

"FIDDLER DICK" IS COMING (See Inside).

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EVERY WEDNESDAY—ONE PENNY.

WEEK ENDING AUGUST 7, 1909.

# The Cad of St. Cxton's

by David Goodwin.

**SMYTHE IS FORCED TO APOLOGISE.**

"I humbly apologise—ooh!" gabbled Smythe, "for behaving like a cad and a bounder; and I beg West's pardon for having insulted a better cricketer than myself. Ow! I've made a fool of myself, and I deserve the biggest kick you can give me. Wow!"

**ONE HUNDRED SCOUT OUTFITS OFFERED TO READERS THIS WEEK.**



# The Cliveden Dramatists.

Another of  
**CHARLES HAMILTON'S**  
Laughable School  
Tales.

### The 1st Chapter.

#### Disappointed Sightseers.

“**C**OME on!”  
“What’s up?”  
“There’s going to be a row in No. 4.”  
“Good! This way, you fellows!”  
And a crowd of fellows, with eager looks, followed Gatty and Greene along the Fourth Form passage at Cliveden.  
Pankhurst and Price, the auburn-haired chums of the Fourth, were strolling along the passage with linked arms towards No. 4 Study. They were chatting as they went, unconscious of the fact that a crowd of interested juniors were following eagerly in their wake.  
But Gatty and Greene and Fish and the rest had no doubt about it. There was to be a row, and they meant to see the fun. For were not Panky and Price the deadly rivals of the chums of No. 4 Study—Poindexter, Neville, and Flynn? Which of the two parties could really be considered head of the Fourth Form at Cliveden was a question that had never been satisfactorily answered, the incessant “rows” on the subject leaving it precisely where it was in the beginning. Since Lincoln G. Poindexter had come to Cliveden and formed the “Combine”—himself, Dick Neville, and Micky Flynn—there had been war in the Fourth, but it really seemed as if honours were easy between the Combine and the “Old Firm.” But the alarms and excursions of the rivals of the Fourth afforded much entertainment to the Form; hence the keenness which the juniors showed on the present occasion in following Pankhurst and Price to No. 4.  
Yet the Old Firm did not look hostile to anybody at that moment. They strolled up to the door of No. 4, and Pankhurst tapped on it. The voice of Lincoln G. Poindexter from within bade them enter, and they entered. The door was closed, and the dozen or so juniors in the passage looked at one another rather blankly.  
“Doesn’t look like a row,” said Fish, in a dissatisfied tone.  
“Oh, you wait a bit!” said Greene confidently. “You’ll see Panky and Price come flying out in a tick.”  
They waited.  
But the door of No. 4 Study did not reopen, and the Old Firm did not come out “on their necks,” as the waiting juniors expected. There was no sound of disturbance within No. 4.  
The watchers were puzzled. They stole closer to the door of the study, and then they could hear a murmur of voices from within. But it was only a murmur, and the voices were not raised in wrath.  
Gatty and Greene looked utterly disgusted.  
“My word,” said Gatty, “it’s not a row, after all!”  
“Oh, wait a bit!” said Greene, in a tone of remonstrance. “Give ’em a chance.”  
They gave them a chance for two more minutes, long minutes to the impatient Fourth-Formers. Still there were no sounds of strife, still the study door was not thrown open, still the Old Firm were not thrown out.  
And then several of the juniors, openly declaring their belief that the whole thing was a swindle, walked away in dudgeon. Green, looking considerably exasperated, kicked open the study door and looked in.  
His face grew decidedly wrathful at what he saw.  
Pankhurst and Price were seated at the table, looking anything but warlike. Dick Neville and Lincoln G. Poindexter were vis-à-vis with them. Micky Flynn was pouring out tea, having just risen to lift the teapot from the grate. The tea-party, in the glow of the bright fire, looked very cosy and cheerful. They all looked round at Greene, and Greene snorted.  
“Hallo!” said Poindexter. “What do you want?”  
“Well, you rotters,” said the disgusted Greene. “Here we’ve been waiting five minutes waiting for you to begin—”  
“Begin! What are you raving about?” asked Pankhurst pleasantly.  
“I thought there was going to be a row—”  
“My dear ass—”  
“I guess there is a row,” said Poindexter. “But if you leave off talking it will stop, Greeney. Shut the door after you.”  
“Look here, Puntodger—”  
“Faith, and sure I don’t know why peaceable chaps like us should be supposed to be always rowin’ one another!” said Micky Flynn,

looking up from the task of pouring out the tea, but without ceasing to pour. “Bedad, and I think—Bejabbers, and what’s the matter wid ye, Panky?”  
Pankhurst had leaped to his feet with a yell.  
Micky, as he looked round, had allowed the teapot to sway, and the hot tea was pouring over Pankhurst’s legs instead of into the teacup.  
“Ow—ow! Gre—rooh!”  
“Faith, and I—”  
“Wow—wow! You utter ass! Ow! I’m scalded!”  
Micky Flynn hastily snatched the teapot round from the direction of Pankhurst, and Poindexter yelled furiously as a splash of hot tea caught him in the neck. He jumped up, and the startled Irish boy started back, and the remainder of the tea was poured over Dick Neville’s shoulder.  
What further damage Micky Flynn might have done we cannot say. The scalded juniors grasped him, and bumped him down on the hearthrug, and wrenched the teapot away.  
“You—you dangerous lunatic!” gasped Neville. “Ow! I’m wet!”  
“Faith, and I—”  
“Ha, ha, ha!” roared Greene.  
“I’m scalded!” growled Pankhurst. “If this is the way you receive visitors—”  
“Sure I—”  
“I guess I’m scalded myself!” groaned Poindexter. “Don’t let that dangerous maniac get up. He wants jumping on!”  
“Quite so!” grinned Price. “I’ll jump on him if you like!”  
“Arrah, thin—”  
“Ha, ha, ha!” roared Greene. The doorway was packed with juniors behind Greene, all yelling with laughter. The scene in No. 4 Study seemed to amuse them as much as if the expected row had come off, after all.  
“Faith, and it was all the fault of that omadhaun Greene, makin’ me look round!” gasped Micky Flynn. “And if ye jump on me sure it’s a thick ear I’ll be givin’ ye, Sidney Price!”  
“Ha, ha, ha!”  
“I guess he’s right,” said Poindexter, turning his wrath in a new direction. “Sling those rotters out!”  
The order was obeyed at once.

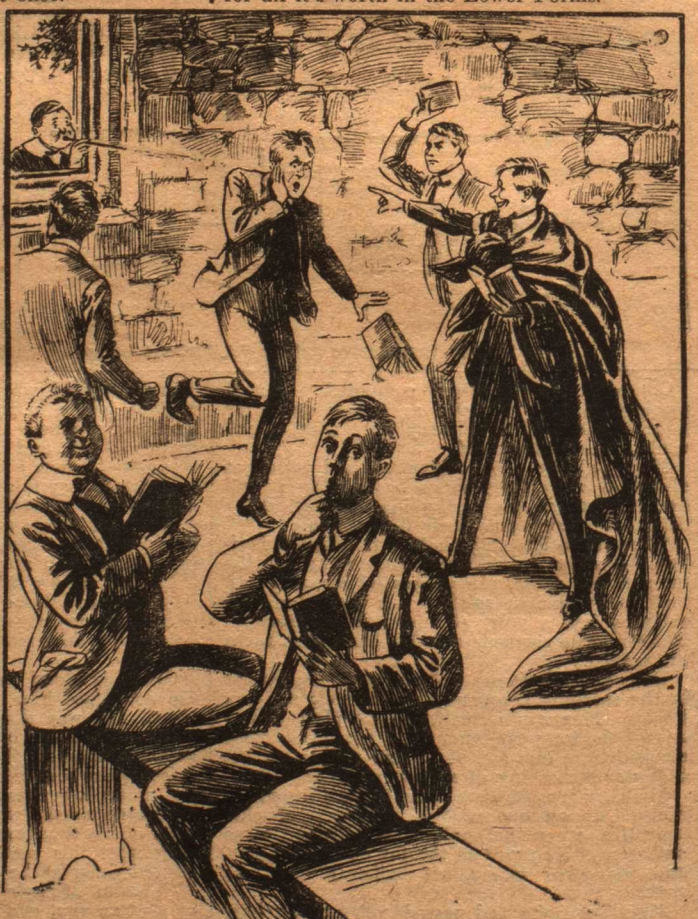
Micky Flynn scrambled to his feet, and the Old Firm rushed in line at the intruders. Whether it was all Greene’s fault or not, Greene had to pay the piper, and relieve the feelings of the scalded juniors.  
Poindexter and Pankhurst grasped him, and Greene ceased to laugh, and roared in another way. But they did not spare him for his roaring. They hurled him at the crowd in the doorway, and Greene and the crowd went reeling into the passage.  
Then the door was slammed and locked.  
In the passage were heard voices in pain and wrath, and then there was a tremendous kicking and thumping at the door, but it was locked, and did not budge. And at the hint of a prefect coming upstairs, the belligerent juniors scuttled away, and the allied rivals of the Fourth were left in peace.

### The 2nd Chapter.

#### Poindexter Knows How to “Raise the Wind.”

“**F**AITH, and it’s dusty I am!”  
grumbled Micky Flynn. “And the good tay’s all wasted!”

“Clumsy ass!” said Neville. “Make some more.”  
“Sure, if ye call me a clumsy ass, Neville—”  
“Well, I do call you a clumsy ass! Look at my jacket—soaked!” And Neville hung his jacket on a chair-back towards the fire, and sat down again at the festive board in his shirt-sleeves.  
“Sure, I’m sorry to interrupt the harmony of the proceedings,” said Micky Flynn, looking round. “But it’s myself that can’t allow any Saxon spalpeen to call a descendant of the kings of Ireland a clumsy ass!”  
“Sit down!”  
“Faith, and I—”  
“I guess we’ll scalp you if you don’t shut up and make the tea!” said Poindexter. “Remember we’ve got visitors present.”  
“Sure, I beg ye’re pardon, Panky—”  
“All right; so long as you shut up!” said Pankhurst cheerfully. “We didn’t come here to listen to you performing a solo on your chin. Cheese it!”  
Micky Flynn looked wrathful for a moment, and inclined to assault the auburn-haired junior on the spot; but he remembered that Pankhurst was a visitor, and made fresh tea instead.  
The slight disturbance in the study did not much affect the cheerfulness of the tea-party. They discussed tea and sardines, ham and eggs and toast, and the cricket prospects for the coming season, and the training schemes for the Boy Scouts of Cliveden, cheerily and amicably. Pankhurst and Price felt, and showed, a considerable curiosity as to why they had been invited to tea in No. 4; but they asked no questions on the subject. They knew that the Combine had something to communicate, but apparently the hosts were leaving it till after tea.  
Tea was over at last; and the juniors, that meal having been disposed of, drew their chairs round the fire and roasted and ate chestnuts. It was then that Lincoln G. Poindexter came to business.  
“I’ve got something to say to you chaps,” he remarked.  
Pankhurst grinned.  
“I didn’t think you had asked us in here solely for the pleasure of our company,” he remarked.  
“Quite so!” said Price.  
“Oh, not at all!” said Poindexter amiably. “Of course, we like to see your cheerful chivvies round the table!”  
“Sure, and the glow of ye’re hair, Panky darling, is as cheerful as a coke fire—”  
“You let my hair alone,” said Pankhurst.  
“Yes, dry up, Micky!” agreed Poindexter. “We’ve got to talk business. Now, look here, you kids, you’ve joined with us in the Boy Scouts of the Fourth Form. Instead of ragging one another, we’ve agreed to form a patrol between us, and make the Boy Scout idea go for all it’s worth in the Lower Forms.”



Poindexter rubbed his ear ruefully. Through one of the open casements came a glimmer of metal, and Cuffy of the Fifth was discovered in the very act of using a pea-shooter. “Look there!” roared Poindexter. “Collar him!”

“Quite so!”  
“Now, my idea,” said Poindexter impressively, “is that we should go right ahead, and get in some really good training, with the idea of joining the Territorials when we leave school. I guess we want to make things hum as well as marching, and so forth.”  
“That costs money,” Pankhurst remarked.  
“Correct. That’s what I’m coming to! I was thinking of raising funds for the Fourth Form Scouts Troop.”  
“Good wheeze—if you can do it!”  
“We can do it.”  
“Blessed if I see how!” said Pankhurst wrinkling his brows. “We don’t want to go independent.”  
“I guess so.”  
“We could have a whip round among ourselves, but—”  
“That wouldn’t be sufficient.”  
“Then how—”  
“That’s what I’m coming to. Why not get a dramatic performance?”  
“A—a—a what?”  
“A dramatic performance,” said Poindexter calmly; “and devote the gate—I mean the box-office receipts—to a fund for the Fourth Form Scouts!”  
“My hat!”  
“I guess it’s a ripping idea! The Fourth Form Dramatic Society ought to be doing some good entertainment. We’re all in it, and we’re jolly clever fellows—some of us.”  
“Faith, and it’s a janias ye are, Poindexter. It’s a ripping Hamlet I can do myself!”  
“Yes,” said Pankhurst seriously. “I can imagine Hamlet with an Irish brogue.”  
“Quite so!” grinned Price. “It would make it a comedy instead of a tragedy, but that’s only a detail.”  
“Ye ginger duffers—”  
“Order!”  
“Sure, Puntodger darling—”  
“Order! Shut up! Ring off! What do you think of the wheeze, Panky?”  
“It’s all right,” said Pankhurst thoughtfully. “Till football starts we shall have lots of time to devote to the drama. There’s no reason why we shouldn’t turn out a really good entertainment, if you chaps will realise that there are fellows in the Fourth who can get miles ahead of you on the boards.”  
“We’ll discuss the parts later,” said Poindexter hurriedly, just in time to prevent some emphatic remarks being made by Neville and Flynn. “If the idea’s agreed on—”  
“That’s agreed on. But I don’t quite see how we shall raise the wind by it. It’s hard enough to get an audience to an amateur performance when it’s admission free. If you charge them for coming in—”  
“They’ll all stay outside,” said Price.  
“Oh, I don’t know! You see, there will be all the talent of the Fourth Form; and I suppose all the juniors will come to see a really ripping representation of Hamlet!”  
“We might let it be known, too, that fellows who don’t come will get scalded the next day,” suggested Neville.  
“Well, that’s one way of getting an audience,” grinned Pankhurst. “That would influence the Lower Forms, but we can’t start scalding the Sixth.”  
“We’ll put it straight to Twynan, and ask him to put it to the seniors for the good of the cause,” said Poindexter. “I was exactly thinking of a regular charge for admission. You see, some of the kids couldn’t afford even a tanner, and we don’t want to bar pennies. On the other hand, some of the seniors could afford a bob or even a half-crown, and we don’t want to stop ’em being generous. My idea was to have a money-collector just inside the door, and every fellow expected to put something into it, according to his means. Then the poor won’t be ashamed to shove in pennies, while the rich fellows will put in what they like.”  
“That’s a good idea. But the point is, how will you raise the wind?”  
“Yes, the play’s the thing,” agreed Poindexter, in the words of Hamlet. “If the thing’s settled, we may as well decide on the play now. Of course, we must consider the dignity of the Fourth Form Dramatic Society.”  
“Of course.”  
“So I don’t see how we can give anything lower than Shakespeare. What do you fellows say to ‘Hamlet’?”  
“Faith, and I can do Hamlet—”  
“Agreed!” said Pankhurst. “You can do Hamlet—”  
“I was just thinking,” said Price, “that Hamlet’s part would suit me down to the ground.”  
“Oh, come off!” exclaimed Neville. “If you’ve got any eye to good effect, you must see that I—”  
“I guess I had marked down Hamlet for myself,” grinned Lincoln G. Poindexter. “As originator of the idea!”  
“Oh, that’s rot, of course! It ought to be given to the best actor,” said Pankhurst.  
“Quite so; so it comes to—”  
“Me bejabbers!”  
“Now, look here—”  
“Ring off! I tell you—”  
“Let me point out—”  
“Faith, and I—”  
“I guess there’s too many Hamlets,” said Poindexter; “‘Hamlet’ goes. What do you say to ‘Julius Cæsar’?”  
“Well, yes,” said Pankhurst thoughtfully.

can take the part of Brutus quite as well as that of Hamlet."

"Faith, if you have Brutus, I'll have Julius Caesar!"

"Cassius is mine!" said Dick Neville.

"Great snakes, and what do I take?"

"Oh, you can be stage-manager, Punt-dodger!"

"I'm jolly well going to be Brutus or Caesar!"

"You can be the ghost of Caesar if you like, Puntodger darling!" said Price. "We shall have to have a Portia—we can't make Brutus a bachelor, even in an amateur performance."

"If you think I'm going to play a giddy girl's part—"

"Portia wasn't a giddy girl. She was a solemn Roman matron."

"Ha, ha! Look here, Puntodger; you can't stage-manage and be one of the leading characters, too! You can be a conspirator!"

"Mark Antony's mine, then!" said Puntodger. "I can stage-manage and act as well. I can be a giddy conspirator, or Cinna the poet, or anybody he likes. As it happens, I have studied Mark Antony's part, and know it pretty well. I shall only have to polish up the lines a bit. I'll give you the oration now—"

"No, jolly well won't!" said Pankhurst. "I'll give you the speech after the assassination as a sample of Brutus—"

"Rats! We don't want any free samples now! We'd better make up a list of the fellows we want to take the characters, and get them to learn up the parts, and then fix a rehearsal."

"Quite so."

And the leading parts of the drama having been assigned to the five juniors themselves, as was only just, they proceeded to make a list of the smaller parts, and the fellows most suited to fill them, and then the meeting in No. 4 Study broke up, and the Fourth Form Amateur Dramatic Society proceeded to take the rest of the Form into their confidence on the subject.

### The 3rd Chapter. The Dramatists.

On the few occasions when the Combine and the Old Firm joined forces they had no difficulty in carrying the rest of the Fourth Form at Cliveden with them. The Boy Scouts scheme had caught on, and the allies at the head of it; and now the idea of a dramatic representation to raise funds for the troop became popular as soon as it was mooted.

There was no lack of histrionic talent in the Fourth Form, to judge by the offers the committee received.

The number of fellows who could play parts of Mark Antony was amazing. Fellows would stop Puntodger in the passage, and repeat the famous oration at him, to show him that they were just the chaps he needed.

Puntodger, as stage-manager and president of the dramatic society, had plenty of work on his hands, and heaps of worry on his mind; and perhaps the hardest task of all was to get the fellows to listen to—the remorseless reciters who would lay him in the most unexpected places.

Otherwise, all seemed to be going well for the Cliveden dramatists.

Mr. Lanyon, the master of the Fourth, obtained permission for them to use No. 3 Room for the representation on a certain evening; and Puntodger had fixed the date over a week ago in order to allow time for rehearsals.

It did not occur to the enthusiastic young dramatists that a week might not be enough.

The chief difficulty was to persuade the boys that the small parts were just suited to them, and that there couldn't be a dozen or fifteen or sixteen Mark Antonys in a single play.

Then there was a slight difficulty about the room of the stage. The room was a fair size, and had a raised dais that served very well for a stage; but there was hardly room for a company. Besides, if nearly all the Form were on the stage, where was the audience to sit?

Puntodger sternly limited the number of spectators. King, the fattest boy in the school, was assigned the parts of all the Romans of Rome—he was the Crowd. And Puntodger assigned the part of the Roman who leaves something to the imagination of the audience.

Micky Flynn suggested, in a humorous way, leaving the whole performance to the trouble of the audience, which would save the trouble of rehearsing; but he was immediately put upon.

Then there was the question of costume. The dramatic society had a certain quantity of theatrical properties, and, with altering, many of them could be made to do. Then others could be hired at the costumier's in Clivebank. "So long as a chap wears a toga," Puntodger would be made out of a sheet with a pair of trousers and a needle and cotton.

"We're getting on swimmingly," Puntodger said to his chums a day or two later. "I've got all the duffers to take their parts, and not ask for more, at last. 'It's amazing!' agreed Neville. 'They think I can take parts which would have made

Irving grow pale. By the way, I'm getting on splendidly with Cassius."

"Faith, and ye're right!" agreed Micky Flynn. "The cheek of them is astonishing. Why, young Trimble actually offered to take Julius Caesar off my hands! He couldn't get within miles of the part. It takes a jolly clever fellow to play Julius Caesar. I'm getting on rippingly!"

And Micky, to show how rippingly he was getting on, started with:

"The ides of March are come—"

And Puntodger and Neville fled.

"Curious how that chap will bore one with going over his part," said Neville. "I say, Punt, what do you think of this for Cassius, in the tent scene?"

"I denied you not, He was a fool that brought my answer back!"

Hallo, where are you, Puntodger?"

But Puntodger was gone.

It was a curious circumstance that although every member of the cast was willing to recite to any extent, he never had any time to spare to listen to another fellow "spouting." But this, we believe, is not at all unusual in amateur dramatic societies.

One thing was certain. The play had taken firm hold of the juniors' minds; and for some days they lived, thought, spoke, and breathed Shakespeare.

The histrionic turn of their minds cropped up in curious ways.

When Mr. Lanyon asked Pankhurst why he was late in class one morning, Pankhurst absent-mindedly replied that it was not that he loved Caesar less, but that he loved Rome more. An answer which earned him fifty lines at once from the astounded Form-master.

And Puntodger, being sent on a message to the Head, conning his part over as he went along, quite forgot his message when he reached the Head's study; and when he was

"We're all here, except a few citizens," said Dick Neville. "What a row they're making at cricket!"

"There's a beast looking in at the window!" said Pankhurst.

"I guess that doesn't matter. It'll improve his mind. Now, look at your parts; and then spout from memory when your turn comes. I'm prompter on this occasion; but you won't always have me to help you, so do your best."

"Quite so!"

"Faith, and I—"

"And if you're going to do Julius Caesar, Micky, drop that unearthly Tipperary accent. Caesar with a brogue would be rotten!"

"Look here, Puntodger—"

"Order! Now, then, Brutus—"

"Right-o!" said Pankhurst:

"What means this shouting? I do fear the people Choose Caesar for their king!"

"Go ahead, Cassius!"

"Ay, do you fear it?"

said Dick Neville.

"Then I must think you would not have it so?"

"I would not, Cassius, yet I love him!"

"Ow!"

"You utter ass!" said Puntodger. "Where did you get that line from? It doesn't make sense."

"Ow!"

"If you're going to mew like a cat, Pankhurst—"

"Something stung me!" howled Pankhurst.

"It stung me on the mouth."

"Oh, rats! Get on with the washing!"

Pankhurst glared; but he rubbed his mouth, and got on with the washing.

The scene progressed, and, excepting for the unfortunate circumstances that most of the actors forgot most of their lines, all went very



As Brutus and Julius Caesar staggered on the stage, fighting desperately, and Mark Antony was bonneted by the scenes, the audience jumped up, convulsed with merriment. In a few seconds the actors were all fighting, amid yells from the audience that rang through Cliveden.

asked why he had come, answered that he came to bury Caesar, not to praise him.

The first rehearsal had been fixed for Saturday afternoon, in the lower apartment of the old tower, a spot which the amateur dramatic society expected to have all to themselves while the other fellows were on the cricket field.

And Puntodger, as general manager, responsible for the production, looked forward to the rehearsal with a certain amount of uneasiness.

### The 4th Chapter. The First Rehearsal.

COLIN G. POINDEXTER looked round the apartment. It was on the ground floor of the old tower, and was spacious enough. The windowless casements gave views of the playing-fields, and the Fifth Form fellows could be seen playing cricket; and their shouts, and the merry click of bat and ball came clearly to the ears of the amateur dramatic society.

But the Cliveden dramatists were not thinking of cricket now. They had their parts in their hands, and were looking properly solemn.

The play had, of course, been mercilessly cut for representation. Puntodger had charge of that department, and he had not spared the blue pencil. The juniors were to turn out the whole performance in a couple of hours, and there might be delays. Unimportant scenes had been taken out bodily. Long speeches had been cut down to two or three lines—a step heartily concurred in by everybody but the fellow who was to speak the lines. The Puntodger version of the play might have made the Bard of Avon weep if he had seen it. But Puntodger was a businesslike fellow. What he gave, he wanted to be a success, and it was no use giving too much.

well. With a celerity that would have amazed a professional company, the actors got into the heart of the play, owing to the stage-manager's extensive cuts.

Greene, in a wonderful robe, took the part of Portia, and he was pronouncing that lady's lines when he gave a sudden jump, and broke off.

"Ow!"

"You, now!" said Puntodger. "What are you owing for?"

"Something stung me!"

"Rats!"

"It wasn't rats—it felt like wasps!"

"Bosh! Why—Ow! Ow!"

Greene grinned.

"Ha, ha! You've got it now!"

Puntodger rubbed his ear ruefully. He looked round in wrath.

Through one of the open casements came a glimmer of metal, and Cuffy of the Fifth was discovered in the very act of using a pea-shooter.

"Look there!" roared Puntodger.

"The—the beast!"

"Collar him!"

Some of the dramatists made a rush to the casement, some to the door. But before they could reach him Cuffy had fled, laughing so loudly that he could hardly run.

The disappointed juniors returned wrathfully to the rehearsal.

"Rotters!" said Neville. "They don't understand the drama. Let's get on!"

"Here they come again!"

A dozen Fifth-Formers, as well as a crowd of fags belonging to the Lower Forms, blocked the windows as the rehearsal went on. But there was no more pea-shooting, and the dramatists endured the staring and grinning as well as they could.

The Cliveden fellows did not take the drama as seriously as they ought to have done. Perhaps they did not consider that the Fourth

Form actors were quite up to the necessary form for Shakespeare.

At all events, they persisted in regarding Julius Caesar, as rendered by Poindexter and Co., rather in the light of a comedy than of a tragedy.

When Poindexter declaimed, with great force, the oration of Mark Antony, and told the awe-struck company that if they had tears they must prepare to shed them now, the lookers on from without only shed a mighty gust of laughter.

In the face of want of appreciation like this, it showed a great determination on the part of the amateurs that they stuck it out.

But they did stick it out. They went through the rehearsal to the bitter end, and before the finish came they were left in peace. The spectators, with aching ribs, had retired chuckling over the rehearsal, and the players finished to no sound but their own voices. Lincoln G. Poindexter professed himself quite satisfied.

"It's ripping for a first rehearsal!" he declared. "Of course, some of you forgot your lines, but I guess that was only to be expected. You'll polish 'em up before Wednesday."

"Yes, rather!"

"And faith, ye'll polish ye're own, won't ye, Puntodger, darling? They need it."

"Don't you interrupt your stage-manager, Micky Flynn!"

"Sure, and I—"

"Order! The worst parts," went on Poindexter thoughtfully, "are Brutus and Casca." Brutus and Casca—otherwise Pankhurst and Price—glared at their candid stage-manager.

"Blessed if I think so!" said Pankhurst. "I think—"

"I guess I wasn't asking you what you think!"

"I'll tell you without being asked!" said Pankhurst heatedly. "In my opinion, Mark Antony was the rottenest we've heard, and Price will bear me out."

"Quite so!" said Price.

"You'll want bearing out on an ambulance if you don't shut up, Panky!"

"Rats! Of all the Chicago cheek—"

"Besides, you weren't quite so rotten as Casca!"

"I think I did Casca pretty well," said Price. "It was better than anything you tinned-beef frauds did, anyway!"

"Look here, we don't want any recriminations!"

"Don't you begin 'em, then!"

"I was giving my verdict as stage-manager and president."

"And I was dissenting from that verdict as a sensible person and a chap who knows what's what."

"Look here, Panky—"

"Look here, Puntodger—"

"Hold on!" exclaimed Dick Neville. "Keep the fighting for the last act. Shut up!"

"I guess you can't tell your stage-manager to shut up, Dick!"

"Oh, rats! Don't row! Let's get along to the tuckshop, and have tea. It's my treat."

Neville's suggestion was like oil poured on the troubled waters. It was adopted without a dissentient voice, and the amateur dramatic company adjourned.

### The 5th Chapter. The Programme.

ALTHOUGH the amateur dramatists had come very near to a battle that was not on the programme, they were pretty well satisfied upon the whole with the first rehearsal. They worked away at their parts, getting letter-perfect, more or less, and studying gesture and delivery before looking-glasses.

There were rifts in the lute between the Combine and the Old Firm. At times, when excitement ran high, they forgot that they were allies, and dropped into old habits. Old habits were not easily thrown aside; but with some difficulty, actual fisticuffs were avoided, and in calmer moments the juniors worked together amicably for the good of the cause.

And the difficulties vanished one by one under their determined onslaughts. The costumes were got ready, and, whether they resembled the costumes worn by ancient Romans or not, they were good enough for the stage, Poindexter said. Other details were seen to, and satisfactorily settled.

The Fifth Form ceased to rag the rehearsals, and the Lower Form fags were systematically thumped into treating the Fourth Form dramatists with respect.

Trevelyan, the captain of Cliveden, promised to be present at the performance, and his presence, besides giving the show a tone, was certain to bring other Sixth-Formers there; and where the Sixth went the Fifth and the Shell were pretty certain to follow.

A large audience meant success to the "wheeze," whatever the acting was like. That was where the cute American junior scored.

"I guess we shall rope in the kopecks," said Poindexter, in his curious American language, with a chuckle. "The fellows will pony up before they see the play. We're going to give them a really good performance; but, whether they like it or not, we rake in the shekels."

"Yes, rather!" said Dick Neville. "And the Boy Scouts troop will have a lot to thank the Cliveden Dramatic Society for."

"Correct!"

"Faith, and it's right ye are; but I'm doubtful about the Old Firm," said Micky Flynn. "I'm rather doubtful about you fellows, but about them I'm anxious. They

