What are your reasons, then?"

"I am sowwy I cannot tell you, Mannahs."

"You utter ass——"

"Bai Jove, you wottah——"

"I think I've seen this coming on for some time," remarked Blake. "I fear it runs in the D'Arcy family. Poor old Gussy! Rely on us to stand you a strait jacket when it grows worse."

"You silly ass!" roared Arthur Augustus. "If you mean to imply that I am off my wockah——"

"Well, aren't you?" asked Blake, in surprise.

"Certainly not, you fwabjous ass!"

"Then why can't you give a plain answer to a plain question?"

"There are weasons——"

"Give the reasons, then, ass!"

"Imposs."

"Oh, he's potty!" said Herries decidedly. "I see it all clear enough. He yanked that young idiot away from the bull, but he's got some potty idea of hiding his light under a bushel. It's his modesty on the rampage. Let's bump him! Modesty is out of place in the Fourth Form!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Bai Jove! Hands off, you duffahs! Oh cwumbs!"

Arthur Augustus dodged out of the study and fled for his life. And the mystery of the rescue of Reggie Manners remained a mystery.

Neither Roylance nor D'Arcy had guessed at the complications likely to ensue from keeping the truth dark, of course. But Arthur Augustus was beginning to guess at them now!

## CHAPTER 10.

### Tricked!

"STEP into my study, Roylance, old chap!" Roylance glanced at Racke of the Shell in surprise.

As a new fellow, Roylance naturally did not know very much of Aubrey Racke, especially as the black sheep of the Shell was in a different Form. But he had heard remarks on the subject of the festive Aubrey, and he did not much like Aubrey's looks, either.

Racke's sudden cordiality surprised him and did not particularly please him.

"Yes; come in!" said Crooke of the Shell from the doorway of the study. "I've been looking for a chance of a chat with you, Roylance!"

"Oh, all right!" said the New Zealand junior.

Somewhat puzzled, he entered the study. Racke pulled out a luxurious armchair, which had cost him ten guineas.

"Squat down, old fellow!"

Roylance squatted down.

Crooke produced a cigarette-case.

"Smoke?" he queried.

"No, thanks!" said Roylance dryly.

"You don't mind if we do?"

"I don't mind what you do in your own study, of course," answered Roylance. "It's no business of mine. But I understood that that was against the House rules."

"Oh, bother the House rules!" said Crooke, lighting a cigarette.

"I think I'll get along," said Roylance, rising.

"You'll excuse me, but I don't like smoke!"

"My dear man, stay where you are!" said Racke, pushing him back into the chair. "Chuck that fag away, Crooke, if Roylance doesn't like it!"

Crooke looked rather unpleasant, but he threw the cigarette into the fire.

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Blake & Co. fairly jumped as the mob of fags poured into the study and roared Blake. "What the thump——!" "Here he is!"

The New Zealand junior sat down again, rather restively. He did not like Racke or Crooke, and did not want to be in the study, but he felt that there was such a thing as civility.

"Getting on all right in the Fourth, kid?" asked Racke.

"Oh, quite!"

"Had any more rows with Manners?"

"No."

"He's keeping rusty."

"Is he?" said Roylance rather impatiently. He did not want to discuss Manners and his rustiness.

"I suppose you know he's opposed your election to the junior debating club?"

"I didn't know it."

"Well, he has!" said Racke.

"Like his cheek, I think," remarked Crooke. "I shall put in a word for Roylance. Every fellow's entitled to be a member, if you come to that; it's pure cheek of Manners to want to interfere. His own pals think so."

Roylance flushed uncomfortably.

"Look here, I'd rather not talk about Manners, if you don't mind!" he blurted out.

Racke nodded, with a smile. The New Zealand junior would not discuss a fellow unfavourably behind his back, but, all the same, the cad of the Shell could see that his shot had gone home. Roylance had heard some rumour before of Manners wanting to keep him out of the debating club, of which Manners was a shining light, and it was irritating enough. This continual dislike, which he had done nothing to deserve, was rather getting on Roylance's nerves.





the study with Arthur Augustus shoulder high. "Hallo!"  
"!" shouted Wally. "He's the conquering hero!"

"But look here," said Racke, "you licked the fellow the day you came to St. Jim's, I hear."

"We had a fight," said Roylance.

"You got the upper hand, I understand?"

"I'd rather not talk about it."

"Look here, then! Why not lick him again? He'll never let you alone till you do. And there's a good many fellows in the House who would be glad to see those three cads taken down a peg or two—and a licking for one of them would do it."

The cad of the Shell had shown his hand at last, and Roylance understood. He had heard something already of the feud between the two black sheep and the Terrible Three.

He rose to his feet, with a contemptuous expression upon his handsome face. Dick Roylance was about the last fellow to be made use of as a catspaw by a fellow like Aubrey Racke.

"I've no quarrel with 'Manners, and I don't intend to quarrel with him to please you, Racke!" said the New Zealand junior. "I'll get out. Ta-ta!"

He went to the door and opened it, Racke and Crooke staring at him in undisguised rage and chagrin at his cool, plain speaking.

But as he opened the door Racke's eyes fell on Manners, who was passing on his way to his study.

Roylance saw him, and paused a moment before going out. Racke's eyes gleamed with malice, and he called out:

"I don't believe you, Roylance! I don't believe Manners is dodging you because he's afraid of you, and, as for giving him the white feather, you can do it yourself if you want to! I shan't!"

Roylance spun round in utter amazement at this speech, which had no connection at all with what

had been said in the study. For a moment he wondered whether Racke was wandering in his mind.

But Aubrey Racke knew what he was about.

For every word had reached the ears of Manners in the passage, and Manners had come to a dead stop, as if rooted to the floor by what he heard.

Crooke's look was amazed as it turned on his chum. But as he caught sight of Manners' furious face outside the doorway he understood. Racke's quick and cunning brain had seen the chance and seized it.

Manners spun towards the door after a moment of stupefaction.

Not for an instant did he doubt. He did not even know that Racke had spotted him in the passage, and he could not guess that the malicious cad of the Shell had acted with quick cunning to take advantage of the chance.

The Shell fellow's face was scarlet with wrath.

"Roylance, you cad! You hound! You dared to say——" Manners almost choked. "You lying cad! You rotter! Take that!"

"I——" began Roylance, amazed and non-plussed.

He was interrupted. Manners' angry fist crashed into his face, and he went spinning across the study, to fall heavily on the floor.

## CHAPTER 11.

### Blow for Blow!

"**M**ANNERS!"

Tom Merry and Lowther came quickly along the passage. They had seen what was happening from their study doorway farther up, but they supposed that Manners was engaged in fisticuffs with Racke or Crooke.

They looked dismayed as they saw Roylance sitting up dazedly on the floor, blinking and panting for breath.

Racke and Crooke grinned quietly.

Roylance had declined to be their catspaw, but Racke's unscrupulous cunning had brought about the same result. And after that hasty and furious blow it was pretty certain that Roylance would not trouble to explain to Manners. Even if he did Manners was in no mood to believe him.

Tom Merry caught his chum by the arm.

"Manners! You—did you——"

"I knocked him down!" shouted Manners. "I'm going to knock him down again as soon as he gets up! Let go of my arm, confound you!"

Tom did not let go. He tightened his grip.

"What are you rowing with Roylance for?" he demanded.

"He's called me a funk!" Manners stammered with rage. "He says I'm dodging him because I'm afraid of him! The cad! The liar!"

Tom's face hardened.

"Oh!" he said. "Is that it?"

He let go Manners' arm.

Roylance staggered to his feet. His eyes blazed at Manners.

"Put up your hands, you cad!" he said, between his teeth.

"I'm waiting for you!"

Roylance rushed at him.

Manners backed into the passage, Roylance following him, and there they stood up to the fight, which was fast and furious.

There came a buzz of voices and a rush of feet along the passage. The Shell fellows poured out of their studies at the din of the fight.



"What on earth's it about?" exclaimed Talbot.

"Separate them!"

"Let them alone!" said Tom Merry

"But——"

"Manners is right. Let him go ahead!" said the captain of the Shell, frowning. "The fellow's a cad!"

"You've changed your opinion of him rather suddenly, then!" said Talbot, in astonishment.

Tom set his teeth.

"He's taunted Manners with being a funk. I hope Manners will smash him! If he doesn't I will!"

"And if you don't I will, Tommy!" snapped Lowther, whose usually good-natured face was like thunder now.

"Oh!" said Talbot, taken aback.

"Go it, ye cripples!" sang out Grundy of the Shell. "By gum, this is rather good for a swot like Manners! That was a good one on his nose!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Bai Jove!" said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, as he hurried up with his chums from Study No. 6.

"Stop them, deah boys! Stop them at once!"

"Keep off the grass!" growled Tom.

Tom pushed the swell of the Fourth back. Jack Blake caught him by the arm.

"Cheese it. Gussy! It isn't your bisney!" said Blake.

Tramp, tramp, tramp!

The fight was going hot and strong, and the juniors looked on breathlessly.

"Pway stop, deah boys!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus. "Weally, Mannahs, you are actin' in a wotten way——"

"Shut up!" growled Lowther.

"Lowthah, you wude ass——"

"Is it all about anything, or only Manners' back up, as usual?" asked Blake.

"The rotter's called Manners a funk!" snapped Tom.

"Well, that's rotten!" agreed Blake. "Manners doesn't look much like a funk now, though he's getting the worst of it."

Tramp, tramp!

Crash!

Manners went down; but he was up again like a shot, and coming on fiercely. Roylance met him with terrific vim.

The Shell passage had seen many a dust-up in its time, but seldom a fight like this. Even Tom Merry's celebrated encounter with George Alfred Grundy had been hardly more terrific.

"I wefuse to believe that Woylance said anythin' of the kind, Tom Mewwy!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus angrily.

"Manners said so, ass!"

"Oh!"

Arthur Augustus was nonplussed.

"Howevah, I do not believe it, all the same!" he said at last. "Woylance would not say such a caddish thing."

"Don't you take Manners' word?" shouted Lowther.

"Pway do not woah at me, Lowthah!" answered Arthur Augustus, with dignity. "I have a stwong objection to bein' woahed at——"

"Shut up, then, ass!"

"I wefuse to shut up! Mannahs is mistaken on the point, I think. Anyway, I wefuse to believe that Woylance said anythin' of the sort! Mannahs is always goin' for him without weason, and I wegard Mannahs as bein' uttahly in the w'ong!"

"Oh rats!" growled Lowther.

Crash!

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Manners was down again.

Tom Merry ran to him and picked him up.

Roylance stood back, a grim look on his face. Even his sunny temper had failed him now. That angry blow from Manners had been the finishing touch. He was fed-up, and he was prepared to give the Shell fellow the licking of his life if he wanted it. And, plucky and determined as Manners was, there was little doubt that the new fellow could do it.

Manners panted as he leaned on Tom's arm.

"Have the gloves on now," said Talbot anxiously; "and rounds, too. Dash it all, fight like sportsmen, if you're going to fight!"

"Let 'em alone!" said Grundy.

"Dry up, Grundy, old chap!" said Wilkins. "I've got some gloves in my study. Wait a minute."

Manners had to wait a minute, for he was too spent to go on. Wilkins came out with the boxing gloves, and Manners waved him back.

"Put them on, old chap," said Tom Merry.

"I don't want them," muttered Manners.

"Rats! Put them on."

Roylance quietly donned the other pair of gloves, and Manners had to follow his example.

"Now, I'll time you," said Talbot. "If you must go on, let's have it in order."

"Oh, I don't care!" growled Manners.

"Time!"

They were fighting again at once.

The crowd thickened in the passage till it was swarming with the Fourth and the Shell. There was a good deal of admiration for Manners, who was standing grimly up to his opponent, though it was clear by this time that he was outclassed. He received words and murmurs of encouragement, but so did Roylance. Few of the fellows bothered their heads as to what the fight might be about.

Arthur Augustus constituted himself Roylance's second now that rounds were observed. When Talbot called time he made a knee for the New Zealand junior. Some of the fellows kept an uneasy eye on the staircase. There was a good deal of noise going on; but a prefect was not wanted on the scene just then.

Roylance gave the swell of the Fourth a faint smile as Gussy fanned him with a cap.

"Feel all wight, deah boy?" murmured D'Arcy.

"Not quite, but I can go on."

"I am sure you did not weally call Mannahs a funk, Woylance."

"No."

"I was sure of it, deah boy. Mannahs is a howlin' ass, I feah. Howevah, you will lick the duffah."

"I mean to try," muttered Roylance grimly.

"Time!"

Roylance stepped up cheerfully at the call.

His opponent came up to time much less quickly, though he was as keen as ever. The spirit was more than willing, but the flesh was weak. Poor Manners was not physically a match for the hardy, iron-limbed New Zealand junior, and he was realising it. But that knowledge only made him the more determined to go on, in the bitter hope of snatching victory from the jaws of defeat.

At all events, if he failed, the victor would not fare much better than the vanquished, and it would be impossible to whisper "funk" afterwards. That cruel taunt, which he believed Roylance had uttered, stung Manners to the very soul, and not to save life itself would he have stopped while he could raise his hands to strike another blow.



But the finish was coming. Four rounds had been fought out after the gloves were put on; and then, in the fifth round, Manners fell—and lay where he fell.

Talbot counted quietly. Manners made a desperate effort to rise, and got on his knees, Roylance standing well back to give him time to rise. But he fell again. He had overtaxed his strength and he was done.

"Out!" said Talbot. He put back his watch. Tom Merry and Lowther ran to their fallen chum; they helped him into their study.

Roylance rather dazedly peeled off the gloves and handed them to Wilkins. He was victorious, but he was hard hit.

"Come along, deah boy," murmured Arthur Augustus.

And he led Roylance away to his study; and the crowd broke up, excitedly discussing the scrap.

CHAPTER 12.

A Challenge Accepted!

ARTHUR AUGUSTUS D'ARCY looked into Roylance's study later that evening, after Smith minor and Contarini had gone down.

He found the new junior looking pale and tired, and working away at his prep in a rather slow and heavy manner.

"Feelin' the dwaught now—what?" inquired Arthur Augustus sympathetically.

"Yes," said Roylance, with a faint smile. "Manners is a sticker."

"About what happened this aftahnoon, Woylance—"

D'Arcy hesitated.

"Yes?"

"I pwomised you not to mention that you wescued that young ass Weggie fwom the bull. Of course, I am goin' to keep that pwomise. But if you didn't mind, I was goin' to ask you to speak out—"

Roylance bit his lip.

"Why?" he asked.

"You see, those fellows knew I was on the scene. I passed Mannabs as I was goin' for that doctah—"

"I didn't know that!" exclaimed Roylance.

"No; and besides, I wathah jawed Wally for gettin' into dangah, you know. So he and the othahs knew I must have been there, and they have jumped to the ewwionious conclusion that I wescued Weggie."

"Oh!" said Roylance.

"It is wathah an awkward posish for me, you see."

"It is rather awkward for me if it comes out now, just after I've been hammering Manners and he's been hammering me," said Roylance, with a grin.

"Bai Jove! I nevah thought of that. Pewwaps it would be as well to say nothin', considewin'," said Arthur Augustus doubtfully.

"If you wouldn't mind—"

"Don't mensh, deah boy! You are quite wight, and you show a lot of tact and judgment for a youngstah," said Arthur Augustus in his most fatherly way. "Anyway, it doesn't mattah. I dare say the fellows will forget all about it in a day or two. Buck up with your pwep and come down, deah boy!"

And Arthur Augustus left the study.

Roylance did not buck up with his prep. In

his present tired and aching state it was too much for him. He resolved to risk it with Mr. Lathom in the morning, and put his work aside. But he did not go down at once; he left his study and went along to Racke's.

Racke and Crooke were there, smoking cigarettes and chatting very cheerfully.

The licking of a member of the Terrible Three was a great delight to the cads of the Shell.

But Racke looked uneasy as Roylance came in.

"Have a smoke, kid?" grinned Crooke. "You deserve it after your terrific efforts."

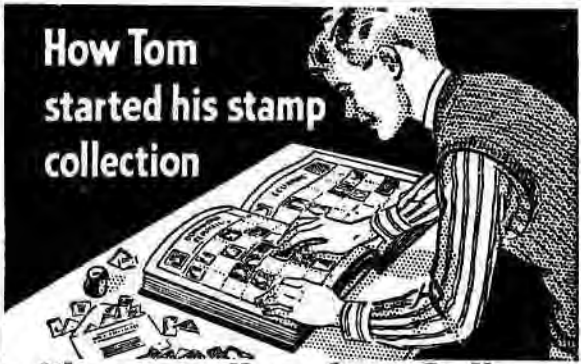
Roylance did not heed.

"Racke, you planted that scrap on me!" he said. "You said what you did for Manners to hear, to make him think I'd been running him down."

"Go hon!" said Racke.

"Being a silly, hot-headed fool, he fell into the trap!" said Roylance quietly. "I see your game quite plainly. I shan't take the trouble to explain to Manners. But I'm going to lick you for playing such a dirty trick on me. I suppose you must have expected that?"

(Continued on the next page.)



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"You don't look as if you could lick anybody just now!" sneered Racke.

"I don't think I shall have very much difficulty with a weedy rotter like you!" answered Roylance coolly. "I'm going to try, anyway. I didn't want to fight Manners, and I'm sorry I had to do it. It was your dirty trickery that caused it. Take that to begin with!"

"That" was a smack that sent Racke rolling off his chair.

The cad of the Shell jumped up with a howl of fury, and fairly hurled himself at the New Zealander.

After such a fight as he had had an hour before, Roylance was in no state for another, and Racke had a strong hope of thrashing him. But the weedy, unfit "gay dog" of the Shell was no good against Roylance, tired as he was.

The New Zealander knocked him right and left, and when Crooke, at a savage call from Racke, chipped in, a fierce backhander sent Crooke collapsing into the fender, and he did not join in again.

In five minutes Aubrey Racke was lying on the floor completely knocked out.

Crooke was skulking behind the armchair in a state of alarm.

"Any more, Racke?" asked Roylance contemptuously.

"Yow-wow-wow!" was Racke's reply.

Roylance strode out of the study without a glance at Crooke, much to the heroic youth's relief.

A little later he turned up in the junior Common-room, where a good many glances fell upon him.

Contarini and D'Arcy joined him at once. The Terrible Three were not visible. Poor Manners was in no state to come down, and his chums were staying up with him.

But Tom Merry came into the Common-room alone at last. He glanced round and came quietly towards Roylance.

There was none of the accustomed friendliness in his face. His look was hard as steel, and his eyes gleamed.

"A word with you, Roylance!" he said.

Roylance was quick to catch the hostile tone, and his own face hardened grimly.

"Two, if you like!" he said coolly.

"You've licked my pal Manners. I'm not grumbling at that; it was a fair fight. But you insulted him, too, and he wasn't able to make you answer for it. I'm going to, if I can."

"Weally, Tom Mewwy—" began Arthur Augustus.

"Shut up a minute, Gussy!"

"Wats! Woylance did not call Mannahs a funk at all—"

"I have Manners' word for that, and that's enough for me," said Tom Merry. "I'm going to make Roylance swallow it, or else he's going to lick me. That's as it may be. Will Wednesday suit you, Roylance?"

"To-morrow, if you like!" answered Roylance, with a shrug of the shoulders.

"You won't be fit to-morrow after what you've had this evening—"

"Isn't that my bisney?"

"Mine, too! It's going to be a fair fight," said Tom Merry. "Make it next Wednesday, outside the school walls. Is it a go?"

"Oh, yes!"

"All serene, then."

Tom Merry left the Common-room with that. "I'm goin' to be your second, Woylance," said Arthur Augustus.

"Thanks! What about a game of chess now?" said Roylance.

The prospect of a fight with Tom Merry, the champion athlete of the Lower School, evidently did not trouble the new junior's nerves at all; but deep down in his heart he was troubled, for he liked Tom Merry, and respected him, and he knew that Tom would not willingly have done him this injustice.

But there was no help for it, and Roylance took it as he took most things, with quiet coolness and cheerfulness.

THE END.

Next Week: "FROM FOE TO FRIEND!"

ANSWER: As a brother Scout, do you mind if I tick you off from the word go? If you are under sixteen, and a patrol leader, you ought to know a jolly sight better than you seem to. Do you remember the Scout law? A Scout is loyal to King, country, officers, parents, employers, and **THOSE UNDER HIM**. The last three words apply to you. If you're satisfied with the example you're setting, O.K. But I wouldn't be!

"Indignant," of Harrow, writes:

I had got up to make a speech at my school when someone threw a rotten egg at me. What do you make of that?

ANSWER: Certainly not a custard, if the egg was really rotten. But custard-making is a fascinating hobby, especially if you are not so hot as a speaker.

S. A. P., of Burnley, writes:

Punctuate this sentence, though I doubt very much if you can: "Scrooge where Scringe had had had had had had had had had had more weight with the examiners than had had had."

ANSWER: On my head, brother! Scrooge, where Scringe had had "had," had had "had had." "Had had" had had more weight with the examiners than "had" had had. "Comma"-gain sometime!

## BLAKE ANSWERS BACK!

(Continued from page 2.)

Miss Jay Gee, of Bromley, writes:

Since my father read the GEM over 30 years ago, and has often wondered where St. Jim's is situated, I can quite understand why "Earnest Inquirer" failed to find it.

ANSWER: It is a bit of a puzzle, isn't it, Miss Jay Gee? So also is your signature, which looks like what Trimble would call a non-dec-plum. But I know you will appreciate the reason why the exact locality of St. Jim's is kept dark. Not that we are averse to any reader who is clever enough to find it dropping in to see us.

Patrol-leader Jim Muir, 44th Dundee, writes:

I've wanted to kick about this for some time. All the rotters at St. Jim's smoke (I smoke), they play billiards (so do I), they go gadding after "lights out." I never get home till eleven o'clock, anyway. Yet I don't feel like a cad, but when I read the GEM I sometimes doubt it. Yours cad-dishly.

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READ ABOUT THE ORIENTAL SCHOOLBOY OF CEDAR CREEK WHO COULDN'T TELL A LIE! IT'S THE BEST LAUGH OF THE WEEK!



George Washington is not in it when the wily Yen Chin starts telling the truth—which proves mighty unfortunate for Bob Lawless, the Chinese's reformer!

# THE TRUTHFUL CHINEE!

By Martin Clifford.

## The Path of Reform!

"POOR little Chinese velly miscable!" Yen Chin, the Chinese of Cedar Creek School, made that statement in almost heartrending tones. His little yellow face was deeply despondent, and his almond eyes seemed on the point of streaming tears. He addressed Frank Richards & Co., and the chums of Cedar Creek sniffed in chorus.

"Rats!" remarked Frank.

"Gammon!" said Bob Lawless.

"Draw it mild, kid!" said Vere Beauclerc.

"You've taken us in too often, you know!"

"Me awfully solly!"

"You've said that before!" growled Bob Lawless. "You're a beastly little liar, Yen Chin, and a young rascal and a spoofer! I suppose you can't help it, you little heathen! But there you are!"

"Chinese velly miscable!"

"Oh, rot!"

"Pool little Chinese cly!"

"Well, you can cry if you want to!" said Frank Richards. "Go ahead!"

Yen Chin sobbed. The three chums looked at him rather uncomfortably. Yen Chin was a queer little fellow, and his ways were not Canadian ways. He was a good little chap in his way, but his slyness, his peculiar tricks, and, above all, his astounding propensity to deceit had quite fed-up the chums.

Yen Chin lied as easily as he breathed. Whether he was spoofing now the chums could not tell, but they thought it very probable.

"Oh, cheese it, John!" said Bob Lawless uneasily. "You've taken us in too often! You're fooling us now most likely!"

"Chinese tellee thuth!" said Yen Chin tearfully.

"I guess you couldn't if you tried!"

"No likee Yen Chin any more?" asked the Celestial sadly. "No likee, and no speakee to pool little Chinese? Me cly!"

"Br-r-r!" grunted Bob.

"Me likee become Canadian likee blave Bob Lawless!" said Yen Chin eagerly. "You teachee; me learnee."

"Oh, my hat!" said Frank Richards, puzzled by his demand.

"Handsome Flanky teachee me, too!" said Yen Chin.

"You buttery young bounder!" answered Frank. "I believe you're only pulling our leg now!"

"You teachee me, beautiful Chelub!" said Yen Chin, turning to Vere Beauclerc.

Beauclerc laughed. Bob Lawless had nicknamed him the Cherub, a name that was not inappropriate. Yen Chin added the adjective in his fulsome Oriental way. Evidently the Chinese thought that flattery might be useful.

"You young ass!" answered Beauclerc.

Yen Chin gave another sob.

"No teachee pool little Chinese?" he asked.

Frank Richards and his chums looked at one another. It was quite possible that the young rascal had seen the error of his ways, and did not want to estrange the three fellows who had befriended him. If Yen Chin really had a yearning for better things, certainly it was up to the Cedar Creek chums to give him a helping hand on the upward path.

"Well," said Bob Lawless at last, "if you mean business, Yen Chin—"

"Me meanee business flem word go!" said Yen Chin eagerly.

"Well, the first thing to learn is to tell the truth," said Bob.

"Me learnee!"

"Don't tell any more lies, for a start! If you can tell the truth for a bit we'll see about the other things later."

"Me tellee thuth!"

"We'll make a bargain," said Bob, thinking it out. "You start telling the truth, and every time

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I find you telling a lie I'll give your pigtail a twist. Is it a trade?"

Yen Chin grinned.

"Allee light!"

"That's a cinch, then," said Bob. "I'll keep an eye on you, and you can rely on me to handle your topknot whenever you slip off the frozen truth. Promise to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, and keep your promise. Savvy?"

"Me savvy."

"Then it's a go, and we'll give you another trial," said Frank, laughing.

"Handsome Flanky——"

"There you go again!" shouted Bob. "Give me your pigtail!"

"But that's the tluth!" howled Yen Chin. "Yen Chin speakee tluth! Flanky handsome!"

"Well, perhaps there's something in that," admitted Bob. "Still——"

"No sayee you handsome, Bob."

"What!"

"That no tluth, so no sayee."

Bob Lawless' face was a study for a moment, and his chums roared.

"Bob lather ugly!" continued Yen Chin cheerfully.

"Wha-a-at!" ejaculated Bob.

"Lather ugly face; big, clumsy feet," said Yen Chin calmly; "talkee in loud voicee!"

"You cheeky young jay!" roared Bob wrathfully.

Yen Chin jumped back in alarm.

"Speakee tluth!" he yelled.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Frank Richards. "He's got you there, Bob! You told him to speak the frozen truth, you know, and he's doing it!"

Bob grunted.

"Always speakee tluth now!" said Yen Chin.

"If peoples glumble, me sayee Bob tellee me."

Gunten, the Swiss, was passing on his way to the schoolhouse, and Yen Chin called out to him:

"Hallo, ugly face! Foleign tlash!"

Gunten turned round savagely.

"Ugly foleign tlash!" continued Yen Chin cheerfully. "Where you get that facee? Lookee likee coyote!"

"Oh, my hat!" murmured Beauclere.

Gunten, surprised and angry, as was natural in the circumstances, strode towards Yen Chin, with his fists clenched. The little Chinese promptly dodged behind Bob Lawless.

"Keepee Gunttee off!" he exclaimed. "Gunttee no likee tluth, but Yen Chin always tellee tluth now!"

"Get out of the way, Lawless!" roared Gunten. "I'll smash the cheeky little beast!"

Bob pushed the angry Swiss back.

"Let him alone, Gunten."

"Do you think I'm going to be talked to like that by a sneaking heathen?" roared Gunten.

"Well, Yen Chin's starting telling the truth," said Bob. "I've told him to."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Why, you rotter——" howled Gunten.

"Always tellee tluth!" said Yen Chin, with a smile that was child-like and bland. "Blave Bob plect little Chinee if peoples angly for tellee tluth! You flighten glizzly bear with your facee, Gunttee!"

The Swiss made a savage attempt to get at the Celestial, but Bob pushed him back again. He could not fail to protect his new disciple, who was, after all, only carrying out his instructions, though not exactly in the way intended.

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"Keep back, Gunten!" said Bob. "You're not going to touch him!"

The Swiss looked for a minute as if he would hurl himself at the rancher's son. But he thought better of it, and tramped away, scowling.

Yen Chin trotted into the lumber schoolhouse with the three chums, evidently in a state of great satisfaction. His resolve to tell the frozen truth on all occasions, he apparently considered, reinstated him in their friendship and good opinion. And whether it was stupidity, or whether it was some more of his Oriental slyness, the little Chinese evidently intended to keep on as he had started. And as Bob Lawless was called upon to protect the amateur truth-teller, it looked as if he was booked for an interesting time.

### Too Much Truth!

MISS MEADOWS came in to take her class, and morning lessons began at the lumber school. Frank Richards & Co. speedily forgot all about Yen Chin and his reform as they settled down to work.

But Yen Chin was not to be forgotten.

Either enthusiasm about his reform or a desire to pull the leg of his kind instructor made the little Chinese very keen to keep to the frozen truth in season and out of season. Being asked in the geography lesson a question concerning the population of British Columbia, he answered that it was composed of Chinese and barbarians, an answer which made Miss Meadows open her eyes.

"What? What did you say, Yen Chin?" exclaimed the Canadian schoolmistress.

"Chinese and barbalians, missy."

"Boy!"

"In China all white men barbalians," said Yen Chin calmly. "Chinee tinkee so. English, Canadian, Melican, all barbalians to Chinee."

"Oh, my hat!" murmured Frank Richards.

Miss Meadows looked hard at her Chinese pupil.

"You must not say such things, Yen Chin," she said, hardly knowing how to deal with the young rascal.

"Me tellee tluth, missy. No can tellee lie."

"Certainly you must tell the truth, Yen Chin; but if you hold such extraordinary opinions, you must not state them here."

"But you askee me, missy."

Miss Meadows passed on hastily to another pupil. The youth from the Flowery Land was rather too much for her.

Yen Chin smiled at Bob Lawless.

"Me goodee boy, what you tinkee?" he asked.

"You young rascal!" murmured Bob.

"No lascal for tellee tluth!" exclaimed Yen Chin, in surprise.

Miss Meadows looked round sharply.

"You must not talk in class, Yen Chin."

"Velly well, beautiful Missy Meadee."

"What!"

"Missy Meadee beautiful, likee stars and moon," said Yen Chin.

There was a giggle in the class, and the schoolmistress coloured with vexation.

"You ridiculous boy, how dare you speak to me in such a manner?" she exclaimed.

"When me glow up me lovee Missy Meadee," said Yen Chin calmly. "Likee velly much kissey beautiful facee."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the whole class.

There was a howl of merriment from Mr. Slimmey's class, too, and Mr. Slimmey turned round and stared at the Chinese. Yen Chin's



extraordinary statement had been heard all over the school-room.

Miss Meadows' face was crimson.

"Yen Chin!" she gasped.

"Yes, beautiful missy?"

"Are you out of your senses?" exclaimed Miss Meadows angrily. "If you speak once more in that way, Yen Chin, I shall send you away from the school."

"No likee tluth?" asked Yen Chin.

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the class.

"Silence!" rapped out Miss Meadows wrathfully. "I will detain for an hour the next boy or girl who laughs."

Sudden gravity descended upon the class.

"Yen Chin, I shall punish you for your impertinence," said Miss Meadows. "Step out here, you bad boy."

Yen Chin blinked at her.

"No bad boy—velly goodee boy!" he exclaimed.

"Me tellee tluth."

"Come here at once!"

"Me goodee boy," persisted Yen Chin. "Me sayee what Bob tellee me."

Miss Meadows' eyes flashed at the unhappy Bob.

"Lawless!"

"Ye-e-es, ma'am?" stammered Bob.

"Is it possible that you have induced this foolish boy to be guilty of such impertinence?" rapped Miss Meadows.

"Nunno! I—I—"

"He says that he has said what you told him to say!" exclaimed the schoolmistress.

"I—I didn't—I wasn't—" stuttered Bob helplessly.

"Then the boy is lying," said Miss Meadows. "Yen Chin, you are a wicked boy, and I shall punish you severely."

"No liee!" yelled Yen Chin. "Tellee flozen tluth. Bob tellee me, and me plomise. Keepee plomise likee goodee boy."

"You promised Lawless to say such things?" exclaimed Miss Meadows.

"Yes, missy."

"What have you to say, Lawless?"

"I—I—I told him to tell the truth, ma'am," stuttered Bob. "I made him promise to stop telling lies, and to tell the truth, ma'am. That's all."

"Oh!"

"Allee light," said Yen Chin innocently. "Me tellee tluth. Beautiful Missy Meadee, with lovely face like sun and moon—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Silence! Yen Chin, you—you—" Words failed Miss Meadows. "You—you know very well that you must not speak in that way."

"No likee tluth?" asked Yen Chin sadly.

"Silence!"

Yen Chin sat silent, with a sad expression on his face. He seemed to be deeply grieved at this reception of his truth-telling.

Miss Meadows' colour was heightened for some time, and she did not address her cheerful Chinese pupil again that morning.

Bob Lawless mentally promised him a record hiding when lessons were over. But when the school was dismissed Yen Chin, with a beaming smile on his face, joined his friends as they went out.

"Ugly Bob velly pleased?" he asked.

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Frank.

"You beastly little heathen!" shouted Bob. "I'm going to rub your heathen nose in the mud!"

"Whatee for?" demanded Yen Chin. "For tellee tluth?"

Frank dragged his angry chum back.

"Chuck it, Bob! He's only doing what you told him! He's reforming."

Bob Lawless choked down his wrath.

"I believe he's only pulling my leg," he snorted. "He's not such a silly fool as he makes out."

"No fool—only tellee tluth," persisted Yen Chin. "Flanky fool."

Bob grinned.

"Oh, let's get away!" grunted Frank Richards; and the three chums started for the frozen creek, to slide, leaving Yen Chin grinning. The little Chinese seemed to be enjoying the path of reform.

### Mr. Slimmey Catches It!

"HALLO, what's the game?"

Frank Richards & Co. stopped on the bank of the creek. They had suddenly come upon Chunky Todgers and Hopkins, the Cockney. The two schoolboys were very busy, apparently weaving a basket of osiers, Hopkins working under Chunky's skilful direction.

Todgers looked up with a grin on his fat face.

"This is my little stunt," he answered.

"Keep it dark."

"But what's the game?" asked Bob.

"Gunten's the game. We're going to fill this with nice soft mud from the creek," grinned Todgers.

"Oh! A booby-trap?" said Frank.

"You bet!"

"But what has Gunten done?" asked Beauclerc.

"He's got a little party on after dinner, in the old cabin on the creek," explained Chunky. "Euchre, you know. He doesn't want me to come into it because I haven't any spondulicks, so I'm down on him—I mean I'm down on him because it's wrong to gamble."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You know Miss Meadows was awfully mad about it when she found him out before," said Chunky loftily. "Miss Meadows is a good sort, and I'm backing her up. When Gunten goes into his merry meeting, he is going to get a cargo of mud on the back of his neck."

"And I 'ope it will be a lesson to 'im!" remarked Harold Hopkins.

Bob chuckled. Hopkins' lack of aspirates was a never-ending entertainment to the Canadian schoolboys.

"I 'ope so," grinned Bob. "I 'ope 'e'll get it fairly on the 'cad. I'll lend you a 'and."

"Good!"

Frank Richards and Vere Beauclerc went on the ice, and left Bob to assist the two practical jokers. When the basket was finished, mud was scooped out from the creek, mixed soft so that it would flow freely. The basket was filled almost to the brim.

With many chuckles the three schoolboys carried it to the old clearing. Near the broken-down corral was a log cabin, once the dwelling of a settler who had long since gone to seek fresh fields and pastures new. The cabin was in a half-ruinous state, the roof caving in in many places. The thick plank door was jammed by means of a peg of wood to keep it from flapping in the wind.

Bob Lawless removed the peg and pushed the

door open. The cabin was empty now save for one or two rough articles of furniture. It was a very secure refuge for Kern Gunten's euchre party, being at some distance from the lumber school.

"We'll fix it from the inside and get out of the window," remarked Chunky Todgers.

"You bet!"

The door was placed a few inches open to allow room for the osier basket on the top. Bob Lawless slipped a chip of pine under it to keep it in position. Then the basket was placed securely on top.

The schoolboys grinned gleefully. It was quite certain that whoever pushed open the door of the hut would get the basket of slimy mud fairly on the head. It would be a surprise for Kern Gunten, when he came there with the euchre party. The basket could not be seen from without.

"I guess that fills the bill," remarked Bob Lawless, with great satisfaction. "Come on!"

The three dropped out of the little window at the side of the log cabin.

"My 'at!" remarked Harold Hopkins. "I don't think Gunten will feel like playin' euchre when he's got that lot on 'is 'ead."

"E won't!" agreed Bob gravely.

"Not 'im!" chuckled Todgers.

"Hallo, what are you after, Yen Chin?" exclaimed Bob, catching sight of the little Chinese. He looked at him suspiciously, wondering whether the Chinese had been watching them. But Yen Chin's face was calm and innocent.

"Me walkee walkee," he answered.

"Well, you can walkee walkee somewhere else!" said Chunky Todgers. "Vamoose!"

Yen Chin obediently "vamoosed," and disappeared in the direction of the lumber school. Bob and his companions went out on the ice to slide till dinner.

Yen Chin was smiling his peculiar bland smile, which showed that he meant mischief. He entered the school gate and made his way to Mr. Slimmey's cabin at the end of the school enclosure near the creek. Mr. Slimmey was reading in his cabin when the little Chinese appeared in the open doorway. The young master gave him a kindly glance over his gold-rimmed glasses.

"Come in, Yen Chin," he said.

The Celestial came in.

"Well, what is it?" asked Mr. Slimmey.

"Pool little Chinese velly sad."

"Dear me! What is the matter?" asked Mr. Slimmey kindly.

"Me tellee tluth. Bad boy playee cardee, and Yen Chin velly sad 'o tinkee of it," said Yen Chin. "Tinkee must tellee good Mr. Slimmey."

The assistant master laid down his book and rose to his feet, his face very grave.

"Do you mean that some of the boys are gambling, Yen Chin?" he asked.

"Me tinkee."

"It is very wrong of them," said Mr. Slimmey. "But, at the same time, you should not tell tales, Yen Chin."

"Me tinkee oughtee tellee."

"H'm! Well, as you have told me, I will see about it, certainly. Where are they?"

"In cabin on clealing, me tinkee."

"You have seen them?" asked Mr. Slimmey.

Yen Chin shook his head.

"No see. Heal Chunkee sayee."

"Todgers, do you mean?"

"Todgee and Bob and Hopkins."

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"Bless my soul!" exclaimed Mr. Slimmey, greatly shocked. "I certainly should never have supposed that those three boys would be guilty of such a thing. Surely you must be mistaken, Yen Chin. Did they tell you this?"

"No tellee. Me heal."

"I suppose you have been listening," said Mr. Slimmey, with a frown. "You should not listen, Yen Chin."

"How heal if not listen?" asked Yen Chin.

"Ahem! But I am sure you must have made a mistake."

"No mistakee. Heal talkee of playee euchre in cabin on clealing. All thlee talkee about it."

"Well, well, I must see into the matter, though I wish you had not told tales," said Mr. Slimmey. "I will certainly go there at once."

The young master left his cabin and hurried away to the old clearing. Yen Chin followed him with a grave face, but a glimmer in his almond eyes. He was close behind Mr. Slimmey when the latter reached the deserted cabin on the clearing. With a grin of anticipation he watched the young master stop at the door.

The bell was ringing for dinner, and the Cedar Creek fellows were hurrying back to the lumber school, but Yen Chin did not heed it. He was too interested in what was going to happen to Mr. Slimmey.

The young master pushed open the door with a jerk and strode into the cabin. The next moment there was a terrific yell.

Squash!

Fairly upon Mr. Slimmey's head came the basket of oozy mud, completely bonneting him.

"Grooooooch!"

Yen Chin doubled up in a paroxysm of silent mirth.

"Grooogh! Oh! Ah! Ooooooch!"

Mr. Slimmey staggered out of the cabin. He was clutching at the inverted basket on his head. The soft mud was pouring down his face and clothes, and his features were unrecognisable.

"Yurrrrrgh!" he spluttered.

He gouged mud from his eyes and glared round for Yen Chin.

"You wicked boy—you young rascal—grr!—I—I—will—grooogh!"

Yen Chin darted away. With a face wreathed in smiles, he arrived at the lumber school, and went in to dinner with the rest.

### Merely a Mistake!

"OH! Ah! Grab! Grooogh! Oooch!"

Miss Meadows started up at the head of the table. Boys and girls turned their heads towards the door in astonishment. Dinner was about to begin, when those remarkable sounds were heard without.

"What the thunder?" ejaculated Bob Lawless.

"Slimmey!" murmured Frank.

Mr. Slimmey appeared in the doorway. But for his clothes, they would not have recognised him. His face was caked with mud, and his hair was streaming with it. He stood gasping and spluttering wildly.

The Cedar Creek fellows stared at him, some of them bursting into a chuckle. Miss Meadows seemed petrified. And there were three others at the table petrified, too. Bob, Chunky, and Harold Hopkins did not need telling how Mr. Slimmey had got into that state. Evidently he had found the booby-trap intended for Gunten & Co.





Mr. Slimmey pushed open the door with a jerk and strode into the cabin. The next moment there was a terrific yell. Fairly upon the young master's head descended the basket of oozy mud. "Groooooch!"

"Mr. Slimmey! Is—is that Mr. Slimmey?" gasped the schoolmistress.

"Gerrogh! Pray excuse me, Miss Meadows!" gasped the assistant master. "I—I apologise for presenting myself in this—geroogh!—state. But—yurrgg—I have been the victim of an outrage! Oh dear!"

"You have met with an accident?"

"Groogh! I have been tricked—yurrg! I have been smothered with mud by a miserable trick!" gasped Mr. Slimmey.

Miss Meadows' face became very stern. The grinning along the table died away as the pupils of Cedar Creek noted the schoolmistress' expression. There was a severe reckoning in store for somebody.

"Who has done this?" exclaimed Miss Meadows. Silence.

"It was that wretched Chinese boy," spluttered Mr. Slimmey, pointing a muddy finger at Yen Chin.

"Yen Chin!"

"Yes, missy?"

"You have played this wicked and disrespectful trick—"

"No, missy."

"What! Do you dare to contradict Mr. Slimmey?" exclaimed the schoolmistress.

"Me tellee tluth," pleaded Yen Chin. "Plomise ugly Bob to tellee tluth."

"You are sure that it was Yen Chin, Mr. Slimmey?" asked Miss Meadows in perplexity.

Mr. Slimmey wiped the mud from his face with his handkerchief. The handkerchief was reduced to a muddy rag, but it did not seem to have

much beneficial effect upon the young master's face. There was too much mud.

"I am sure of it, Miss Meadows!" he gasped. "Yen Chin came to me and informed me that some boys were gambling in the old hut on the clearing. I went there to ascertain, and as I pushed open the door an osier basket filled with mud fell upon my head. There was no one there."

"You heathen villain!" gasped Bob Lawless, beginning to understand.

"Me goodee boy!" murmured Yen Chin. "Always tellee tluth."

"Silence! Yen Chin, you gave Mr. Slimmey false information to induce him to fall into this wretched trap."

"Me tellee tluth. No sayee bad boy in cabin. Sayee heal that thlee fellow talkee of playee euchre in cabin."

Mr. Slimmey gave the little Chinese a muddy glare.

"That is certainly correct," he said. "The boy declared that he had heard three boys discussing playing euchre in the cabin. He certainly led me to suppose that they were actually doing so."

"Mistel Slimmey supposae wrong," said Yen Chin calmly. "Me tellee tluth. Me heal talkee."

"Did you place the basket of mud there, Yen Chin?"

"No, missy."

"Who did so?"

"Ugly Bob."

"Oh, you young rotter!" murmured Frank Richards.

Yen Chin blinked at him. "Mustee tellee tluth," he said innocently. "Plomise ugly Bob to tellee tluth. Chinee goodee boy, keepee plomise."

"Lawless!"

"Yes, ma'am?" groaned Bob.

"You, then, played this wicked trick upon Mr. Slimmey?"

"No, ma'am!"

"You placed the mud there?"

"Ye-e-es. But—but I never dreamed that that little villain would plant it on Mr. Slimmey!" gasped Bob. "It—it was intended for some chaps!"

Kern Gunten grinned. He understood who were the chaps for whom the booby-trap was intended. Mr. Slimmey had got the benefit of it instead of the rogue of the lumber school.

"You were discussing playing euchre in the cabin when Yen Chin heard you?" pursued Miss Meadows sternly.

"No!" exclaimed Bob. "I—I was speaking about it, certainly, but—but only referring to some other chaps who were going to play euchre there. We—we fixed up the booby-trap for them. We thought they deserved it!"

"Oh!" said Miss Meadows.

Gunten looked uneasy, fearing that his name was coming next. But he need not have feared. Bob was not likely to betray him.

"I believe you, Lawless," said Miss Meadows at last. "Yen Chin doubtless misunderstood you and reported your words in a mistaken sense to Mr. Slimmey."

Bob gave the Chinese an almost homicidal look. He could guess exactly how much Yen Chin had been mistaken.

"Chinee velly solly," murmured Yen Chin. "Me tellee Mr. Slimmey tluth. Plomise ugly Bob always tellee tluth."

Mr. Slimmey looked hard at him. But the innocent little face of the Chinese disarmed suspicion. Mr. Slimmey did not know Yen Chin so well as the other fellows did. The assistant master dabbed at his streaming face.

"As—as it appears to have been, after all, an accident, I should not like Yen Chin punished on my account," he said. "I—I will retire, and—and remove this extremely unpleasant mud!"

And he promptly retired.

Bob Lawless, Chunky Todgers, and Harold Hopkins looked uneasily at Miss Meadows. As the authors of the booby-trap, they expected trouble. But the schoolmistress sat down without referring to the matter further. The three practical jokers were greatly relieved.

When dinner was over, Bob Lawless and his chums ran Yen Chin down in the playground. The Chinese smiled at them cheerfully, apparently quite unaware that he had offended in any way.

"You sneaking heathen!" shouted Hopkins.

"You pesky Chink!" bawled Chunky Todgers.

Bob Lawless made a grab at the Chinese. Yen Chin dodged behind Frank Richards in alarm.

"No touchee Chinees!" he howled. "Me tellee tluth!"

"You young villain!" howled Bob. "You told the truth, but you led Mr. Slimmey to believe that we were playing euchre in the old cabin!"

"No can tellee what Slimmey supposee, if tellee tluth. Mistel Slimmey lathel silly, oh, yes!" said Yen Chin. "You keepee handee off Yen Chin. You makee me plomise tellee tluth!"

"I'll twist your Chinese neck, you yellow covate!" roared Bob, grasping the little Celestial.

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"Helpee!" yelled Yen Chin. Frank Richards and Beauclerc, laughing, dragged the Canadian schoolboy away.

"Let him alone, Bob—it's your own fault!" gasped Frank. "You started reforming him, and this is the result!"

"You duffers, he's only spoofing!" howled Bob.

"No spoofee—tellee tluth!" pleaded Yen Chin.

"Always do as ugly Bob tellee!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bob Lawless restrained his wrath. It was barely possible, though not probable, that Yen Chin was innocently carrying out in good faith his instructor's directions.

"Look here, Yen Chin," said Bob Lawless at last. "I believe you're pulling my leg, and if I were sure I guess I'd scalp you. There's some other things to learn as well as telling the truth."

"Me glad learnee flom ugly Bob."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bob breathed hard.

"If you call me ugly again, you yellow imp of—"

"No likee tluth?" asked Yen Chin.

The Cedar Creek fellows roared. Bob and his promising pupil were very entertaining.

"You little sneaking heathen jay!" said Bob. "I tell you this—if I catch you sneaking again, I'll skin you!"

"What sneakee?"

"You know very well that you mustn't repeat things to Mr. Slimmey or Miss Meadows!"

"Chinee glad learnee. Ugly Bob tellee."

"You're not to tell Miss Meadows or Mr. Slimmey anything," said Bob categorically, so that there could be no possibility of mistake.

Yen Chin nodded.

"Me savvy. No tell Miss Meadows anything."

"That's it—or Mr. Slimmey, either. If you do, I'll warm you!"

"Me glad learnee. Ugly Bob velly kind!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, go and chop chips!" growled Bob Lawless, and he strode away with his grinning chums.

### The Last Lesson!

CEDAR Creek School came in for afternoon lessons. There was Canadian history that afternoon, an interesting lesson enough to most of the pupils. Yen Chin listened with his usual demure expression until Miss Meadows turned her attention to him.

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## **MODERN BOY**

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"Todgers!"

Chunky Todgers looked up guiltily, and hastily relinquished the chunk of maple sugar his fat fingers were clutching under his desk.

"The name of the British general who fell at the Battle of Quebec?" said Miss Meadows.

"Wolfe, ma'am," said Chunky cheerfully. He was quite equal to a question like that.

"Very good. Yen Chin!"

"Yes, missy?"

"The name of the French general who fell at Quebec?"

Yen Chin shook his head.

"You do not mean to say that you do not know, Yen Chin?" exclaimed Miss Meadows.

"Me knowee!" assented Yen Chin cheerfully.

"Then tell me!"

Another serious shake of the head from the little Chinese.

"No tellee," he answered.

"What do you mean, Yen Chin?" exclaimed Miss Meadows sharply.

"Meanee what sayee!"

"I have asked you to tell me the name of the French general who fell at Quebec!" exclaimed Miss Meadows.

"Me knowee!"

"Then tell me at once!"

"No tellee."

"The boy must be out of his senses! Why do you not answer my question, Yen Chin?" demanded the perplexed schoolmistress.

"No can! Plomise ugly Bob!"

"What?"

"Plomise ugly Bob not to tellee Missy Meadee anything," answered Yen Chin calmly. "Chinee goodee boy—keepee plomise."

Bob Lawless glared speechlessly at the Celestial. Once more Yen Chin was carrying out his instructions to the very letter, though not in the way he intended. Frank Richards grinned. Bob's path as a reformer seemed likely to be a thorny one.

"Lawless, this is very extraordinary," said Miss Meadows. "Is it possible that you are taking advantage of this boy's simplicity to make him act disrespectfully in class? This morning there was a similar incident."

"Oh, ma'am!" stuttered poor Bob, his face crimson.

"It really looks like it to me, Lawless, and it is a serious matter. Your object should be to help this heathen boy, and not make his path more difficult by foolish practical jokes!" said Miss Meadows sternly.

Bob's cheeks burned.

"I—I—" he stammered.

"You have told this boy not to answer my questions, and, in fact, made him promise—"

"No!" gasped Bob. "I—the little beast understands! I—I told him not to sneak, as he did with Mr. Slimmey!"

"Oh!"

"Allee light!" said Yen Chin. "Me plomise ugly Bob not to tellee Missy Meadee anything! Keeepee plomise!"

"Really, Lawless, the Chinese lad would be better off without your advice, I think!" said Miss Meadows tartly.

Bob sat down, quite overwhelmed. His face was red for the remainder of the lessons, and he was very glad when the class was dismissed. Frank Richards and Vere Beauclere were smiling as they went out of the schoolhouse with him, when lessons were over.

(Continued on page 36.)



## THE EDITOR'S CHAIR

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

**H**ALLO, chums! I have received a letter from a Reading Gemite who says he's a voracious reader, and asks me to recommend other school story papers to read, besides the GEM and our companion paper, the "Magnet." I have had this request from readers before, and so I decided to deal with it in my chat. Many readers doubtless know that there are three grand book-length school stories published every month in the "Schoolboys' Own Library," but there are some who have not yet been introduced to this popular book.

As a matter of fact, there are three new numbers, price 4d. each, on sale to-morrow, February 2nd. Firstly, No. 361 contains a thrilling school and mystery story of Harry Wharton & Co. called "The Master From Scotland Yard!" No. 362 is an exciting yarn of our old friends Jimmy Silver & Co., of Rookwood, and is entitled: "Manders on the Spot!" Lastly, there's a powerful tale of the chums of St. Frank's in No. 363, which bears the title, "Nelson Lee's Come-Back!"

In addition to the GEM and "Magnet," I think that's enough for the most voracious reader to be getting on with! Next month there will be a gripping St. Jim's yarn published in the "Schoolboys' Own." Look out for it.

### "FROM FOE TO FRIEND!"

Now let us see what the GEM contains for next Wednesday. The principal item on the programme is the final yarn of the "feud" series featuring Manners and Roylance. As you can tell from the title, the two juniors at last settle their differences and become friends. But this happy state of affairs is only brought about after a good deal of further trouble—involving Tom Merry in the hardest fight of his life with Dick Roylance, the New Zealander. You will enjoy every word of this gripping story.

### "FLOODED OUT!"

That's what happens to Frank Richards & Co. in next week's thrilling yarn of the backwoods school. Rain and a great thaw set in, and Cedar Creek overflows its banks, flooding the land all around. The most seriously affected by the flood are Vere Beauclere and his father, who live in a shack on the bank of the creek. They have to seek refuge on the roof of the shack, but slowly the water rises to their precarious perch. Can help come to them in time to save them? Make sure you read about it next week.

### "THE TROUBLES OF TUCKEY!"

Having been disloyal to Drake in the St. Winifred's election, Tuckey Toodles is not a little nervous how he will be received again by his studymates in No. 8. His nervousness is well founded, for he gets a hostile reception from Drake and Rodney. To add to his troubles, he is barred from all feeds in the study, which is a serious blow to a trencherman like Tuckey! So he sets his fat wits to work to reconcile himself again to Drake and Rodney. How he goes about it—thereby adding to his troubles, incidentally—makes a very amusing yarn.

Chin, chin! THE EDITOR.

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WHOM WILL TUCKEY TOODLES VOTE FOR IN THE ELECTION FOR THE JUNIOR CAPTAIN OF ST. WINIFRED'S? THAT'S THE BURNING QUESTION ON THE BENBOW, FOR—



Drake opened the door and looked out of the study. Four or five juniors were struggling along the passage, with Tuckey Tooodles in their grasp. "We've got him!" exclaimed Sawyer. "Yaroooh! Leggo! Yoop!" yelled Tuckey.

### A Very Important Person!

IT was whispered at first in the Fourth, and it caused a stir of excitement in the Fourth Form at St. Winifred's.

The whisper reached the Third, and it set the fags in a buzz.

Then it came to the Shell, to the ears of Vernon Daubeny, and it caused that superb youth to lose, all of a sudden, his aristocratic repose, and to jump up and pace his study with great animation.

Through all the Lower School of St. Winifred's the whisper ran, and the old Benbow buzzed with it. The excitement was keen. Indeed, to judge by the looks of the St. Winny's juniors, the fate of nations might have been trembling in the balance.

There was no excitement in the Upper School. Fifth and Sixth went on their way regardless—possibly even unconscious of the fact that there was a crisis in the history of St. Winifred's at all.

But there was!

And the whisper that ran like wildfire, and thrilled the Lower School, was a rumoured remark of Rupert de Vere Tooodles of the Fourth Form—more familiarly known as Tuckey Tooodles.

Never before since St. Winifred's had had a local habitation and a name had a remark of Tuckey Tooodles caused anything like excitement. Certainly, Tooodles made remarks enough; next to eating and sleeping, "chin-wag" was his delight. But nobody ever dreamed of attaching importance to the remarks of Tooodles; it was even difficult for the grubby youth to induce fellows to listen to them. And now—

Now, a single remark of Tooodles, whispered, repeated, rumoured through the school on the river, caused a buzz of interest—of mingled com-

# IT ALL DEPENDS ON TUCKEY!

By Owen Conquest.

mendation and condemnation. It caused Dick Rodney to knit his brows, and Jack Drake to shrug his shoulders, and Vernon Daubeny to pace the study with glistening eyes and triumphant visage.

For once the fatuous youth had delivered himself of a remark worthy to be entered on the school records. And yet it was quite a simple remark. Tuckey Tooodles, consuming jam tarts in the canteen amidships, had said—or was supposed to have said—that he wasn't sure how he would vote in the election on Monday!

That was all!

But it was enough! It was sufficient to make Tuckey Tooodles, once the least important member of the Fourth Form, the most important fellow in all the Lower School—Shell and Fourth and Third.

For the matter stood in this wise. The election of the junior captain of the school had resulted

*Tuckey Tooodles is the least important member of the school on the river. But Tuckey becomes a person of importance when his vote can sway the result of the captaincy election!*

in a tie—thirty-three votes for Vernon Daubeny, thirty-three for Jack Drake of the Fourth Form. Tooodles, who was Drake's studymate, had voted for Drake.

A new election was to be held on Monday, and in the interval there had been keen and tireless electioneering on both sides.

Drake himself, perhaps, was rather careless in the matter, but his chum Rodney worked tirelessly on his behalf, and so did Estcourt and Sawyer major of the Fourth, and Sawyer minor of the Third. They did not succeed in bagging any additional votes for their leader, but they kept their own party up to the mark, and baffled the efforts of Daubeny & Co. to draw Drake's voters from their allegiance.

Daub had had a like success; no new voter joined his standard, but his supporters were key loyal. It really looked as if the new election on Monday would result in a tie, like the previous one, and then the decision would have to be referred to the Head.

And then Tuckey Tooodles' remark was rumoured through the ship.



Tuckey Toodles, utterly insignificant as he was personally, became at once a person of the greatest importance. One vote was sufficient to turn the scale.

One vote taken from one candidate and transferred to the other would give the latter a majority of two! And a majority of one was sufficient to decide the election!

If Toodles changed his mind and voted for the rival candidate, Vernon Daubeny resumed his old position as junior captain of the school.

For nobody was likely to change his mind. All the fellows made it a point of honour to stick to their candidate. Daubeny was not particular in his methods of capturing votes, but all the voters who were amenable to the influence of lavish spreads, and invitations home, and loans of cash, were on his side already. By those honourable methods, Daubeny could not hope to increase his party—unless Tuckey Toodles changed sides. Tuckey was the only one of Drake's supporters who was amenable to such influences, and Tuckey, being Drake's studymate, and Rodney's, had been kept under careful observation.

Certainly, if he betrayed his leader, he was likely to experience considerable discomfort in Study No. 8. That consideration, doubtless, had kept Tuckey true to the flag, for some time. But Tuckey had fallen away at last.

"It will be all right," said Vernon Daubeny to his chums Egan and Torrence. "I told you it would be. That fat little beast borrowed ten bob off me yesterday. He understood what it was for."

"Drake may tip him fifteen bob!" suggested Egan.

Daubeny grinned.

"Drake wouldn't; the dear boy is above such things."

"But you're not!" grinned Torrence.

"Hardly. Value received has to be paid for in this wicked world," said Daubeny. "I wasn't sure of Toodles. He's a tricky little beast; but he knows there's some bobs to come if I'm elected."

Torrence looked rather uneasy.

"If the other party finds that out——"

"Toodles won't tell them—they'd scalp him!"

"I shouldn't wonder if they scalp him, anyway!" said Egan. "I'd scalp any chap who deserted our side."

"Let them scalp him, so long as he votes for me. They can chuck him in the river afterwards, if they like," said Daubeny coolly.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"The sly little rotter——" Torrence was beginning, when Daubeny made him a sudden sign to be silent.

The plump figure and grubby face of Rupert de Vere Toodles loomed up in the study doorway.

"Hallo! Trot in, old chap!" said Daubeny coolly.

Daubeny's manner was cordiality itself, and his tone was honeyed—though he was promising himself the satisfaction of kicking Master Toodles—after the election. He felt that he was entitled to that compensation, for the civility he had had to waste on the grubby junior.

Toodles did not trot in. He fixed an accusing look on Torrence.

"You were speaking of me?" he snapped. Evidently he had overheard Torrence's rather unfortunate remark.

"Oh, no! Not at all!" stammered Torrence.

"You were! You said I was a sly little rotter, and——"

"Not a bit of it! You're not the only sly rotter

on the Benhow. I—I mean——" Torrence was making matters worse.

"Shut up, Torrence!" exclaimed Daubeny. "Come in, Toodles! Jolly glad to see you here. I hope you'll always make yourself at home in this study."

But Toodles' look was lofty. He was not to be so easily placated as all that. It was fully borne in upon his mind what a very important person he was just at present.

"I expect an apology from Torrence," he said frigidly.

"I'll see you——" began Torrence wrathfully.

But he broke off. He realised that the election was at stake, and he made a tremendous effort to swallow his wrath.

"I—I—I——" he stammered.

"I'm waiting," said Toodles loftily.

"I—I apologise!" gasped Torrence, with a crimson, furious face.

"Good!" Tuckey waved a fat and grubby hand. "In that case, Torrence, I overlook your remark. But don't do it again."

"N-n-no!"

"Have a fag, Toodles, old son?" said Daubeny, to change the painful subject; and he opened his cigarette-case.

Toodles shook his head.

"Not just before lessons," he answered. "I looked in to see whether you could lend me half-a-crown, Daubeny. I had a pound-note blown away——"

"Certainly, kid."

Half-crowns did not matter much to Vernon Daubeny, the richest fellow at St. Winifred's, Tuckey Toodles' fat fingers closed on the coin.

"Thanks!" he said carelessly.

He turned to the passage again.

"You're voting for me this evening, Toodles?" remarked Daubeny, in his most honeyed tones.

"I haven't decided."

"But I heard that you—you said——"

"I said I wasn't sure how I should vote."

"But if you'd give me your promise——"

"Perhaps I'll see you later," said Toodles airily; and he walked away, with his fat little nose in the air.

Daubeny gritted his teeth.

"Oh, won't I take it out of the cheeky little rotter—after the election!" he gasped.

"And won't I!" said Torrence savagely.

Which was a pleasant prospect for Master Toodles, as soon as his temporary importance should be a thing of the past!

### Tuckey the Conscientious!

**J**ACK DRAKE and Rodney were going into the Fourth Form Room for afternoon lessons when Toodles came up, with a smear of jam on his mouth. Daub's half-crown had been hurriedly expended in the canteen.

"Hallo, Drake, old scout!" said Toodles.

"Feeling anxious—what?"

"No," replied Drake.

"Not anxious about the election?"

"No, you ass!"

"I'm not sure how I'm going to vote——"

"Oh, dry up!"

With that Jack Drake went into the Form-room, followed by an indignant glare from Master Toodles.

Drake's electioneering methods, certainly, were not quite so astute as those of Vernon Daubeny. His nature was rather different. Even to become

captain of St. Winifred's he would not "butter" any voter, and least of all Tuckey Toodles.

Toodles' assumption of importance had only an irritating effect upon him, which he did not take the trouble to conceal.

"Well, of all the cheeky beasts—" muttered Toodles in great wrath. "As if the whole thing didn't depend on me!"

Rodney paused to speak to his fat studymate. He was a little more circumspect in electioneering than his chief.

"What's this the fellows are saying, Toodles?" he began.

"I really don't know," said Toodles.

"About your not being sure how you're going to vote to-night."

"Oh! That's so, certainly."

"You're bound to back up Drake," said Rodney.

Toodles shook his head.

"Not at all! I'm bound to vote according to my conscience," he answered loftily. "Every voter is. If I think Daub would be a better captain than Drake, I'm bound to vote for him. I'm a conscientious chap, I hope—more so than some fellows."

Rodney suppressed his feelings.

"You can't desert Drake," he said.

"It isn't a question of deserting anybody, but of voting according to conscience. Daub's a civil fellow, anyway. Drake can't be civil to a chap who can make him junior captain if he likes."

"But—"

"If I vote for Drake, he will have to be a good deal more civil," said Toodles. "You can tell him so."

And Tuckey rolled past Rodney into the Form-room. Mr. Packe had not yet arrived, and the Form-room was in a buzz. Half a dozen voices addressed Rupert de Vere Toodles as he rolled in.

"Toodles, you cad—"

"Toodles, you sneak—"

"Toodles, you fat chump—"

"Let Toodles alone!" exclaimed Pierce Raik, Daub's henchman in the Fourth. "Toodles can do as he likes, can't he?"

"Shut up, Raik!"

"We know Daub's asked you home for a week-end if he gets in as skipper, Raik!" shouted Sawyer major.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"He hasn't!" yelled Raik.

"Toodles heard him—he said so," snorted Sawyer.

"And I'll bet he's been tipping Toodles for his vote!" exclaimed Rawlings.

"Nothing of the kind!" said Toodles warnly. "Daub may have lent me some money, as one pal to another. I happen to be rather short of tin just now, owing to having a pound-note blown away. But, of course, that wouldn't make any difference to my vote."

"Are you voting for him?"

"I haven't decided."

"Are you voting for Drake?" howled Sawyer.

"I haven't decided—"

"Let's hold his head under an inkpot till he decides!" exclaimed Sawyer.

"Hear, hear!"

"Let him alone!" bawled Raik. "You're not going to threaten our voters—"

"Shut up, Raik!"

"Here, I say, hands off!" roared Tuckey

Toodles, in alarm. "I haven't said I'm not going to vote for Drake— Yaroooooh!"

"Boys!"

It was Mr. Packe's voice in the doorway, and Sawyer major and Rawlings, who had collared Tuckey Toodles with wrathful hands, let him go suddenly.

The juniors bolted to their places as Mr. Packe walked in with a severe brow.

Jack Drake had not joined in the discussion. He was quite resolved that he would not beg for votes. If the fellows chose to back him up, well and good; if they preferred Daubeny as captain, well and good again. Drake was the only fellow who had not been disturbed by the thrilling news that Tuckey Toodles' vote was undecided. In his eyes, Master Toodles was as unimportant as ever.

Such an attitude, naturally, was not gratifying to the important youth himself. Unless Drake modified it very considerably, it was probable that Toodles' conscience would lead him to back up Vernon Daubeny at the election.

Tuckey glanced at Drake several times in class, with a half patronising and half threatening air, but Drake did not even notice him. And wrath gathered in the fat breast of Toodles.

With scornful indifference from one candidate, and honeyed words and unlimited half-crowns from the other, it was only too likely that Tuckey's honourable conscience would drive him into the rival camp.

### Looking After Toodles!

**A**FTER lessons Drake and Rodney went on deck. The sunshine was bright on the rolling Chadway and the wooded banks. In the playing fields on shore senior cricket practice was going on. Lovelace of the Sixth was at the wicket, and Wake of the Fifth was bowling to him. Jack Drake leaned on the rail and watched the cricketers with a thoughtful brow.

"It's all rot, Rodney!" he said at last, abruptly.

"What is?" asked Rodney.

"This stuff about the election. It's all rot for such a thing to be decided by an ass like Toodles—and that's what it amounts to. Who's Toodles, that he should decide whether Daubeny is captain or I?"

"Put that way it does seem rather rot!" said Rodney, with a laugh. "But a vote is a vote. You've got to wedge in if you can, for the sake of the school. We don't want St. Winny's cricket this term to be like the footer last!"

Drake nodded, with a wrinkled brow.

"But even if Toodles votes for me it will be a tie again. Then the Head will appoint a skipper."

"That gives you a good chance. Lovelace approves of you, and the Head will consult him. Daub's no good at games, and Lovelace has jawed him a good bit over the footer last term. All the fellows know it. I think very likely if the Head consults Lovelace, as he's bound to, the captain will put in a word for you."

"Yes, it's likely enough. So it all depends on Toodles."

"So it seems."

"It's rot! Besides," said Drake, with a moody brow, "at the election last week I voted for myself—"

"Daub set the example."

"I know; I did it because he did. But"—Drake gave an impatient shrug—"I don't like it. I shan't put my hand up to-night for myself."





Tuckey Toodles was bundled in. The fat junior spun half across the study, and collapsed on the carpet, gasping. The doorway was crowded with panting juniors.

"Yow-ow-ow-ow! Woop!" came from the hapless Tuckey. He was discovering that it was not all pleasure to be the most important fellow in the Lower School.

"We found him in Daub's study!" gasped Sawyer major breathlessly. "We rushed them and got him out!"

"Yow-ow-ow!"

"Keep an eye on him," said Rawlings. "We'll stay in the passage in case he tries to bunk."

And he drew the study door shut.

Tuckey Toodles sat up on the carpet and spluttered.

"Yow-ow-ow! I hadn't finished tea! I hadn't even tasted the jam! Yow-ow! Look here, Drake, I won't vote for you now! Yow-ow-ow!"

Toodles scrambled up and opened the door. Five or six juniors were in the passage, and Sawyer major flourished a large set of knuckles at Tuckey's nose. The door closed again suddenly.

The doubtful voter was safe for the present, rescued from the designing hands of the bucks. But whether Sawyer major's drastic method would induce him to give his vote to Drake was quite another question.

### Daub's Luck!

"TIME!" said Dick Rodney.

Drake rose from the table with a yawn.

It was time for the meeting in the Common-room, at which Mr. Packe was to count the votes.

Tuckey Toodles was still in the study, with a very morose expression on his face. His thoughts

## NELSON LEE'S COME-BACK!

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were with the feed he had left unfinished in Daub's study.

"Come on, Tuckey!" said Rodney.

Toodles sniffed.

"Oh, I'm coming!" he said. "Perhaps Drake is going to be a bit more civil now."

"Not at all," answered Drake coolly. "You can vote for me, if you like, or you can go and eat coke!"

"You cheeky ass——"

"Oh, dry up!"

Tuckey Toodles breathed hard.

"Is that what you call pally?" he inquired.

"Bow-wow!"

"Daub's offered me——"

"Bless Daub!"

"He's offered to make good the pound note I had blown away——"

"You mean he's offered you a quid for your vote, you fat rascal!" growled Drake.

"Nothing of the sort! Daub wouldn't insult me by such an offer," said Toodles. "He's offered me the quid because I had a pound note blown away. I haven't accepted the offer. But, as you've plenty of tin, Drake, I think it's up to you to make it good, don't you?"

"Rats!"

Jack Drake left the study.

"Come on, Toodles!" said Rodney, rather uneasily. "Stick to me, old chap."

"You go and eat coke!" retorted Toodles.

The fat junior rolled out of the study, and there was a shout as Sawyer & Co. closed round him.

"Gerraway!" howled Tuckey.

"We'll look after you, Toodles! We'll see you through!"

"Look here——"

"Come on!"

Tuckey Toodles was rushed away in the midst of Drake's supporters. Daubeny & Co. were in the Common-room in full force. The room was as crowded as on the last occasion.

"This way, Toodles!" called out Egan.

"Toodles is staying here!" growled Sawyer major, keeping a tight hold of Toodles' arm.

"Leggo!"

"Cave! Here's Packe!"

Mr. Packe came in. No time was lost in getting to business. The Fourth Form master called for silence, and then for a show of hands for Vernon Daubeny.

"Leggo, Sawyer!" gasped Toodles.

"You fat little beast, you're not going to vote for Daub!" hissed Sawyer.

"Sawyer!" thundered Mr. Packe wrathfully. "Are you restraining Toodles from voting? Release him at once!"

"Oh, I—I——"

"Leave the room, Sawyer! You will not be allowed to take part in the election!"

"Oh crumbs!"

Sawyer major almost limped from the room. The game was up now. Daubeny & Co. were grinning with delight. Tuckey Toodles joined them, with a glare of defiance at Sawyer's comrades. His fat hand went up with the rest for Vernon Daubeny.

"Thirty-four!" announced Mr. Packe.

Daubeny had voted for himself as before.

"Hands up for Drake!"

Jack Drake put his hands in his pockets. He had already resolved not to vote for himself.

"Thirty!"

Jack Drake shrugged his shoulders.

"Vernon Daubeny of the Shell is elected captain

(Continued on page 36.)





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## IT ALL DEPENDS ON TUCKEY!

(Continued from page 34.)

of St. Winifred's by a majority of four votes!" said Mr. Packe.

There was a roar of cheering from Daubeny's supporters and a chorus of groans from the defeated party. The door was thrown open, and Daubeny left the Common-room, carried shoulder high by his companions, amid cheers.

"Done to the wide!" growled Rodney.

"Better luck next time!" said Drake, with a smile; and he left the Common-room with his chum.

The election was decided. Vernon Daubeny was junior captain of St. Winifred's once more. In the Shell quarters there was great rejoicing. Daub's supporters celebrated the victory in great style. In the midst of the merry spread Tuckey Toodles rolled in. Tuckey Toodles took upon

## THE TRUTHFUL CHINEE!

(Continued from page 29.)

"You're getting on rippingly with your pupil, Bob!" said Frank.

Bob breathed hard through his nose.

"Do you think the tricky little beast really misunderstood me to that extent?" he demanded.

"Ha, ha! Not quite!"

"I guess I don't think so, either," said Bob, taking the trail-rope from his pony. "I reckon I've got something to say to Yen Chin. Here he comes, the sly little rotter!"

Yen Chin came up beaming.

"Allee light?" he asked. "Chinee goodee boy.

himself the whole credit of Daub's success, and he had come to be made much of, as befitted so important a personage.

But, alas! for Tuckey's expectations.

His importance was now a thing of the past, as he was destined to discover with startling suddenness.

"Daub, old chap—" he began, and he had no time to get further.

"What's that grubby animal doin' in here?" demanded Daubeny. "Kick him out!"

"You bet!" grinned Torrence.

"Here, I say, I voted for you! You owe me a pound! I say, Daub, old chap— Yaroooh! I say— Yoop!"

Tuckey Toodles vanished from the study amid a forest of boots. That was his reward—no doubt the one he deserved. A dishevelled and gasping fat figure crawled back dolorously to Study No. 8. It was the end of the importance of Toodles!

Next Wednesday: "THE TROUBLES OF TUCKEY!"

Oh, yes! Always do as ugly Bob tellee, what you tinkee? Yaroooh!"

Bob grasped the grinning heathen by the shoulder, spun him round, and laid on the coiled trail-rope. There was a terrific howl from Yen Chin as the rope landed on his loose garments.

"Yow-ow-ow! Helpee! No thlashee pool little Chinee! Ugly Bob beestee! Oh! Yah! Ah!"

Whack, whack, whack!

"There!" panted Bob, feeling somewhat solaced. "That's the lesson you wanted all along, you blessed heathen! When you want another, you just ask me, and I'll have it ready! Have another now?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Apparently Yen Chin did not want another, for he fled, yelling. It was the end of the reform of Yen Chin.

Next week: "FLOODED OUT!"

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