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No. 1,176. Vol. XXIV.—New Series.]

THE BEST BOYS' PAPER IN THE WORLD!

[Week Ending December 22nd, 1923.]



THE COLLIERY TEAM SCORE A GREAT GOAL AGAINST THE YELLOW BOYS!

(An exciting incident from the magnificent new sports story in this issue.)

AN EXCITING STORY OF THE CHUMS OF ROOKWOOD SCHOOL!



Lick In The Limelight!

By Owen Conquest.

(Author of the Tales of Rookwood appearing in the "Popular.")

Texas Lick causes a great disturbance at Rookwood, and is very nearly expelled!

The 1st Chapter. The Licking of Lick!

"Yaw-aw-aw-aw-aw!" That yawn was loud and deep and prolonged. Mr. Dalton started. The Fourth Form stared. English history was being dealt with in the Fourth Form room at Rookwood. They had arrived at Henry the Eighth, and Mr. Dalton was imparting quite valuable information to his class respecting the times of that much-married old gentleman. The yawn interrupted him. It proceeded from the new boy at Rookwood, the American youth who rejoiced in the striking name of Texas Lick.

Probably more than one fellow in the Fourth felt disposed to yawn. Their interests were mostly concerned with the reign of George the Fifth, naturally, and they could have given Henry the Eighth a miss with pleasure. But fellows in the Form-rooms did not always do what they were disposed to do. Only Texas Lick allowed himself that freedom. Mr. Dalton ceased to speak, and fixed his eyes upon the junior from Texas.

"Yaw-aw-aw-aw-aw!" Quite deliberately Texas Lick yawned again, with his somewhat extensive mouth well open, and his sharp eyes almost shut.

There was an irrepressible chuckle in the Fourth. Evidently the boy from the Wild West was bored; equally evidently he did not hesitate to make the fact known. Texas Lick had been brought up in the freedom of a Texas ranch, and he had roughed it with the cow-punchers ever since he could remember. He did not find it easy to settle down to the orderly life of Rookwood School. Neither, apparently, did he see any special reason for settling down to the collar.

Being bored, he yawned—yawned portentously—regardless of his surroundings.

"Lick!" exclaimed Mr. Dalton. The young Texan looked at him. "Yep," he answered. "I have told you several times, Lick, not to use the word 'yep,'" said Mr. Dalton sharply. "Do you hear?"

"Yep." "Cannot you say yes?" exclaimed the Form master.

"Yep." "Then say yes when you mean yes."

"Sure!" The Fourth-Formers grinned, and Mr. Dalton compressed his lips.

"What do you mean by yawning in class, Lick?"

"Nothin' in particular, sir, only I'm bored," said Lick.

"Bored!" ejaculated Mr. Dalton. "Bored stiff, boss!" said Lick.

"You must not call me boss!" snapped Mr. Dalton. "Boys here address their Form master as 'sir.'"

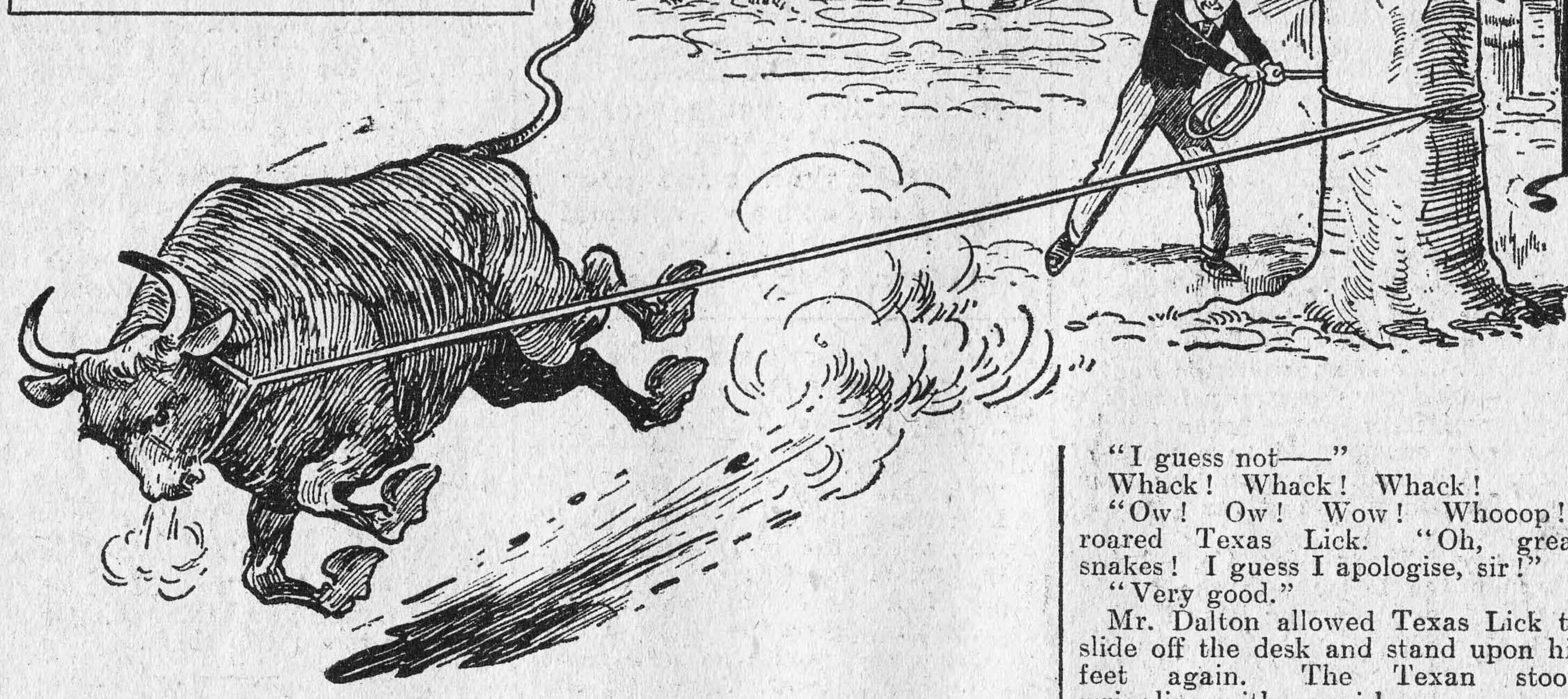
"I guess I don't mind." "You must not yawn in-class, Lick. It is very—very ill-bred. You must contrive somehow to learn better manners."

Texas Lick made a grimace. "I guess all this guff makes me tired, sir," he answered.

"This—this what?" "Guff, boss."

"Sir!" snapped Mr. Dalton. "All serene, sir!" said Lick obligingly. "What do you mean by guff, Lick?" "Oh, jest guff, sir! All this old stuff about that galoot Tudor." "That what?" gasped Mr. Dalton. "That ornery old galoot Tudor," said Lick. "The pilgrim you call Henry the Eighth. I guess if we'd had him out in Texas he would have been lynched on the nearest tree!"

CAPTURING THE MAD BULL! As the bull thundered past him Texas Lick hurled the lasso with unerring aim, and the loop encircled the great muscular neck of the animal. Quickly Lick took a turn of the rope round the trunk of a tree, and then another rapid turn. The rope tautened, and sang almost like a harp-string as it stretched, and the wild career of the bull was suddenly stopped.



"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the Fourth. "Silence!" exclaimed Mr. Dalton. "Lick, are you aware that you are speaking insolently?"

"I guess not, sir—jest giving you what I think," said Texas Lick. "All this hyer guff is a waste of a galoot's time. Who cares a Continental red cent about old Henry? If there ever was such a disreputable old mug-wump, the sooner he's forgotten the better, I calculate."

Mr. Dalton stared at him, at a loss for words. His class grinned joyously. "Doesn't that Texas merchant take the giddy cake?" murmured Mornington. "Dicky will skin him."

"I guess so!" grinned Lovell. "Ha, ha, ha!"

"Silence! Lick I shall cane you for impertinence, and for interrupting the lesson," said Mr. Dalton.

"Will you, by gum!" said Texas Lick.

"Stand out before the class." "I guess I'm comfortable hyer, sir. I don't mind going to sleep while you go on chewing the rag."

"Ha, ha, ha!" "Lick, you ass!" whispered Jimmy Silver, really concerned for the boy from Texas.

"Stand out at once, Lick!" exclaimed Mr. Dalton.

Texas Lick eyed him, but did not stir.

"You want to wallop me?" he demanded. "I am going to cane you." "I guess I've never been walloped," said Texas Lick. "I reckon that when I'm hit I hit back, boss." "Wha-a-at?" "I'm not looking for any old trouble," went on Lick. "The popper's sent me to this hyer school, and hyer I am. I guess I'm going to stand it as long as I can, jest to please the popper. It bores me stiff, and, as far as I can see, you don't teach a galoot anything that's worth knowing. But carry on, boss, and don't mind me."

"I'm sure not going to do anything of the sort."

"For the last time, Lick." "Oh, guff!"

"Then I shall cane you more severely for your disobedience," said Mr. Dalton.

"Let up, I tell you!" said Lick. "I ain't a galoot to be walloped! You can't do it!"

Mr. Dalton very promptly proved that he could do it—by doing it. The youth from Texas was grasped in his powerful hands and laid across the desk.

Texas Lick struggled. He struggled and wriggled and kicked. One of his kicks landed on Mr. Dalton's knee, and the Form master gave a gasp of pain.

Then Lick was held down on the desk with a hand of iron, and Mr. Dalton's other hand, grasping the cane, rose and fell.

Whack! Whack! Whack! Mr. Dalton did not run any risk of spoiling the Texan by sparing the rod. He laid on the strokes of the cane with a hefty hand.

Whack! Whack! Whack! The dust rose from Texas Lick's trousers. Wild yells rose from Texas Lick.

Whack! Whack! Whack! "Yarooooo! Let up!" roared Lick. "I guess I ain't standing this— Oh Jerusalem! Oh gum! Let up!"

Whack! Whack! Whack! "Dicky Dalton's in a wax!" murmured Mornington. "I kinder guess and calculate that Lick is sorry he spoke."

Whack! Whack! Whack! "Yooop! Whoop! Woorrooop!" "Now, Lick—"

"Yow-ow-woop!" "You will apologise at once for your impertinence!" rapped out Mr. Dalton.

"I guess not—"

Whack! Whack! Whack! "Ow! Ow! Wow! Whoop!" roared Texas Lick. "Oh, great snakes! I guess I apologise, sir!"

"Very good." Mr. Dalton allowed Texas Lick to slide off the desk and stand upon his feet again. The Texan stood wriggling with anguish.

"Now go back to your place, Lick, and remember that while you are at Rookwood you must treat your Form master with respect."

Texas Lick groaned. "Ow! I guess I'll remember that, boss! I reckon you've given me suthing to remember it by! Ow!"

"I am sorry to punish you, Lick. But you compelled me to do so."

"Ow! Ow! I guess I never reckoned you was such a hefty galoot, boss! I ain't arguing with you any more! Ow!"

"Go back to your place." "Ow! Wow!" Texas Lick limped back to his place amid a grinning class. He sat down, and jumped up again immediately. Mr. Dalton frowned at him. "Sit down at once, Lick!"

"If you don't mind, boss—I mean, sir—I'd rather stand for a bit!" groaned Texas Lick. "Oh! Ah! Yes! Very well, you may stand."

And Texas Lick stood. And he was still standing when the Fourth Form were dismissed. It was quite a long time before Texas Lick wanted to sit down.

"I'm sure not going to do anything of the sort."

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"I am sorry to punish you, Lick. But you compelled me to do so."

They had come up to the end study after dinner, and they found Texas Lick there.

He was leaning against the window, apparently still disinclined to sit down.

There was a deep frown on his rugged brow. "I ain't standing it," he repeated. "You can't wallop a free American. I guess I'm going to make that galoot sit up somehow!"

"What galoot?" asked Jimmy Silver, with a smile. "That guy Dalton!"

"You're going to make Mr. Dalton sit up?" grinned Arthur Edward Lovell. "How?"

"I guess I've been thinking that out," said Lick. "He ain't going to wallop a galoot from Texas, and don't you forget it. He's too hefty for me, but—"

"Oh, don't be an ass!" said Raby. "You shouldn't come to Rookwood if you don't want to toe the line!"

"And you've got to toe the line, anyhow," said Newcome. "And the sooner you settle down to it the better for you," said Jimmy Silver.

Texas Lick shook his head. "I guess I ain't taking a cow-hiding from any son of Johnny Bull," he answered. "Why, on our ranch in Texas—"

"You're not on your ranch in Texas now," interrupted Jimmy Silver. "You asked for a licking in the Form-room this morning, and you got it! Are you coming out with us this afternoon?"

"Yep! All the same—"

"Oh, chuck it!" said Lovell. "Dicky Dalton is a good sort, and he wouldn't have licked you if you hadn't made him. Give it a rest!"

Texas Lick grunted and followed the Fistical Four from the study. As a matter of fact, Jimmy Silver & Co. did not rejoice in the company of the youth from the wild and woolly West. But as he had been placed in their study, they felt that it was up to them to take him in hand a little. Lick caught up his Stetson hat as he followed the juniors, and donned that headgear as he went out. The school cap or the school topper did not seem to agree with Lick. It was much against the grain that he had changed into Etons.

"For goodness sake, chuck that thing away, Lick!" exclaimed Arthur Edward Lovell impatiently. "You can't go round Rookwood wearing a Texas hat. Where's your cap?"

"Oh, guff!" answered Lick. "You'll get called to order if a prefect spots you," said Raby. "I guess your prefects don't cut any ice with me."

"You guessed the Form masters didn't, and you found out that they do," grinned Newcome. Bulkeley of the Sixth was in the quad. He glanced at the Fistical Four and their companion, and came over to them.

"Take that hat off, Lick." "What's the matter with it?" demanded Lick. "Nothing. But we don't wear Stetson hats here. You must dress like the other fellows."

"Why?" "Never mind why," said Bulkeley impatiently. "You are here to do as you're told."

"I guess not," answered Lick independently. "That ain't good enough for a galoot from Texas." "Are you taking that hat off?" asked the captain of Rookwood grimly. "Nope!" Bulkeley reached out for the hat. Texas Lick jumped back. The captain of Rookwood, head prefect of the school, stared at him in astonishment. He had already observed Lick of the Fourth, and observed that he was something new for Rookwood. But it had certainly not occurred to him that Lick did not understand the respect due to a Sixth Form prefect. "Give me that hat at once!" he exclaimed angrily. "Oh, come off!" said Lick desisively. Bulkeley made a stride forward. Jimmy Silver hastily jerked off Lick's Stetson. "It's all right, Bulkeley, here it is!" "Gimme that hat!" roared Lick. "This hat will be returned to you at the end of the term," said Bulkeley. "I shall hand it to the House-dame. And I warn you, Lick, that you'd better not cheek a prefect again."

Bulkeley walked into the House with the Stetson, leaving Texas Lick staring after him angrily. "Now get your cap and come along, you ass!" growled Lovell. (Continued overleaf.)

The 2nd Chapter. Bumptious!

"I guess I ain't standing it!" Jimmy Silver & Co. grinned.

"Lick Lays the Ghost!" is the great story of Jimmy Silver & Co. and Texas Lick appearing in our Bumper Christmas Number. Don't miss it!



Lick In The Limelight!

By Owen Conquest

(Continued from previous page.)

"I guess this mouldy old school makes me tired," grunted Texas Lick, but he fetched his cap and came along.

The chums of Rookwood walked out at the gates, and Lick sauntered along with them. He showed little interest in the surroundings. When he observed them, it was only to make a remark pointing out their infinite inferiority to things in Texas. The green hedges, above all, moved Lick's scorn.

"I guess we'd root all that up, and put in barbed wire," he remarked. "You galoots don't know how to make anything even of this little old ten-cent island you've got!"

"Oh, come on!" said Lovell. "Don't you walk so pesky fast!" said Lick. "I don't want to risk falling off this little island!" Thud, thud, thud!

"Hallo! There comes Tubby in a hurry!" said Raby. Reginald Muffin of the Fourth was coming down the lane towards the Rookwood juniors, going at great speed. His cap was off, his face was crimson with exertion, and the perspiration poured down his fat cheeks. It was quite unusual for the fat Tubby to put on speed, and it was clear that something had happened to alarm him.

He came up panting, and was rushing past the juniors, when Lovell caught him by the collar to stop him.

Tubby spun right round Lovell under the impetus of his rush, and curled up and sat down in the lane with a bump.

"Ow!" he gasped. "What's the row?" demanded Lovell. "What are you bolting for, you fat duffer?"

"Ow! The bull!" "What bull?"

Tubby Muffin scrambled up. "Farmer Outram's bull!" he spluttered. "He's loose!"

"Oh, rot!" said Jimmy Silver. "They're always careful with that black bull."

"I tell you he's loose!" howled Tubby. "Don't stop me! Ow! Run for your lives!"

"Have you seen him?" asked Raby. "No; a man told me he was loose, and told me to clear! I'm jolly well clearing, too!"

And Tubby Muffin rushed on, perspiring and panting, towards Rookwood.

Jimmy Silver looked up and down the lane and across the fields. There was no sign to be seen of Farmer Outram's black bull. That prize bull was well-known in the locality, and known to be a dangerous animal; and the Rookwood juniors paused.

"If he's loose we'd better get back," said Newcome. "He gored a farmer's man once in a field."

"I suppose we'd better," said Jimmy. Texas Lick burst into a laugh. "Ha, ha, ha! You guys afraid of a bull?"

"No, we're not, you cheeky ass!" exclaimed Lovell angrily. "But it's no good running into a dangerous bull if he's loose. If the gate was left open he's in this lane somewhere."

"I guess I'm not skeered of a bull," grinned Texas Lick. "Your old bulls in this country ain't a circumstance to our bulls in Texas."

"Oh, blow Texas! We're hearing a lot too much of Texas!" snapped Newcome. "Let's get back, you fellows!"

"Come on, Lick!" Lick laughed derisively. "Get back if you like," he said. "I'm not goin' back. I reckon I'm not skeered."

"We're not scared, you dummy!" roared Arthur Edward Lovell. "I guess you sure look scared!"

chuckled Lick. "If I had my lasso with me—and I've got it in my box—I guess I'd rope that bull in, and show you 'uns how it's done." "You've not got it with you!" snapped Jimmy Silver. "So come back with us, and don't play the goat!" "Oh, run off and hide somewhere!" said Lick contemptuously, and he walked on up the lane towards Coombe. The Fistical Four exchanged glances. They were very well aware that it was the height of folly to risk meeting a savage bull in that narrow lane. But they did not turn back to Rookwood now. The bumptious youth from Texas was not to be allowed to say that he had gone where Rookwood fellows dared not follow. With grim faces Jimmy Silver & Co. hurried after Texas Lick.

The 3rd Chapter. Some Rider.

"Look out!" The five juniors were half-way to Coombe when a cyclist came tearing by them at top speed. It was Peele of the Fourth Form. His face was white as he bent over the handle-bars and pedalled as if his life depended on it.

The juniors had just time to jump aside as Peele came rushing them down. "Peele!" shouted Lovell angrily. "What—"

"The bull!" Cyril Peele flung back that word as he rushed on, and the bike and its rider vanished towards Rookwood.

"Oh, my hat!" said Newcome. "Then—"

Newcome was interrupted. From a turning of the lane came a deep, heavy roar. It was the black bull—and he was close at hand. A second more and the bull was in sight. He came round the turning at a run, and was within ten feet of the juniors when they saw him—a huge, muscular, magnificent beast, as huge and powerful as any fighting bull in the arenas of Spain.

"Good heavens!" stuttered Lovell. "Hook it!" panted Jimmy Silver. But there was no time to "hook" it. The bull had seen them, and was evidently in a furious temper. Probably it had already been hunted and harried since escaping from the field, and its temper—never good—had been exasperated to a pitch of fury. There was a rumbling roar, and the bull rushed at the group of juniors.

Jimmy Silver & Co. bolted through the hedge into the adjoining field, and a second later the bull was charging the hedge. In the field stood a large tree with low-hanging branches, swept clear of foliage by the winter wind. The juniors scrambled into the low boughs with frantic haste.

The Fistical Four were in the tree almost in the twinkling of an eye. But Texas Lick was late. The Texan was good at many things—he could ride the wildest horse barebacked, he could flick a cap from a fellow's head with a stockwhip at six yards, he could handle a lasso in a masterly manner. But he was not good at climbing in a hurry. He caught a branch, lost his hold, and dropped back in the damp grass, as the bull came bursting through the hedge.

Texas Lick was on his feet in an instant, dodging round the thick trunk of the tree. "Oh gum!" he ejaculated. "If I had a gun!"

He made a spring for the branches, keeping the trunk between him and the bull. The savage animal came careering round as Lick strove to clamber up.

Jimmy Silver reached down and grasped the Texan by his collar. Texas Lick was a good weight, but Jimmy put all his strength into the tug, and the Texan was dragged bodily off the ground.

"Catch hold!" panted Jimmy. Lick grasped the branch, and the bull's massive head struck his boots as he swung.

A moment more and Lick was on the branch, safe out of danger. "Gee-whiz!" he ejaculated. "That was a close call, I guess!" The bull paced under the tree, roaring.

"My hat!" said Raby. "Lucky we got into this tree! You thumping idiot, Lick—"

"You howling ass, Lick!" shouted Lovell. "A pretty scrape you've got us into with your silly gas!"

"Oh, can it!" gasped Lick. "We might be safe in Rookwood now!" exclaimed Newcome. "And with all your gas, you'd have been gored if Jimmy hadn't dragged you into the tree, you silly chump!"

"If I had my lasso here—"

"What's the good of iffing!" snorted Lovell. "You haven't got your silly lasso—only your silly self!"

"How long are we going to be treed, I wonder?" grunted Jimmy Silver. "I guess I'm not going to be treed long," said Texas Lick coolly. "This hyer perch don't agree with me."

"Going to walk away with the bull there?" snorted Lovell. "Nope, I'm going to ride."

"Ride!" yelled Lovell. "On what?" "On the bull, I guess."

"On the bull?" gasped Lovell. "Mad?" "I guess I've rode bulls before, on the llano in Texas," answered Lick. "This hyer bull may skeer you, but

rider sticking to his back, was not to be caught. The black bull charged down on the farmer and his man with such savage determination, that they jumped aside and let him pass. They had entered by a gate, which was left open, and the bull rushed out into the road, Texas Lick still sitting on his back.

The Texan waved his cap to the Rookwooders as he was carried away. Bull and rider vanished from sight.

Jimmy Silver & Co. descended from the tree. They went back into the lane and stood irresolute. Texas Lick was out of sight, hidden by high hedges, and the juniors naturally wanted to get back to Rookwood and safety while the coast was clear. But they did not want to go back without the Texan.

"Bother the fellow," growled Lovell. "All his silly fault that we're in this scrape at all!"

"He may be hurt," said Jimmy Silver anxiously. "I think we'd better look for him."

The juniors proceeded up the lane, with their eyes well about them, prepared to dodge if they sighted the bull again. But they did not sight the bull—they sighted Texas Lick. They found that youth sitting on a fence by the roadside, whistling. He nodded and grinned to the Fistical Four.

"Where's the bull?" demanded Lovell. "Miles off by this time, I reckon," said Lick. "He was going real slick-like when I dropped off his back and nipped over this fence before he could turn on me."

"We thought you'd be killed—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Lick. "Not this infant! That bull ain't a circumstance, I tell you, to the bulls I've handled in Texas."

"Oh, rot!" said Jimmy Silver. "I'm glad you're safe, anyhow. Now come back to the school."

"I guess I'm in no hurry."

"Well, we are," snapped Lovell. "You've got us into danger once, and we're fed-up. Come on."

"Nope!" "You've got to come!" roared Lovell.

Lick laughed. "You galoots vamoose if you're afraid of bulls. You leave me hyer."

"We're not going to leave you here," said Jimmy Silver. "Are you coming?"

"I'm sure not coming."

"Then you'll be taken. Collar him, you chaps."

"Hyar, let up!" roared Texas Lick, as the Fistical Four grasped him, and dragged him off the fence. "You let up, you 'uns! You hear me yaup."

But the Fistical Four did not "let up," as the Texan expressed it. They grasped Texas Lick by his arms and his ears, and walked him off to the school. All the way to Rookwood, Texas Lick told them what he thought of them, loudly and with emphasis; but they did not heed. Lick was not released till they were inside the gates of Rookwood, and then he was bumped down in the quadrangle.

"Now you can go and eat coke, or anything else you like!" growled Jimmy Silver, and the Fistical Four walked on, leaving Texas Lick sitting on the ground, and still telling them what he thought of them.

The 4th Chapter. A Surprise for Mr. Dalton!

"What on earth's that?" Valentine Mornington asked the question. It was near tea-time, and Mornington had come upon Lick in the Fourth Form passage. Lick had a coiled rope on his arm, and Morny looked at him curiously.

"That!" said Lick. "I guess it's a rope."

"I can see it's a rope," said Mornington. "Somebody asked you to put up a clothes-line?"

"Oh, can it," said Lick. "It's my lasso, that I brought with me from Texas!"

"Can you handle it?" asked Morny, with interest. Lick gave a snort.

"Can I?" he said. "I guess I could rope in a steer before I was six years old."

"Well, there are no steers here to be roped in," said Mornington, with a laugh. "I suppose you're not thinking of going out to hunt for Mr. Outram's black bull. Tubby Muffin says it's loose."

"I guess I'd rope in that bull for them if they asked me," answered Lick. "But I ain't stalking bulls now. I guess I'm after that galoot Dalton."

"What?" yelled Mornington. "If that galoot thinks he can wallop a free American citizen, he's

missing his guess," said Lick darkly. "Why, if I had him out on the ranch in Texas, I'd have pulled a gun on him."

"Oh gad!" "I guess I'm goin' to rope him in, and make him sit up and take notice," said Lick. "You can come along and see the fun, if you like."

"You mad duffer," exclaimed Mornington. "You'll be flogged and bunked from the school if you do anything of the kind."

Texas Lick shrugged his shoulders. "I guess I'm carrying on, all the same," he answered; and he walked down the passage with the coiled rope on his arm.

Mornington stared after him for a moment or two, and then, with a chuckle, strolled along to the end study. The Fistical Four were there, making preparations for tea.

"Hallo! Trot in, Morny," said Jimmy Silver cordially. "Just in time for tea."

"I haven't come to tea," said Morny laughing. "I understand that you fellows are the keepers of that potty Westerner, Lick."

"Well, he's in our study," said Jimmy. "We're trying to keep an eye on him. What's he up to now?"

"He's going to lasso Dicky Dalton for licking him in the Form-room this morning."

"Wha-a-a-at?" "So he says, at least," grinned Mornington. "If you think it's worth while to keep him from being sacked, you can go and stop him. I'd rather watch the fun myself. Dalton's in the quad now."

Jimmy Silver jumped up. "The potty chump!" he exclaimed. "Come on, you chaps, we must stop him. We don't want him sacked."

"Let him be sacked, and blow him!" grunted Lovell. "I want my tea."

"Oh, come on!" Jimmy Silver ran out of the study, followed by his chums. Mornington followed on, laughing.

"Where is he, Morny?" shouted Jimmy. "I think he went downstairs."

Jimmy Silver & Co. ran down the staircase. Texas Lick was not to be seen indoors, and they ran out into the quadrangle. Mr. Dalton was standing by the beeches, talking with Mr. Greely, the master of the Fifth Form. They were discussing the rumoured escape of Farmer Outram's black bull.

"If that dangerous animal is indeed loose, the school gates should be kept closed," Mr. Dalton was saying, as the Fistical Four came along the path.

"Undoubtedly," agreed Mr. Greely.

"It's all serene," whispered Lovell. "Only that duffer's gas—or guff, as he would call it. There's Dicky Dalton safe and sound."

Jimmy Silver nodded, greatly relieved. The Texan was not to be seen in the quad, and they came to the conclusion that he had been pulling Mornington's leg. But Jimmy noticed the next moment that Mr. Greely was staring up curiously at the big beech tree close to which the two masters were standing.

"Upon my word, there is a boy in the tree!" exclaimed the Fifth Form master.

Jimmy Silver & Co. looked up, startled. There was Texas Lick. He was standing in a fork of the branches, and his lasso was in his hand. His eyes were fixed on Mr. Dalton, who looked up at the same moment. The Fourth Form master frowned.

"Lick!" he shouted. "Yey!"

"You are not allowed to climb the beeches. Descend at once!" Texas Lick did not answer. His right arm made a sudden swing, and the lasso flew.

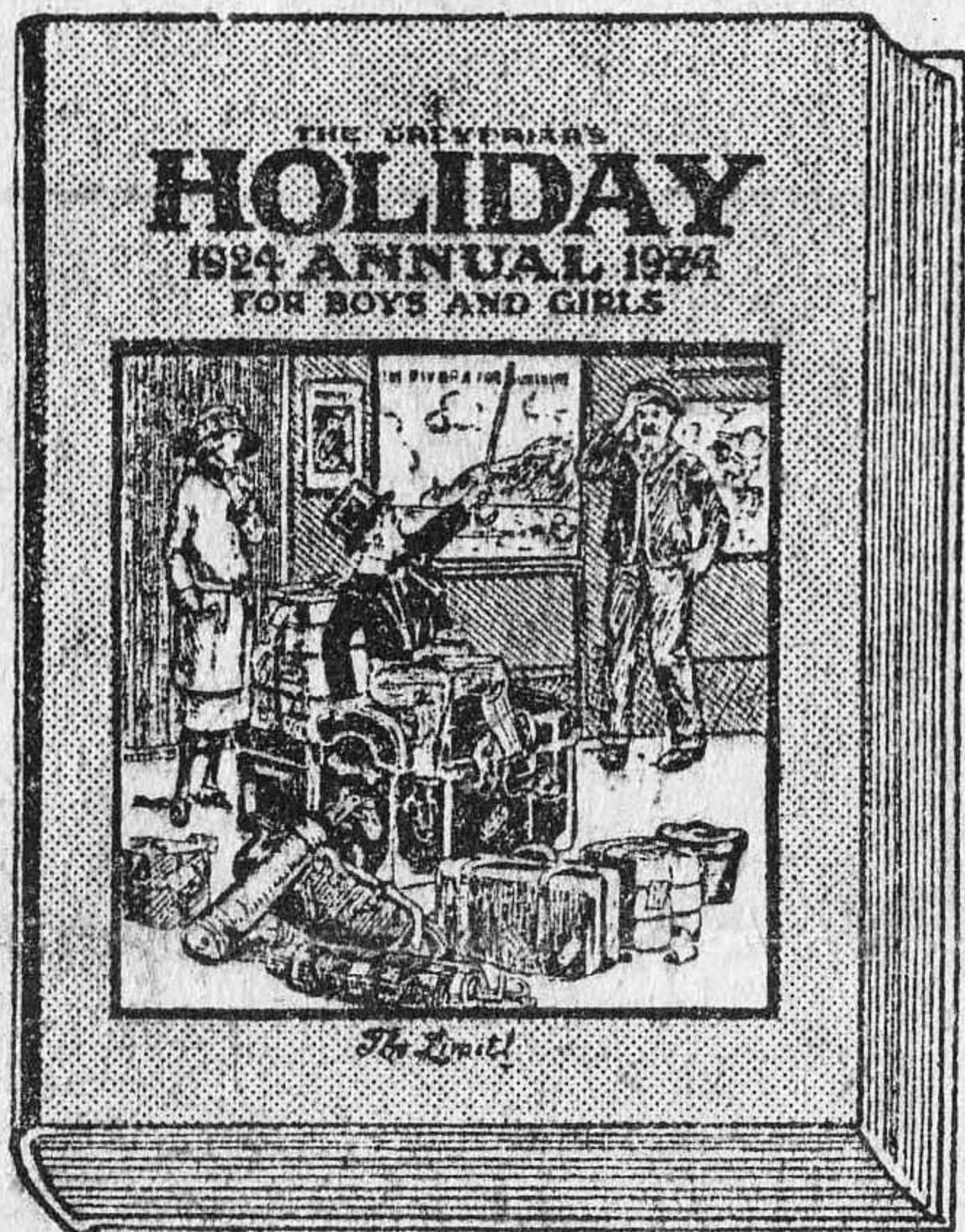
Mr. Dalton was utterly unprepared for the lasso-cast, but had he been prepared he could scarcely have eluded it. The loop was over his head in a twinkling, and it dropped round his body, and instantly the rope was dragged taut.

The astonished Form master lost his footing with the drag of the rope and rolled on the ground. Mr. Greely looked on, his eyes almost starting from his head with amazement.

"Oh crumbs!" stuttered Lovell. "He's done it!" "Rescue!" gasped Jimmy.

The chums of the Fourth rushed to the Form master's aid. But there was no time to help him. Lick had taken a turn of the rope over a higher branch, and he was dragging on the end. The result was that Mr. Dalton was dragged from the ground. Leaning back against the trunk, with

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he ain't a circumstance to the bulls I've handled in Texas. You watch out."

"Look here, Lick—" exclaimed Jimmy Silver. "Can it!"

Lick hung to the branch with his hands, while the bull roared below. The juniors watched him blankly. They had heard of Texas cow-punchers riding on the backs of bulls—indeed, they had seen such things on the films. Now, apparently they were going to see it in reality.

"Stop!" shouted Jimmy. "Oh, guff!"

Texas Lick chose the right moment, and dropped fairly on the back of the bull. Astride of the animal, he held on with his knees, as when riding a barebacked horse.

"Now, you gee, you critter!" he shouted. The bull, for a second, seemed too dazed to move. Then, with a roar, it leaped away and careered across the field, with the Texan schoolboy sticking like a limpet to its back.

"Oh crumbs!" gasped Lovell. Texas Lick rode away on the almost frantic bull. How he maintained his strange seat was a mystery to the Rookwood juniors; but he did maintain it. Well they knew that if he fell he would be gored to death by the savage animal in a matter of moments. But, amazing as it was, he seemed in no danger of falling.

"Well, this beats Banagher!" said Newcome.

"It do, it does!" gasped Jimmy Silver. "I only hope the silly ass won't be killed."

"He seems to be sticking on!" There was a shout in the distance, and a stout, gaitered farmer appeared in the field, with a labourer armed with a pitchfork. Evidently they were hunting the bull.

But the animal, maddened by the

his feet firmly planted in the fork of the branches, Lick dragged on the rope with all his weight and strength. With the gripping rope tight round his chest, the young master was lifted and swung clear of the ground, his brain in a whirl.

"Lick!" yelled Jimmy Silver. "I guess this is where I come in," chuckled Texas Lick breathlessly. "I reckon that galoot won't wallop me again!"

"Boy!" shrieked Mr. Greely. "How dare you! Release Mr. Dalton at once! Do you hear?"

"Oh! Ah! Help!" gasped Mr. Dalton. He clutched at the rope with his hands, but with his weight on it he could not loosen the gripping noose. He swung helplessly.

There was a roar of laughter from Texas Lick in the tree. It was echoed by a crowd of Rookwood fellows who rushed to the spot.

"Roped in!" chuckled Mornington. "Ha, ha, ha!"

"He's lassoed Dicky Dalton!" shrieked Peele. "Ha, ha, ha!"

"The boy must be mad!" gasped Mr. Greely. "Lick, I command you! Bulkeley, Neville!"

Bulkeley ran towards the beech, to climb up and deal with Lick. At the same moment there was a wild shout from the direction of the gates.

"The bull! Look out!" The shout was followed by a rush of footsteps. Fellows on all sides were running for the houses. Old Mack had leaped into his lodge and banged the door and bolted it.

In the wide gateway of Rookwood stood the escaped bull, huge, magnificent, its red eyes glaring with rage. From the road behind came a sound of shouting; from two or three directions the hunters were closing in on the bull. But the school gates, unfortunately, stood open, as they generally did on half-holidays, and there was nothing to prevent the entrance of the bull. Certainly old Mack, the porter, had no intention of trying to prevent it. Old Mack palpitated behind a bolted door.

In a twinkling the crowd round the beech broke up, as the bull charged in at the gateway. Mr. Greely, portly and dignified as he was, headed a rush for the School House, and he put on a speed that was remarkable and creditable in a gentleman of his years and circumference.

In a moment or two the spot was clear, save for Mr. Dalton swinging on the rope, with his toes touching the ground.

He could make no movement to escape. The bull, bellowing, with lowered head, charged after the fleeing crowd. Jimmy Silver took a hurried glance back, thinking of the helpless Form master. But what he saw was a lowered head only six yards behind him, and he put on a desperate burst of speed. He could not help Dicky Dalton by staying to be gored, and he went up the steps of the School House almost as if he were flying. In a jamming crowd, the Rookwooders poured into the House, and Mr. Greely and several fellows fumbled in wild haste with the big door. But the door was not needed. The bull stopped at the steps, and stood there roaring, with a roar that rang like thunder through the quadrangle of Rookwood.

The 5th Chapter.

Lick in the Lighthouse!

"Gee-whiz!" Texas Lick uttered that exclamation as the crowd below scattered before the rush of the bull. Bulkeley of the Sixth was the only one that remained; he was already climbing the tree when the bull appeared, and for him the path of safety lay upward. He clambered into the branches breathlessly.

"Some scare, what?" grinned Lick. He stared after the bull. The animal was roaring at the School House steps. The quadrangle was clear now. From doors and windows in the School House and in Mr. Manders' House scared eyes stared at the terrible animal.

From the steps the bull swung round, its red and furious eyes seeking a victim. Five or six men appeared in the distant gateway, the gaitered farmer and his men armed with pitchforks, one of them with a gun. The bull did not heed them. He had sighted Mr. Dalton suspended from the beech, and he was careering back towards the spot whence the crowd had scattered.

"Gee-whiz!" said Texas Lick again, and for a moment his sunburnt face paled.

Then he shouted to Bulkeley.

"Bear a hand here, pard! Help me with the rope!"

Bulkeley did not answer—there was no time for speech. He grasped the lasso with his powerful hands, and put all his force into the pull. With Bulkeley and Lick pulling together with all their strength, the lassoed Form master was swung high above the ground. The rope was over a high branch, and the pull brought Mr. Dalton up into the lower branches, where Texas Lick and Bulkeley stood.

It was none too soon. Less than a minute after Mr. Dalton had been dragged up into the big beech the bull was careering below.

"I guess that was a close call!" gasped Texas Lick. Bulkeley helped the dazed Form master to a secure fork in the branches, and Mr. Dalton was released from the lasso. He was too aching and breathless to speak, but the look he gave the cheerful youth from Texas was a very expressive one.

Texas Lick, astride of a branch, drew in his lasso and coiled it. As he did so he watched the bull.

The farmer and his men were in the quad now, closing in on the bull. But as the infuriated animal turned upon them with flaming eyes and lowered head, they broke away and scattered. One of the men had a narrow escape of being gored, leaping into the fountain just in time, and rolling drenched in the great granite basin.

"I guess that animal's goin' to give some trouble," chuckled Texas Lick. "I reckon his dander is riz, and he won't be skeered home by a guy with a pitchfork."

He looped the lasso on his arm, and swung to the lowest branch of the beech.

"Lick!" exclaimed Mr. Dalton. "Yey?"

"Where are you going?" "After the bull, I reckon."

"Are you mad, boy? Stay where you are! You are safe in the tree," snapped the Form master.

"I guess I've got my rope hyer, sir. I'm going to rope him in, same as I did you, boss," chuckled Lick. "You will do nothing of the kind," gasped Mr. Dalton. "I forbid you to leave this tree, Lick."

"Oh, can it, boss!" said Lick coolly. "You don't know what you're talking about."

"What? What?" "Lick, you cheeky young rascal!" exclaimed Bulkeley.

"Give it a rest," said Lick. "Chin-wag cuts no ice with me when there's a job to be done, I can tell you! On our ranch in Texas that bull would have been roped in in two shakes of a beaver's tail. I guess I'm goin' to show you 'uns how to handle a bull."

"I forbid you, Lick! Bulkeley, seize him!" exclaimed the master of the Fourth.

Bulkeley made a grasp at the Texan, but he was too late. Lick dropped from the low branch to the ground.

"Good heavens! He will be killed!" exclaimed Mr. Dalton, as the Texan schoolboy, with his lariat in his hand, ran lightly towards the careering bull.

"He's got pluck, sir," said Bulkeley. "It's possible he can do as he says."

"If the bull attacks him I must go to his aid," said Mr. Dalton; and he prepared to drop from the tree.

The bull, careering round in search of a victim, watched on all sides by anxious eyes, speedily sighted the

Texan schoolboy running towards him. He turned on the Texan at once.

Lick stopped, and watched him coolly.

Every eye was on the Texan now with breathless interest. Texas Lick was enjoying himself. To be the cynosure of all eyes, to show off to all the school what he could do, just "jumped," as he would have expressed it, with his inclinations.

Even when the bull, with red, savage eyes, charged down on him, the Texan found time to wave his hand airily at the crowd of faces at the School House windows.

"Swank!" growled Arthur Edward Lovell. "Pluck, too!" said Jimmy Silver.

steer on the plains of Texas, and it was more than equal to the strain.

Crash! Over went the black bull, sprawling helplessly on the ground, and roaring with rage.

"Gee-whiz! I guess that's done the trick!" exclaimed the Texan.

He coolly knotted the end of the rope round the tree-trunk. By the time he had finished, the maddened animal had struggled to its feet. It came whirling back towards the Texan at furious speed. Texas Lick walked away with his back to the bull.

He did not run. With the eyes of all Rookwood upon him, that was a magnificent moment for the bumptious Westerner.



LICK ASKS FOR TROUBLE! Leaning back against the trunk of the tree, with his feet firmly planted in the fork of the branches, Lick dragged on the rope with all his weight and strength. With the gripping rope tight round his chest, Mr. Dalton was lifted, and swung clear of the ground, his brain in a whirl. "Lick, you mad ass!" yelled Jimmy Silver in alarm. "I guess this is where I come in," chuckled Texas Lick breathlessly. "I reckon that galoot won't wallop me again!"

"Yes, rather. If he can handle that bull, he's the real goods," said Mornington. "Oh gad!"

For a moment it looked as if the charge of the maddened bull would sweep the Texan helplessly away. But a quick, active leap aside saved Lick, and the bull, with lowered head, went thundering past him. Texas Lick spun round on him, and the lasso flew with an unerring aim.

Right over the massive head and horns the loop circled, and slid round the great muscular neck of the bull.

The rope flew out taut as the bull thundered on. Against that powerful pull the Texan could not have held it for a moment. But he knew what he was about. He was standing close by a tree, and as the rope flew out, Texas Lick took a turn of it round the trunk, and then another rapid turn.

The double turn of the rope, with Lick holding the end, held it as fast as a knot. The rope tautened, and sang almost like a harp-string as it stretched.

The wild career of the bull was suddenly stopped. With the immense strain on it it looked as if the rope must snap, but it did not. That same lasso had held many a struggling

He just walked. Behind him the bull came thundering, while Texas Lick strolled, with his hands in his pockets, towards the School House.

Texas Lick knew the length of the rope, he knew its strength, and he knew that he was out of reach of the bull's charge if the rope held. And he was quite certain that it would hold. Had it snapped, the horns of the savage brute would have been in his back in a second more. Sure as he was of the rope, it required an iron nerve to walk calmly away with his back to the savage bull behind him. He did not even glance round.

Twang! The rope sang as the charging bull drew it to full length from the tree, his horns only a few yards behind the Texan.

But the rope held, and the sudden wrench threw the bull off his feet again, and he went down with a crash and a roar.

As if unconscious of his proximity, Texas Lick strolled on towards the School House, not giving the bull a look.

He came up the steps and grinned

cheerily at the swarm of fellows in the doorway.

"I guess it's all O.K., now!" he remarked airily. "You 'uns needn't worry about that pesky bull. He's roped."

The 6th Chapter. Called to Account!

Jimmy Silver & Co. watched the roped bull as if fascinated. The animal had struggled up again, puzzled and enraged by the strange hold that held him to the tree.

Again and again the bull sought to rush away, and again and again he was hurled to the ground by the tautening of the lasso. And the tightening of the noose about his neck was almost choking him now.

The great brute's strength and fury were a terrible sight to behold. The juniors almost held their breath as they watched. There was little doubt that the bull might have done fearful damage before he was captured had he not been roped in by the Texan schoolboy. Farmer Outram and his men were gathering round the bull now, keeping out of the radius of the rope. They waited for the great animal to exhaust his strength in his futile efforts to escape.

"They've got him!" said Lovell at last.

The bull, exhausted, half-throttled, was seized at last by the farmer and his men. Several ropes were tied to him, and the farmer held on to the lasso. In the midst of his captors, the subdued brute was led away, and disappeared out of the gates.

Glad enough were the Rookwooders to see him go. Old Mack rushed out of his lodge and slammed and locked the gates, on the principle, apparently, of bolting the stable-door after the horse had been stolen. The quadrangle was soon swarming with Rookwood fellows again, excitedly discussing the startling happening. Texas Lick seemed, like the celebrated young lady at the tea-party, to "swell visibly." There was no doubt that Lick had acted well and bravely, and there was still less doubt that Lick felt that he was entitled to "swank."

"That was plucky, kid," said Bulkeley of the Sixth, as he passed the Texan.

"It sure was!" agreed Lick. And Bulkeley grinned as he walked on.

But a few minutes later a message reached Lick that he was wanted in the Head's study. Lick nodded complacently.

"I guess the old guy figures it out that he's bound to put in a few words," he remarked. "I reckon he's never seen a bull handled like that before in all his natural."

"You awful ass!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver. "The Head wants to see you about handling Dicky Dalton, of course."

Texas Lick shrugged his shoulders. "I guess I'm going to handle any galoot that lays his paws on me!" he answered.

And he walked away to the Head's study.

He found Mr. Dalton in the presence of Dr. Chisholm. There was a deep frown on the doctor's face, and Mr. Dalton looked troubled.

"Lick!" exclaimed Dr. Chisholm sternly. "From the window of my study I saw your action—"

"Yep," said Lick. "I guess I handled the animal all right, sir."

The Head coughed. "I am referring to your attack on your Form master—Mr. Dalton. I was about to come out and deal with you when the bull appeared."

"And then you reckoned you'd wait a bit, sir!" chuckled Lick. "I guess you was wise. That bull would have made shavings of you before you could have said, 'No sugar in mine.'"

"You have dared to raise your hand against your Form master, Lick!"

"Not my hand, sir, only a rope," said Lick.

"Have you any excuse to offer?" "Heaps! That guy—"

"What?" "Mr. Dalton, sir, he walloped me this morning. I figured it out that I would get level. And I guess I did, just a few!"

"Bless my soul!" Dr. Chisholm stared at Texas Lick over his glasses. He was already aware that Lick was a new and strange inhabitant for a school like Rookwood. But this reply almost took his breath away.

"You—you justify your conduct on the grounds that Mr. Dalton punished you?" he articulated at last.

(Concluded on page 400.)

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THE BULLIES OF THE BOMBAY CASTLE!

(Continued from previous page.)

There was nothing that annoyed Cecil more than the discharge of firearms. Showing his teeth in an ugly grin, he pounced upon the senseless Chinese like a terrier on a rat.

Cecil seemed to have quite a clear notion of what had happened to his chums. He advanced through the coco-grove boldly, and, coming to the edge of the dock, showed his teeth in an angry snarl.

The Chinese working about the hatches turned and gave a yell of fear. None of these had ever seen an orang-outang before.

And Cecil, standing there with their captain hanging limp under one arm and a pistol grasped in his paw, dressed in the same uniform as that which their captives wore, put fear into the mob.

Cecil snarled and shook his captive, and the dread Lee Sin's head wobbled in an ominous manner. There were few of his crew who sympathised with Lee Sin. He had been a harsh taskmaster, and they had been recruited by him, not for piracy, but for the legitimate fishing of the sea-slug and the gathering of birds' nests for the famous Chinese birds' nest soup.

But their captain had forced them into piracy under a reign of terror, and had likewise blackbirded the natives who were working for him.

The natives were the first to howl and run, and the terror spread to the Chinese. They dropped their arms which they had snatched up at the first sight of this sinister figure, and, leaping from the junk, they ran into the woods in all directions.

Down below the boys heard the stampede, and a moment later they heard Cecil's angry roar.

"My word!" cried Arty. "There's old Cecil. He's got in amongst 'em. Listen! They are running like rats, and not a shot fired. Let's give old

Cecil a shout. Now then, boys, all together. Ce-cil!"

The shout was heard. With a snarl of rage Cecil dropped the senseless Lee Sin, and, with one tremendous bound from the side of the dock, reached the closed hatch, tearing at the tarpaulin and ripping it off; his powerful paws tearing it as though it were brown paper. Then a section of the hatch was dragged up, and Cecil's face appeared, his eyes shining and his huge teeth gleaming, beside himself with rage.

"Look out, my dear boys!" gasped Mr. Lal Tata. "Do not approach Cecil. He is in dangerous states of mind!"

"Dangerous, your grandmother!" said Pongo, looking up at the terrible face which was peering down into their prison. "Hallo, Cecil, old chap! Here we are. Good old Cecil!"

All the anger died out of Cecil's terrible visage as he saw that he had found his chums unharmed. Goodness knows what had been going on in his dim mind as he had sat in the tree, waiting and watching.

He reached down to Pongo and lifted him up in his tremendous hairy arms, making a little crooning noise and turning him over and over to see if he was hurt.

Pongo seemed to understand him perfectly.

"It's all right, Cecil, old chap," said he. "We are all in the pink and Sir Garneyo."

Cecil put him down and picked up Jerry Swainson, who was the next to climb the ladder. Cecil was very fond of Jerry and turned him over and patted him and smelled him to see that he was not hurt before he put him down on deck. And, one by one, he handled the whole crowd till only Mr. Lal Tata was left below on the heaps of rotting oysters.

"Come on up, sir!" called Dick. "Old Cecil wants to kiss you!"

"Cecil is excellent fellows," said Mr. Lal Tata nervously, "but I do not wish to be kissed by Cecil. He

was in very dangerous frames of mind just now."

"Come on, sir," said Dick encouragingly. "Don't be silly. He won't hurt you."

Then Dick turned and saw the form of Captain Lee Sin lying limp upon the bank of the little dock.

"My word," said he. "It looks as if old Cecil has kyboshed the captain. That bright and breezy San Francisco Chink looks as if he's had his gruel!"

Dick ran ashore by the gang-plank and, greatly to Mr. Lal Tata's relief, Cecil bounded after him.

"My word, Cecil!" said Dick, examining the Chinese. "You've done him in. He looks to me like a dead man. But as he was going to out us, perhaps it's all for the best. How did you do it? What did you hit him with?"

Cecil seemed to understand. He made the queer crooning noise that he always made when he was pleased, and picked up a fallen coconut.

"I see," said Dick. "You biffed him with a coconut!"

But Captain Lee Sin groaned faintly and turned.

"Come on, boys," said Dick. "Pick this caitiff up. We'll carry him to his cabin. We'd better tie his hands and feet together. He looks a slippery sort of customer, and perhaps he's only shamming!"

They carried the Chinese aboard the junk and laid him on his bunk, locking the door on him. Then they gathered up the arms that were scattered about the decks, looking round and expecting to be attacked when the Chinese had recovered from their fright.

"Keep well down behind the bulwarks, boys," said Arty, loading the rifle he had picked up and watching the wall of greenery that surrounded the little dock.

But not a leaf moved. Presently there came a sound like the hooting of an owl.

"Perhaps that's some of the niggers coming back," said Arty.

"Answer them, Pongo."

Pongo was admirable at making all sorts of catcalls and bird and monkey noises. He hooted in answer, and the hoot sounded nearer as though the person giving the signal was encouraged by the answer.

Soon a black face showed in the greenery and a black arm waved a palm branch as a sign of peace.

"Come on, Jacko!" called Arty, making affable and friendly gestures.

The golliwog figure beckoned to others who were hidden in the bush, and presently sixteen wild figures came into view. They were the niggers, wild and frizzy Papuans, who had been collecting the shell for the Chinese. Some of them wore collars of boars' tusks. Others had clay pipes thrust through their noses, and others were content with a sardine tin as a necklace.

"Come on, boys!" cried Arty. "Don't be afraid, nobody's going to eat you!"

The niggers advanced cautiously from the cover, and at the sight of Cecil in his little cricket cap they seemed as if they wanted to run back again.

But Arty, to show them that Cecil was not a demon, took Cecil by the arm.

"Come along, boys!" he cried. "Don't be afraid. It's only old Cecil—one of the k-nuts!"

And the niggers, reassured, came stealing out of the cover and made for the junk.

"Any of you chaps savvy English?" demanded Arty, as the niggers came up.

The black face of one golliwog lit up.

"Black feller him savvy," said he, pointing to himself. "Savvy white man lingo!"

"Right-ho!" replied Arty. "Sposum you run along like lightning to big smoke canoe. Catchee number one big captain fella and give um paper. Tell him come along chop chop and bring plenty gun."

And Arty scribbled a note to Captain Handyman.

The native nodded. He evidently knew the meaning of writing. His eyes turned nervously from boy to boy and suddenly rested on Jerry Swainson. Jerry had taken off his cap and was running his hand through his hair, and the sunlight fell upon his father's signet ring which had been so mysteriously discovered by Captain Handyman.

Of a sudden the nigger rushed up to him and took his hand, examining the ring closely.

"Look out, Jerry," said Pongo. "He's going to pinch your ring!"

But the nigger, after one glance at the ring, fell on his face at Jerry's feet rubbing his frizzy head on Jerry's boots muttering: "Tokui! Tokui!"

"What on earth does he mean?" said Arty, looking down in some surprise. "Why, he's worshipping Jerry! Hey, Perce, what's up with you?"

"In his language," said Mr. Lal Tata, "Tokui means the sign of a great personage. It is evident that this man recognises the ring which belonged to Jerry's father, and without a doubt he was stolen by this evil Chinese fellow from that part of the coast of New Guinea where Captain Handyman believes Jerry's father to be still alive. Now, Jerry, my boy, take the ring from your finger and offer it to this man to hold in his hand. Thus we shall discover if your father is alive. If he is alive the man will take it. If he is dead this man will not touch it, for no native on that coast will touch the belongings of a dead chief. He is too much afraid of the spirit of the dead man!"

Jerry turned very white as he looked down on the man who was embracing his ankles. He slipped the ring from his finger and, stooping, held it out to the nigger. "Ask him what name," whispered Arty, looking on breathlessly. "What name?" asked Jerry in a shaky voice.

The man took the ring and turned it over in his black paw. Then the answer came clear and distinct. "Joa Swanson," he answered in guttural tones. "Big chief!"

"Well, if that's not Joe Swainson he's trying to say, I'm a Dutchman," said Arty. "Make him say it again." The man nodded violently.

"Joa Swainson," said he, correcting his pronunciation as much as he could. "Him big chief fella!"

"Alive?" asked Arty.

The nigger nodded violently.

"When did you last see him?" asked Arty. "How many moons?"

The nigger pointed to the sky and held up eight fingers.

"He means, Jerry, that your father was alive, to his knowledge, about eight months ago," said Arty.

"But how can he recognise just a signet ring?" asked Jerry, white and shaking, as he tried to take in this great news.

"Have no fear of that, my dear Jerry," said Mr. Lal Tata. "These natives are very remarkable fellows at noticing the smallest things. It is all the same, a spear, a fishing net, a kava bowl, they will remember it for years, and will tell you to whom it belongs. You must remember that they do not live near shops, and that their eyes are not bewildered by many objects of property. Show them the boots of a white man, and they will tell you at once to whom they belong out of a hundred pairs. They never forget, their eyes are as sure as the scent of a dog."

"It's too good to be true!" stammered Jerry, and he covered his face with his hands.

"That's all right, old chap!" said Arty, clapping him on the shoulder. "Don't you be upset. Mr. Lal Tata understands these chaps and their ways, and he thinks that your father is alive all right. If he were not alive that chap would not have touched the ring to save his life. And you could see by the way your black pal dropped on his face at the sight of the ring that he's the big squeeze in these parts. And there's another thing we might try him on. Haven't you got a likeness of your father in your pocket-book?"

"Sure!" replied Jerry. "I had forgotten that."

And with trembling hands he brought out his pocket-book, producing a faded photograph of his father.

(There will be a further long instalment of this great story in our bumper Christmas Number out on Saturday next, December 22nd. Order your BOYS' FRIEND in advance and avoid disappointment!)

Home Made Marionettes!

How Tony Sarg—now one of the most famous illustrators—came to devote himself to the study of marionettes and their mechanism forms an interesting story.

At the age of six he was drawing pictures on the margins of his copy-books and any blank piece of paper which came his way. The aunt and uncle with whom he lived did not take his art work seriously, although it was in his blood to draw, his grandmother having been an artist of no small ability; but when the lad was eighteen years old, and his drawings were so much admired that he was engaged to illustrate a book for children, they realised that he had created a profession for himself. Tony Sarg still loves to draw better than to do anything else—unless it is making marionettes or fishing! His little daughter has inherited his ability, and is already making vigorous drawings, with a touch of her father's ever-present humour.

Tony Sarg has never had a teacher. He was advised—wisely in this case—to avoid the art schools, lest his remarkably individual drawings might lose character through academic instruction. His drawings have a spontaneous humour which is delightful; and this vein runs through all of his marionette productions. The little figures and animals are grotesquely humorous. No one who has seen one of Mr. Sarg's puppet-shows could fail to

recognise this quality, and to know as well that their creator has a great love and understanding of children and the four-footed kindred.

Now, a magnificent little book has just been published about Tony Sarg and his marionettes. It is called "Marionettes and How to Make Them" and it explains how to build marionette stages, and how to make and operate puppets. Also, it contains useful information of how to give successful marionette productions at home.

Readers of the BOYS' FRIEND, who have a love for amateur theatricals, are strongly recommended to this marionette book. It will help them if it is their intention to give plays this Christmastide.

In addition to such interesting and useful information, there is a stunning competition being run in connection with "Marionettes and How to Make Them," and it is so easy that it is bound to attract hosts of boys and girls. As for the prizes—well, there are five hundred waiting for owners. Cash awards and a splendid variety of other gifts. And to be in the running for one of these you are advised to secure a copy of the marionette book without delay. It can be obtained from any bookseller, newsagent, or direct from the publisher—Stanley Paul & Co., Ltd. (Dept. P.), 31, Essex Street, Strand, London, W.C. 2, for 2s. 6d., and you can be sure that it is well worth the money!

LICK IN THE LIMELIGHT!

(Continued from page 397.)

"Yep." "Very well," said the Head. "It is evident, Lick, that you are not suited to Rookwood, and that Rookwood is not suited to you. I shall communicate by telephone with your father's agent in London, and you will leave the school to-morrow morning."

"Gee-whiz!" ejaculated Lick. "That is all. You may go, Lick!" said the doctor, with a wave of the hand.

Lick hesitated. Somehow, he did not seem to have anticipated that his retaliation upon his Form master would lead to his dismissal from the school. He looked dismayed.

Mr. Dalton broke in.

"I should certainly have expected you, sir, to expel this boy from the school for his outrageous conduct," he said. "But—"

"I could do no less, Mr. Dalton."

"Quite so, sir. But as it happens the boy acted very bravely in securing the bull. I am afraid that lives might have been lost but for his action. I think he has, to some extent, atoned for his lawless conduct. So far as I am concerned, sir, I should be willing to overlook his conduct towards myself for this once, if you thought fit to give him another chance here."

Dr. Chisholm hesitated.

"The boy certainly acted bravely, and doubtless prevented serious

damage from being done," he agreed.

"But—"

"I guess you're a real white man, Mr. Dalton!" said Texas Lick cheerfully. "I don't mind saying, sir, that I'm sorry I handled you. I reckon I ain't used to Rookwood ways yet. It's a pesky big change from Texas."

"That is certainly true," said the Head. "At Mr. Dalton's request, Lick, I will give you another chance."

"Thank you, sir!"

"But any repetition of such conduct—" added the Head, in a terrific voice. He did not finish, leaving the rest to Lick's imagination.

"Sacked?" asked Jimmy Silver, as the Texan strolled into the end study for tea.

Lick shook his head.

"Not this time. I guess I went a bit over the limit. That guy Dalton is a real white man. I guess I'm going to be real nice to him after this. He put in a word for me with the old guy."

"More than you deserved," said Arthur Edward Lovell.

"Oh, guff!" said Texas Lick.

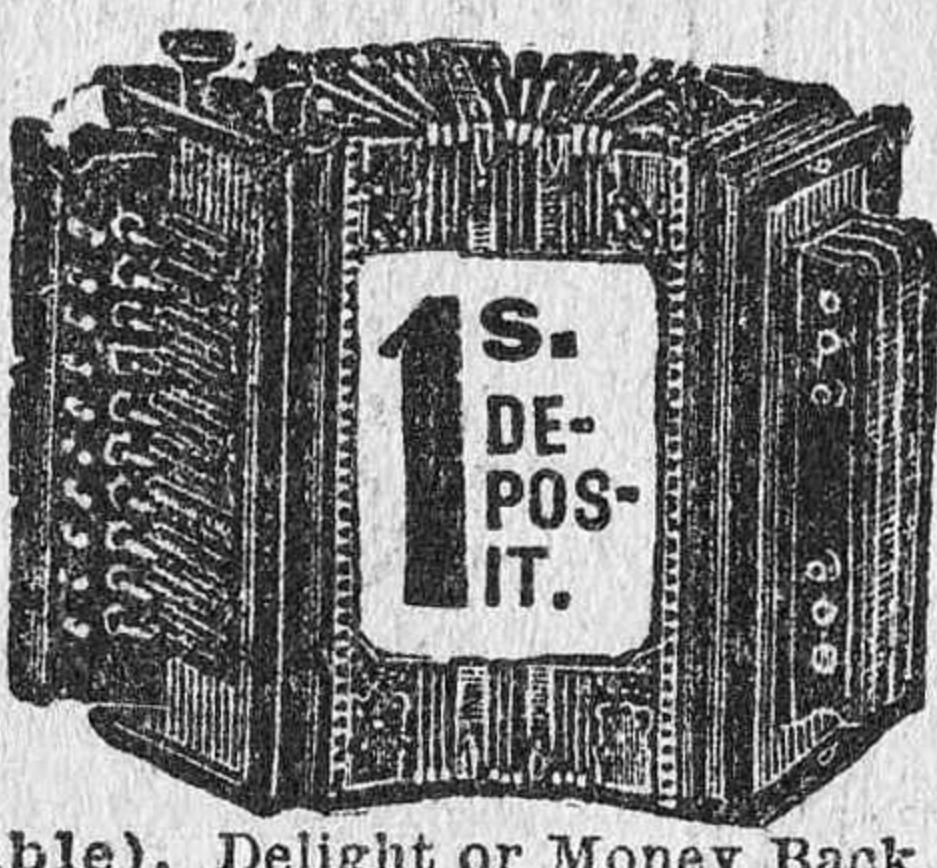
And he sat down cheerfully to tea.

THE END.

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