

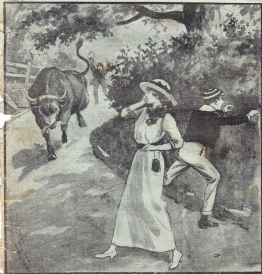
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Monday

Wednesday



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A splendid, new, long, complete School Tale, dealing with the adventures of TOM HARRY & CO. of St. Jim's.

BY MARTIN CLIFFORD.

CHAPTER I.

Arthur Augustus Receives a Letter.

HENRY LUMLEY LUMLEY, of the Fourth Form at St. Jim's, walked across the old quadrangle in the bright morning sunlight. It was nearly dawn-time, and groups of school boys gathered in all parts of the quadrangle, talking and waving their arms, and shouting their heads off. "Here's Blake & Co., the three of 'em! No, & have wrapped an umbrella—aggravation!"

"I say, 'em three, I want to talk to 'em privately," said Lumley-Lumley, rather angrily.

Blake & Co. turned to the new comers.

"Right," exclaimed Jack Blake promptly. "Five o'clock sharp! How about you? Is your pocketing in top?"

"I want speaking privately," he said. "I'm just wonderin' if any of you chaps can lend me half-a-crown, till to-morrow."

"No," said Blake thoughtfully. "There's no harm in that, but I can't lend it there, cheap!"

"No harm at all!"

"You can't say that with you in the heat, old chap!"

"What, privately?" "Eh, you wanted 'em all day if you say so!"

"Eh, what?" shouted Arthur Augustus Harry, the boy of the school House. "Puzz de 's worry, Lumley-Lumley, what say. You got it pocketed slowly as you could, in your pocket, Lumley-Lumley, private!"

"Oh, come off it!" he cried again. "Don't play the ex, you know. I give it a certain reason. In plain language, you see how the half-a-crown—"

"Ah, now you're talking!" said Blake. "Well, I won't see anything, but perhaps that'll give you an inkling of the state of my pocket!"

And Blake proceeded to turn his pockets inside out. His change-old shillings, and Lumley-Lumley regarded them with a wistful eye.

"You've all got 'em, then?" he asked.

"Eh, what?"

"I'm in the middle!"

"No! I'm in the middle!"

"Well, you've a nice set of change to rely on?" said Lumley-Lumley.

"I'm surprised at you, Harry, at least, for giving your hands to 'em. You shouldn't spend so much on your pocket!"

"You ought not," exclaimed Arthur Augustus Harry.

"I'm not sure that I'm very careful indeed, but I'm not sure that I'm not a bit of a chaps' chaps!"

"Oh, but you ought to be very, very careful indeed," said Lumley-Lumley. "Well, I don't profess to be a chaps' chaps, but you, Harry?"

"Well, Lumley-Lumley."

"I want to know who you're best up," said Blake.

"What's happened to the family pattern, Lumley-Lumley?"

"Ah, my pocket is Blake's pocket!" he said gravely.

"You are better than I am," said Lumley-Lumley. "I was just about to tell Lumley that he is a woman for selling me a chaps' chaps."

"That's all right, Harry?" interrupted Lumley-Lumley really.

"There's no need to waste time, so suppose we take it for granted that you've given me a talking to, and I'm always found a fearful chaps' chaps? That'll save time and trouble, won't it?"

"Eh, is it?"

"Eh, yes, you shall change!" gasped Arthur Augustus Harry.

Next Wednesday

"FRIENDS DIVIDED!" AND "THE CORINTHIAN."

indulgently. "We will do nothing of the kind, Lantry. I will only continue to be called a tailor's chimney."

"Well, if you refuse to be called one, what's all the fuss about?" asked Blake. "You're refused, and there's an end of the matter."

"But how, that's quite your" exclaimed D'Arcy, walking down. "As I have refused to be called a tailor's chimney—"

"But you've already been called it, Guss?" chorused Blake.

"I have a deal to say to Lantry's brother's remarks," said Arthur Augustine with. "I only condemn the conversation, dear boys; the matter is ended."

The fathers chuckled.

"Thank goodness," said Blake, with a grin. "Now, Lantry, you see, what's the meaning of your being heard up? I thought you were riding to watch."

"Well, I'm always sure, anyhow," said Lantry-Lantry.

"I was waiting for a horse to get out, on a matter of fact; but I wanted a new hat to be going on with."

"Surely, old man, but we can't do anything to alleviate the embarrassment."

"My hat! They're good words, anyway!" said Lantry-Lantry indignantly.

"I'll bet you're out of a giddy head!" said Horrie, with a sneer.

"He's named me, as a matter of fact, so I know!" Blake retorted.

"We're waiting for the postman," he said hastily. "He'll be coming along presently."

"But how, that's to be, dear boys?"

Arthur Augustine D'Arcy hurried across to the gates, and the other fathers quickly followed. Hagg, the village postman, had just appeared, and he was soon surrounded by the waiting fathers.

"Letter for me, Hagg?"

"Nothing for me?"

"Surely thank it one for me, Hagg, dear boy?"

"Steady on, young gentleman!" ejaculated Hagg, looking awfully.

"You there's one for you, Master D'Arcy, and one for Master Hagg, and one for Master Hagg, and one for Master Lantry-Lantry."

"Oh, good!" said Lantry-Lantry.

"Thank it one, Hagg?"

The letters were handed over, and then Hagg trotted away to the behind house to deliver other letters. The Fourth Farm postman, meanwhile, opened their letters with a considerable amount of interest.

"My hat, this is all right, you shape?"

"Certainly, Blake!" "There's a postcard order here for a new hat?"

"Good!" said Horrie and Digby.

"I can lend you a few bob now, Lantry—"

Lantry-Lantry looked up from his letter.

"Thanks," he said, "but I'm in funds now, my son. I've got a giddy horse here. The post's turned up traps in the nick of time."

"A new hat?" said Blake.

"My hat, that's taken the skin out of my postman's back. We mightn't be able to do it in the nick of time. If you haven't got a five in that lot of yours we'll both go in all!"

And then Arthur looked up attentively.

"I can lend you fifteen now, dear boy?" he asked.

"Thank it one, Blake." "Hand over the five for us to look at."

"I can lend you a few bob now, Lantry—"

"But you've just got a letter," said Blake.

"The postman to tell me that there isn't a restriction in it, at the post office?"

"I'm sorry about the matter, my son."

"The letter isn't from my governess, Blake," he explained.

"What's in them, then?" asked Horrie.

"It's from Cousin Ethel, dear boy. Pray be quiet, and let me finish reading it."

"You wish to be quiet?"

"My only wish, that's good!" said Blake.

The question of the five was forgotten, and the father read out D'Arcy for information. His cousin, Ethel Cleveland, was very popular at St. John's, and the father and both Horrie were always glad to see her when she visited the old school.

"Is the matter here?" asked Horrie again.

"Happy up and tell us, Guss?" said Horrie.

"Pray don't be afraid, Horrie!" exclaimed D'Arcy.

"I don't think we'll be the least before I could tell you what was in it. Your cousin Ethel is coming to St. John's on the 15th."

"When will she be here?"

"This afternoon, dear boys. She will arrive by the train which reaches W. Junction at three o'clock."

"It's a delightful day, afternoon, so it'll be all over," said Blake, with satisfaction.

"I've no more to say to you, dear boys."

"The postman is, what shall we do with her?" said Jack Blake.

"I've no more to say to you, dear boys."

"I'll be in the nick of time."

"I'll be in the nick of time."

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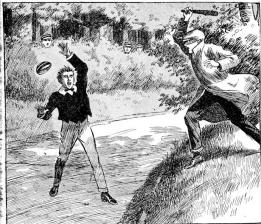
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(See column 2, page 28 of this issue)



As the masked figure suddenly broke from the bridge with upraised weapons, a terrified group, except the janitor's wife, ran a second or three yards from the crowd, and fled: "Don't follow!" exclaimed Jack Blake, breathlessly. (See Page 4.)

And Arthur Augustus gave it up.

"After dinner Blake & Co. were among the first out in the snow. The sun was still shining brilliantly, and there was every prospect of a glorious afternoon."

"Early there'll be a picnic on this afternoon," said Blake, "and I would have made no objection whatever, had I not heard of Mr. D'Arcy. I could do better, even if a rain-storm had been foreseen, as I should have had to postpone it completely, however, we have the afternoon to ourselves."

"Well, I suppose you go and not yourself up, Grace," said Herbert. "If you don't hurry up you'll keep us all waiting when it's time to start."

"Hurry she'll be about, Herbert!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus. "It isn't two yet, and there is no necessity to start until then."

"Well, you'll take an hour adjusting your giddy necktie," said Blake. "Hurry off!"

"Forgive me my night, Blake. This occasion is a special one, and I must take particular care with it."

"But Mr. D'Arcy left his change and entered the Belmont House. When, twenty minutes later, they joined him on the driveway, they discovered that he was still undecided as to which party was to be invited, and a worried expression was upon his agitated face."

"Oh dear, dear boy, I'm in a wretched state of indecision!" he said. "Pray advise me what to do." Blake, who was busily smoking,

"Oh, any old thing!" said Blake.

"Whichever you like!"

"Why, the dancing hall's started dancing yet?" said Herbert breathlessly. "I've got an idea! Let's rather let D'Arcy's wife come, then he'll be bound to wear it. There's no one else but her, and she'll do it."

"You mean Mr. D'Arcy?" exclaimed Herbert indignantly. "I'd better to ask your opinion on the matter. I will advise her to go."

"Well, look sharp about it!"

Blake & Co. recommenced dancing. Meanwhile Landon-Lundy was lounging under the old elm in the park. Figgins, the ever-ready, long-legged clerk of the New House, arrived on his own, and reported the use of Landon-Lundy's pocket-knife.

"How was your evening?" remarked Landon-Lundy cheerily.

"No. What?" asked Figgins, holding up as he sharpened his pen.

"Everybody you know."

"You mean Herbert, then. I know lots of people. How the dancing was I don't know. Is it your party?"

"No," said Landon-Lundy. "D'Arcy's cousin—Edith Cleveland."

Figgins stopped his pen, and looked up quickly.

"Oh, nothing!" he exclaimed loudly.

"Oh!"

"I-I mean, will he be in our Cousin Ethel's apartment?" said Figgins loudly. "She hasn't been in St. Jim's for a bit, has she?"

"That's what it is coming by?" he added carelessly.

"Thanky," replied Lumsley-Lumsley. "Blake & Co. and one or two other chaps are going to meet her at the station."

"Oh!" said Figgins. "How's your hair, Lumsley. Thanks for the cut of it."

"You've not lately sharpened your glady pencil yet?" he said, as Figgins turned away. "You've left it on the ground here."

"That's all right!" shouted Figgins.

He hurried across the road, so fast, as his long legs would carry him, leaving Lumsley-Lumsley looking after him in some surprise. Figgins dashed up the stairs at the New House, and found him in the study in shared with Kerr and Fatty Wynn.

"Lays, you there?" he ejaculated.

"Well, what do you say?" asked Kerr, looking up from a book.

"I've just heard some news!" said Figgins breathlessly.

"What, a kangaroo race for somebody?" asked Fatty Wynn, without getting up.

"No, nothing like that," said Figgins, shaking the school House benches for the third time.

"Figgins glared at the Island of the New House.

"You looked!" he exclaimed. "You can't think of anything else except grass? You live for grass?"

"Well, I'd like to see the chap who lives without grass!" growled Fatty Wynn. "Even those professional-looking chaps have to feed themselves. My hat! What a life!" he added, with a shiver.

"Kerridge's a good man, Kerr."

"You'd do well to thank him for it!" roared Figgins.

"Well, you couldn't tell us that," said Figgins. "We can see it for ourselves."

"Look here—"

"Oh, my eye! Cousin Ethel's coming this afternoon."

"Oh, my eye!"

Fatty Wynn and Kerr were interested at once. Nearly all the pupils at St. Jim's, liked D'Arcy's cousin very much, and were always pleased when she paid a visit to the old school.

"She's coming by the three-thirty train," went on Figgins quickly. "I've just heard a letter Lumsley-Lumsley. He'll like the check of these things. No, I refuse not to tell us?"

"Blake & Co. are going down to meet her," said the long-legged child. "I've got to leave up in the dormitory and get changed. We can go down to the village, and wait at the station the same time as Blake & Co."

"Good egg!" said Fatty Wynn. "I'm in luck just now, and if we go a little early we can stop at the bookshop."

"Oh, how the bookshop!"

"Come on," said Figgins loudly.

"The 'O's' found him out of the study, and presently they were hurrying into their Sunday clothes. On such an occasion as this it would have been bad form to wear every-day clothes, but Stone and Lumsley were exempt. As long they had finished, and Blake & Co. certainly were not exempt.

"Ready!" asked Kerr.

"All right, then?"

They descended to the hall, and Figgins glanced at his watch. The time was just three o'clock, so they would be able to walk to the station comfortably. They slipped into the quadrangle with a certain amount of swagger.

"I wonder if these bookies have gone yet?" remarked Kerr.

"It's hardly time— By Jove, here they are!" said Figgins, glancing across at the School House steps. "Let's start, then, at the gate, and walk down to the station with 'em."

"That might object," suggested Fatty Wynn doubtfully.

"What?"

"I don't want my Sunday topers looked in."

"Don't be an ass!" said Figgins calmly. "Do you think they are going to have a scrap with us in those tops? We're in safe as eggs."

"Oh, all right."

And Blake & Co. marched across the quadrangle to the gates. Blake & Co. and the Terrible Three met them just as they were passing and took Rylands Lane. The School House gates were so well guarded by Figgins & Co.—Arthur Lumsley & Stone, indeed, was a very strict and conscientious.

From the crowd of his gathering together to the loss of his parliamentary speech, he was reprehensible.

THE BOYS' FRIEND—No. 226.

"Hello! What are you chaps doing?" asked Blake carelessly.

"Oh, just going for a stroll," said Figgins carelessly.

"You're tipped up like two pins!" said Manly Leather.

"Do you usually go for strolls disguised as school dismissed? What's the game?" he asked Manly.

"Who told it was Sunday?" growled Fatty Wynn.

"Nobody," he said.

"Oh," said Manly Leather. "You're dressed in your best, if you mean to go, but we're going to meet somebody at the station."

"But Jove, Figgins, is that really true?"

"Honest bright?"

"How very respectable!" exclaimed D'Arcy. "You're going to meet somebody at the station, too?"

"No, certainly!" said Kerr.

"You'd better send the New House janitor something."

"What's he going to get?" he inquired.

"Oh, a bottle of soap," said Figgins carelessly.

"Look here, you New House wipers," said Manly, with some sarcasm. "I believe I know what you're up to. You're afraid that Cousin Ethel is coming, and are going to the station to meet her?"

"But Jove!"

CHAPTER 5.

Manly's Unaccountable Act.

THE OTHER AUGUSTUS FAIRY jumped his former associate into his van, and surveyed Figgins & Co. with considerable wrath.

"Is that you, Figgins?" he asked severely. "Are you really going to the station to meet Cousin Ethel?"

"Figgins & Co. grinned.

"You've got your hat on!" said the New House child.

"You've got your eyes on me!" said Manly.

"You're going to get a good scolding!"

"Well, we're going to meet her, my son."

"Really, Figgins, I'd like to see you should improve!" said Arthur Augustus Wynn. "After all, you would have met Cousin Ethel when she arrived here."

"That won't be good enough, Manly," said Figgins loudly. "You're going to meet her, and you'll be in it, Jove!"

"Oh, my eye!" exclaimed Manly severely.

"Oh, you can't do with us, if you like!" said Kerr, with an air of contempt.

The School House janitor gasped.

"Oh, with you?" ejaculated Blake. "My hat, what the deuce do you think you are?"

"It's no business to say!" growled Kerr.

"If you believe us, my fellow," exclaimed Manly, "you'd better get on your feet."

"Come, washed!"

Figgins looked at his watch.

"It's ten past three," he said calmly. "If we wait much longer, then, Cousin Ethel won't have anybody to meet her at all."

"My hat!"

"So I've got to go down together!" went on Figgins.

"If you try to prevent or going with you, I'll only meet Jove," said Manly doubtfully.

"Good provision!" ejaculated D'Arcy, horrified.

The School House janitor looked at his watch.

"Manly, Stone, and Blake, 'are they to come?'"

"Manly, Stone, and Blake, 'are they to come?'" said Arthur Augustus Wynn. "I don't know, but you can't see Manly."

"I don't know, but I would have preferred them to ask my parents, before they'd themselves go."

"We hadn't time to ask parents!" growled Figgins.

"Come on, then, you bookies!"

And the janitor made their way to Rylands Lane without further delay. The School House and New House were investigating what was going on, and Manly, Kerr, and Stone, on an occasion such as this, inquiries were allowed to slumber.

They arrived at the station, and made inquiries.

"It's all right, don't you?" said D'Arcy. "The train will not come in the next half-hour. Pardon the time, we wouldn't have believed quite so much. I feel quite cheap, my fellow."

"That's just you, if you like, Manly," said Figgins politely.

"Don't you dare to be your usual kind of an ass, you bookies!" said Arthur Augustus Wynn. "The train will be here presently, and—"

"There goes the signal," interrupted D'Arcy. "That's the whistle!"

"Good!"

The janitor walked impatiently for the train to arrive, reflected in a group on the north platform. As long a whistle in the distance told of the train's near proximity, and a

moment later it steamed into the station, and jerked to a standstill.

Arthur Angustus D'Arcy surveyed the carriage anxiously.

"No, I'm afraid," said he, "it's not the right one."

"It's very queer," said Jerry, "think that it, infer to that beautiful Figgins?"

"Like her look?" queried Blake.

The ladies hurried up the platform, where Figgins & Co. had already formed a little circle round Cousin Ethel. In a moment they were all laughing and hurrying about linked with pleasure at the remark of the "young" gentleman.

"I'm glad to see you again, dear old man, girl!"

cried Cousin Ethel, regarding him with gratitude and bewilderment.

"It's really a miracle to see you down here for a day."

"Really?" asked Figgins loudly.

"Yes, Ethel said."

"It's nice to see you again," she said, "and I certainly didn't expect to have you so soon. But how do you know you got off the platform, Arthur?"

"But Jerry, you said you'd bring me home?"

Arthur Angustus gratefully led the way out of the station, and in the end he turned, and was surrounded before he could get to the carriage, and his own carriage was driven back.

The rest of the afternoon finished with indignation.

After all, Ethel was his cousin, and he had the most right to be so for her sake. At the present moment Figgins was on her right, and Manservant on her left, both of them engaged in animated conversation.

"But Jerry?" ejaculated D'Arcy indignantly. "The cheery fellow?"

"He's a good fellow, but I don't know you, and they would not help entering the green glasses which he directed towards Figgins."

"What's the matter, Jerry?" inquired D'Arcy.

"I consider that it is really impossible of Figgins to push himself forward," replied D'Arcy severely.

"It is my place to be for Cousin Ethel's sake."

"But you can't be both sides at once," declared D'Arcy.

"I'm sure I'm able, Leveah!"

Manservant is perfectly willing to remain by her side, but I really must have upon Figgins watching in my front."

"The rest," said D'Arcy.

But D'Arcy took no notice of the gentleman's remark. He looked his way through his glasses, and stopped at Figgins's elbow, and then turned round and looked at Cousin Ethel, but observed the action Figgins looked round, and then grinned.

"Hello, Jerry?" he said gradually. "I thought you were lost."

"I'm sure you look a moment, dear boy," said D'Arcy, "if you'll say you know him, Ethel?" he asked, to the girl behind him.

"Certainly," said Cousin Ethel readily.

Figgins bowed, but there was no hope for it. He left Cousin Ethel's side, and stepped behind D'Arcy. The New House chief and Arthur Angustus with a certain amount of noise.

"Now, you suppose cheap, what's the matter?" he demanded.

"A great deal to be made," replied D'Arcy. "I consider that it is a New House business, you are talking a system of it in walking by Cousin Ethel's side. As a matter of fact, it is my duty."

"You may be happy, Jerry?" said Figgins severely.

"Indeed I'm not, because the reason for it is really because I'm sure you don't wish me carrying Cousin Ethel to St. Ann's?" He stopped at you, Jerry! You're as bad as I am."

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"I'm not, Jerry?"

"I'm not, Jerry?"



Manservant looked round again. The rest of the journey was now over a hundred yards behind, and by D'Arcy's faster movements it was obvious that the disagreement was by no means at an end. But Manservant didn't mind. Cousin Ethel was safe for the moment, and he felt obliged to do so.

They started along the road quietly, walking slowly, in order not to get on far ahead. This part of the village was very quiet, the road on either side being bordered by little cottages, with neat front gardens.

"Everything looks beautifully fresh," Cousin Ethel remarked. "Oh, are those flowers over there, aren't they lovely?"

"Yes, indeed, and looked about her in some surprise. Suddenly a series of shouts had made themselves heard, and apparently they proceeded for a small time which joined the road a few yards further on.

"What are the children in that?" said Manservant, in a puzzled voice.

"I don't know," replied Cousin Ethel wonderingly.

They hurried on a few steps, and the shouts became more faint. Manservant took a glance behind, but saw that the children were still standing in a group in their selected position. The next moment he saw Cousin Ethel was opposite the line, and they looked down it with repeated curiosity.

"Oh, my boy!" gasped Manservant.

"Oh?" exclaimed Cousin Ethel sharply.

But she was a shade pale. For the night she and Manservant looked— "You was sufficient to give them a real surprise, and then looked round from them, and approaching at a better pace, was a fact, it's just coming, and its tail ending with me."

The reluctant animal's head first on the hay rack, and its eyes glowered evilly as it saw the man's face.

The New House.—No. 225.

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"For a second it appeared to pass; then, with a mad yell, it leaped its load, and charged for Cousin Ethel and Maudie."

"Oh, jumped the girl pathetically, "it's coming for us!" There was not a moment to lose—the ball would be upon them in less than thirty seconds, and the crowd before could create deadly havoc. Cousin Ethel stood staring before her irresolutely. Then she turned quickly to Maudie, expecting him to catch hold of her and walk her out of the way."

"But Maudie was staring at the ladder, apparently, willing on no account of his fair companion whatever. The next moment, with a cry, he turned from Cousin Ethel, and dived head-first into the lake."

"The ball, following angrily, was less than twenty-five yards distant."

"Cousin Ethel jumped with surprise. Even in that moment of deadly peril, he realized that Maudie's nerve had given way, and that he had deserted her in order to save his own skin. At least, Cousin Ethel imagined this to be the case."

"But the girl had plenty of pluck, and she did not lose her head. She had time to give a few yards more by, as the ladder of a strip of greenish cloth was divided from the road by a low fence. In the nick of time Cousin Ethel saw to the fence, the ball striking and getting not quite quite behind. The girl crossed the fence with wonderful agility, and crossed to the next, less weakly of her streaming behind her in the distance."

"The next moment she had wrenched open the door, and was gone."

"The ball, meanwhile, had passed, following and flaming at the fence. There, within the group of startled juveniles in the roadway—Tom Merry & Co. had had no time to seek shelter—the general mind divided their direction was the lower part of nature, and whetted round. Then it transferred from the vision of terror, accompanied by a shower of shreds from a layer of tarred cloth, to the appearance of the ball here. They all started pathetically, and hurried helplessly after their dangerous charge."

"Tom Merry & Co., and the three New House juveniles, had witnessed the whole of the little episode, and now that the danger was past, they rushed down the road, and hastened to the shed in which Cousin Ethel had taken refuge."

CHAPTER I.
A Brawl and a Court.

COUSIN ETHEL opened the door of the shed just as the juvenile crowd entered. She was looking a little pale, and uttered a sigh of relief as she saw that the ball was now almost out of sight.

"Are you all right, Miss Cleveland?" asked Figgins excitedly.

"Where's that booby Maudie?"

"Yes, where's Maudie?"

"Why did he look?"

"Cousin Ethel hesitated."

"I'm all right," she said quietly. "I was a little frightened, for the ball looked so dreadfully fierce."

"But don't you're white, dear girl!" exclaimed Arthur Langston. "If I had been in your uncomfortable position, I should have been thrown into a wooden barrel. You look dreadfully worried."

"Thank," answered Miss Merry.

"Most girls would have stood still and screamed," said Figgins. "My hat, Miss Cleveland, the way you lagged over that fence was a treat! I'm blessed if I could have done it better myself!"

"I'm sure no mother else is to do," replied Ethel simply.

"It isn't fair for this shed the ball would have attacked."

"But where the diabolical is Maudie?" exclaimed Maudie Lawford, looking round with a puzzled expression. "And why on earth did he want?"

"Cousin Ethel looked grave."

"I really don't know," she answered.

"So you're all right, Figgins said. Maudie had his nerve, and left you in the lurch. I don't think of it, shape! Leaving Cousin Ethel to keep the ball alone?"

"Maudie?"

"Naturally."

"Why did Maudie look like that?"

"If I had been one of us, with him it wouldn't have mattered," went on Figgins. "But to leave Cousin Ethel

by herself was—was getting less than criminal! The rotter ought to be whipped!"

"You're in a lovely humor, Figgins," said Tom Merry.

"Why can't you walk with Maudie's explanation? He may be the

best of us, except, dear boy," interrupted Maudie coldly. "In all probability he will be able to offer a perfectly satisfactory explanation. It was surely within Maudie's power to show the white feather!"

"I've believed if I can understand it," said Maudie Lawford harshly.

"Please walk a moment," said Cousin Ethel. "I am sure Maudie will be able to explain. The ball has gone now, and there is no danger. I am quite myself again now, Arthur."

"That's right, dear girl!"

Maudie came up to the group of juveniles surrounding Cousin Ethel, with a doubtful expression upon his face. He chose unobtrusively that look, in reality, Maudie was only wondering how he would be received, but the juvenile imagined him to be thoroughly ashamed of himself.

"That was a little more than you," said Cousin Ethel, he remarked. "As it happened, I shouldn't have done my good if I had started by my side."

"That's no excuse," explained Figgins harshly. "Look here, Maudie, we want to know why you ran away from your job Cousin Ethel and dived into the lake?"

Maudie hesitated, and his cheeks had no further doubt.

"Well, I—well, I'm honest, if I can explain in a few words he said. "All things had turned out as I expected could have known the reason before now. But—"

"Maudie stopped forward."

"Why the diabolical can't you speak out plain?" he demanded. "Why can't you own the truth?"

"The truth?" Maudie answered. "What do you mean?"

"You looked at," explained Figgins. "You had your eyes open, and wanted, leaving Cousin Ethel to look after the ball."

"It was dreadful!" said Maudie. "To leave a girl in a position like that was the act of a beastly coward!"

"Beastly, beastly!"

"I'm absolutely ashamed of you, Maudie," said Tom Merry sternly.

"Thank, thank!"

Maudie stopped back, and all the colour fled from his cheeks. A look of astonishment was on his face as he contemplated the two who had surrounded him so far.

"You don't think I looked at?" he asked. "You don't think I deliberately left Cousin Ethel because I was afraid?"

"There's no other explanation," said Figgins.

"Do you think I left you because I feared cowardly?" asked Maudie angrily, turning to Cousin Ethel.

"I—I hardly know what to say," replied the girl. "Your action was very unbecomingly."

"Thank, thank!"

Maudie looked round him carefully.

"Really, you don't condemn me, before I've had a chance to explain?" he inquired. "I've never acted cowardly since I've been at St. John's, and you all know it. I may not be an expert glider, then, but nobody's ever called me a fink!"

"It isn't surprising you, Maudie, we'll apologize of course," he said quickly. "But I'm blessed if I can see where your explanation is coming in. The action was so obvious, on the face of it. Surely you saw the ball coming at you, you left Cousin Ethel, and dived into the lake?"

"There's no explanation to that!" declared Figgins. "It explains itself."

"I'm sure it does, on the face of it," said Maudie angrily. "But can't you walk a moment? Good Heavens! never imagined I should get a reception like this! I'll tell you the whole truth, and if you don't believe in you can tell me, will do the other thing."

"Oh, don't quarrel, please!" pleaded Cousin Ethel.

"I don't want to quarrel," replied Maudie. "But when a chap's called a fink he doesn't find in a very good humor. I left Cousin Ethel's side because I saw that a little child was in a great danger of being killed, and the risk was absolutely hopeless. There wasn't any time to talk, so I simply acted."

"And did you see the child?" asked Tom Merry indignantly.

"No," replied Maudie. "When I got to the spot I found that the child wasn't there. It had been saved by its mother."

"It's a fact that there was absolute gloom. The juveniles looked at one another unbecomingly. Maudie's explanation sounded so decidedly untrue, so utterly preposterous, that the juveniles had some reason for being incredulous.

ANSWERS

The Old Library—No. 225.

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"You say you want to keep a child?" repeated Mopsy Leworthy. "Where do you want it? And you think the law would suddenly change at the lodge?"

"No, I didn't," replied Manners, turning crimson. "The child was just walking towards the open garden gate at a cottage, and I thought that if I stood in the hedge I could catch it more quickly. If the child hadn't been stopped it would have run right under the feet of the lord."

"And you, instead of running to the garden you stood in the hedge?" asked Mopsy scornfully. "Look here, Manners, that wasn't a bad job. You've got nothing to suggest to me, you say that when you got there the child was gone. There's nothing to prove that it was ever there?"

"That's a fair word," replied Mopsy Manners.

"You didn't see any child," said Mopsy, turning Manners's cheeks red. "You saw the whole incident, but there was no child there."

"I tell you it was just in a garden," repeated Manners.

"Well, Corinna Ethel was with you," said Tom Merry. "If you saw it the next day were you, lying in the road again, did you notice a child, Miss Cleveland?"

"I did really see it," replied Corinna Ethel, looking at Manners unconcernedly, and with a certain amount of indifference. "I was too frightened to notice anything, I think."

"You can't remember seeing the child at all?" asked Mopsy.

"I didn't see anything, except the hall."

"Then there's no more doubt in my mind," said the long-haired justice grimly. "You always had a great opinion for Manners, but after this I'm pleased if I know what to do. Here's a copy of my order before. Even when there's no answer to a finding the law is generally handed from Manners?"

Manners clenched his teeth, but shouted angrily. "My hat, if Corinna Ethel wasn't here I'd knock you down, Piggins! And I'll fight any other chap who says the same thing! You haven't got an opinion properly at all."

"You haven't got an opinion properly at all," repeated Mopsy Manners, always thoughtful and never without a remark, but I am sure I will never let you down."

"Oh, please order yourself, Manners!" interrupted Corinna Ethel quietly.

"Do you think I've been lying, Miss Cleveland?" asked Manners fully.

"I shall say nothing until there is proof," replied the girl.

"Then, you see?" exclaimed Mopsy Manners. "Usually an example for you, you say?" Manners comprehended one at least, but he didn't say so in any way, and said there's proof. What's your proof of possession? Do you call possession any other?"

"You Mopsy and Leworthy looked me over, while the rest of the justice were certainly impressed by Manners' evidence."

"Don't be so silly myself," said Tom Merry at last. "If what you say is true, Manners, we shall look like a set of scoundrels, and shall have to apologise. But, as matters stand it looks very much as if you've been taking advantage in order to escape yourself. By don't Mopsy you do much for showing the white flag?"

"Don't be!" growled Piggins.

"But where you tell whoppers on the top of it?"

"I shall show you where better!" roared Manners.

"I don't," said Popsy Wynne wrothly.

"I don't!"

"I say you did!"

"Do, please—please don't quarrel!" repeated Corinna Ethel. "After all, what Manners has done is the really odd bit. It doesn't amount to much. He only lost his nerve, and he was quite wrong."

Nevertheless Corinna Ethel looked at Manners with an expression of quiet disdain upon her pretty face which clearly told her thoughts. Manners turned pale, and commenced to stammer out further protestations.

"For goodness sake don't tell any more whoppers!" interrupted Mopsy wrothly. "Why say you what you've a right to say, and don't say anything at all?"

"I'm going to go down to the lodge," said Corinna Ethel, and I'm just certain you didn't. You simply found your way back to your own den, and left Corinna Ethel to a position of absolute despair."

"It was wroth of you, Manners!" said Mopsy reproachfully.

"It was downright wicked!" declared Piggins. Manners looked round him wrothly.

"But I tell you—"

"Please tell no more whoppers, you booby!"

"You told the truth!" declared Manners indignantly. "You

can say what you like, but I don't alter my tale! The truth's the truth, and—"

"There is a way to settle the matter once and for all," said Ethel quickly. "I'm awfully uncomfortable, Arthur, about this affair."

"No wonder, dear girl!"

"How can it be settled?" asked Tom Merry.

"By going to the cottage Manners speaks of, and asking if a child was absent to reveal that road where the hall passed, and if nobody noticed it away in the nick of time."

"But how, that's a wretched suggestion!" exclaimed Mopsy indignantly. "It will check up everything straightforwardly. Have you anything to say about the idea, Manners?"

Manners' face lightened for a moment, and then a troubled frown crossed his brow. He hesitated before replying, and his hesitation practically proclaimed him to the eyes of the justice. If his story was false it would, at once, be settled going to the cottage.

"Well?" asked Mopsy Leworthy shortly.

"That seems a good idea," said Manners, looking round.

"But I'm pleased if I know exactly what setting it was! They're all very much alike, you know, and in the confusion of the moment I didn't give any attention at all to the house. I simply saw the child, and made up my mind to leave."

Manners paused as he saw the Mark look on the faces around him. Then he realised how his silence would support this explanation. In truth it would appear almost impossible that he could not know the cottage. Yet it was an absolute fact.

"Don't talk rubbish!" exclaimed Piggins roughly. "Do you mean to say that they think it would be possible for a child to walk in? Why, there's a road on that side of the road, it's pretty plain, though, that Manners has been hiding all along?"

"It's nothing of the sort!" retorted Manners angrily. "If you'll just say what you think, that will be all right. I don't want to say anything more on that side of the road. It's pretty plain, though, that Manners has been hiding all along?"

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Manners pointed across to two oak trees, unobscured, which were quite distinct from the others, inasmuch as their front walls had been fairly white-washed.

"Why the deuce couldn't you say so before?" exclaimed Tom Merry. "If it's one of those trees we can walk up and look on the truth. I see Corinna Ethel moved, and Manners go over there and make inquiries, we can't all creep into the garden."

"Good eye!" said Leworthy.

"Yes, wrothly!"

"Yes, it will be the best way," said Ethel quickly. "I like having to take a part in this affair as all here, in relation to Manners, we must see if the facts were as he has stated. If he has told the truth all along we shall look very ridiculous, and deserve to be having whipped his head."

Corinna Ethel, with a very nervous brown upon her pretty face, stepped forward, and Tom Merry and Manners accompanied her. The rest of the justice gathered in a little group, eagerly discussing the matter. In their own Manners had committed a very serious crime, and if he could not prove his innocence he would go to prison. It was a very serious case, as Piggins said to leave Corinna Ethel as the party if he intended to tell for no other reason than to save his own skin was the act of an unscrupulous, and almost criminal.

Ethel and the two justices arrived in the roadway, and looked at the two cottages. Manners' glance was eager, and Tom Merry's doubtful. He feared having to check his claim, but he didn't say so in any way.

"One of the cottages is a good deal better than Corinna Ethel's," said Piggins, looking back at the window of the lower story room. A glance served to show that the cottage was indeed empty—no apparently so far as was concerned, and was an air of neglect.

"By Jove, that's good," said Tom Merry. "As this cottage is empty we shall only have to inquire next door. You see, quite near the child was in one of these gardens, Manners."

"Fustian!" said Manners, looking into the garden. "And it seems to me that it was in the empty one. But, of course, I may be mistaken."

"You say that, but," said Ethel. "The child could have wandered into it from next door, as the only division is a wall."

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low hedge with several big gaps in it. But come, we will go and inspect."

"It goes here," said Manners, "and I hope to purchase a horse or two at night. It's a lovely business enterprise, and I hate leaving it very much." The other things went uncollected that very day.

Manners watched eagerly as Cousin Ethel and Tom Merry looked at the cottage above. In his heart he was feeling bitter and miserable. Everything seemed against him; everything seemed to point to conviction and deliberate falsehood on his part. Yet he had spoken the truth from start to finish. He had acted like a lion rather than a coward, and he had all the facts for his support. He could not look after a man's claims though he had left Ethel at the bull's mercy in order to save himself.

It was a predicament such as he had never found himself in before. Had he arrived in the cottage garden in time to save the child it would have been all right, his claims would have remained unshaken; that he had done perfectly justified in leaving Cousin Ethel to take care of herself. For this was a man's world, a world of force, and it was his duty to look after Manners' claims. The little child, on the other hand, was a helpless wretch. Manners had acted on the side of the weaker; he had made up his mind as a coward, and had not acted with honor. In his shame it seemed as though he had been a coward, and he could not blame them for their attitude. To go and show them had been no proof that he had not been lying. The history of the cottage would soon settle the matter.

Manners looked at Cousin Ethel and Tom Merry in their eyes. The little child—a baby girl—had certainly been in one of these two cottages, and as one of the cottages was empty it was a legitimate conclusion that she lived in the one that was tenanted.

"It'll be all right," thought Manners. "Cousin Ethel'll soon find out the truth, and then the things will be sorry they engaged me of looking and lying. I don't blame you for."

Manners glanced, and a keen, concentrated look entered his eyes. He was watching an old man who had entered Tom Merry's knock. The old man was impatiently shaking his head, and crying his content with abject dejection.

Manners caught his breath in, and a cold hand seemed to clutch his heart.

Why was the old fellow shaking his head?
What was he saying?
Cousin Ethel and Tom Merry turned away from the door, and the latter advanced to. Impudently Manners stepped forward, and met the pair as they approached him.

"Well," he asked eagerly, "I spoke the truth, didn't I?"
Tom Merry looked at his claim obviously, and a certain hard glint shone about his usually merry eyes. Cousin Ethel, too, seemed grave and cold, and refrained from looking at Manners at all.

"What's the matter?" asked Manners sharply. "What's wrong?"

Tom Merry's lip curled.
"We've proved you to be a liar, that's all," he said quietly. "The only person who lives in this cottage is a contemptible old man, and there hasn't been a child in it for years! You've a lie and a coward, Manners!"

CHAPTER 5.
Continued By All.

MANNERS staggered back.
"Good heavens!" he muttered hoarsely. "You say—you don't mean it, Tom? It can't be true! I saw the child myself—I tried to save it from the fall!"

Tom Merry uttered an impatient exclamation.
"What's the matter with your own eyes?" he exclaimed eagerly. "You brought it in your underwear, you, Manners! You must have known all along that you'd be found out."

Manners seemed dumb. He gazed at Tom Merry as though he could not believe his ears. Then, as though in despair, he turned to Cousin Ethel.

"Tom don't believe I'm a coward, Miss Cleveland?" he asked hoarsely. "You don't really think I'm such a cad as all that?"

"Please don't speak to me about the matter at all," said Cousin Ethel quietly. "I wish you would let the whole matter drop after all, it concerns no more than yourself, and I simply hate to think of a boy being weak."

"It's a matter for all of us, Miss Cleveland," said Tom Merry sharply. "Manners has acted like a scoundrel, and he's acted as if I never thought he could act, and he'll have to answer for it."

And the episode of the cliff walked across the road, with Cousin Ethel, looking very grave and serious, by his side.

THE BOYS' FRIEND—No. 286.

Manners, pale-faced, walked behind. His mind was in a turmoil, and he found it impossible to think clearly.

Ethel & Co., and the New Women too, were waiting in a grim little group, and Tom Merry explained in a few words, Manners' conduct, leaving out all details, and Manners' words being accompanied by his angry expression.

"You wot?" said Piggins loudly. "I know all about that that yarn was a fair tale. You deserve to be drummed out of St. Jim's! I always thought Melish and Lavison were about the same in confidence, but I'm hanged if you don't beat 'em out better!"

"But don't that's worth with Piggins?" exclaimed Arthur Langton indignantly.
"It says you did not believe that I was lying! To uphold Manners in the least, but his offence is hardly as serious as all that. He has acted stupidly—as no real gentleman would—and I shall certainly refuse to regard him as a friend in future." It was hard enough to show the white as a friend in future, but to tell honorable whoppers in addition was extremely unwise.

The justice pronounced in agreement.
"You mean to say that if I ever again think Manners is as good as Lavison, I Lavison is a wretch in the end, but Manners has always been a decent chap up till now."

Manners snatched his hat.
"You're all mistaken!" he declared passionately. "I didn't look it—I haven't lied! You're all mistaken, I tell you! Don't you know me well enough to know that I wouldn't say in such a case as this a single word of falsehood?"

"Oh, really?" exclaimed an old man who had been sitting on a bench nearby.
"Really?" Melish, then's worth with?" pointed Arthur Langton.

"I've told the truth!"

"You never?" shouted Ethel, being all patience. "We've got absolute proof that you're lying!"

"You haven't," said Manners, between his teeth. "I saw the child, and tried to save it!"

"There wasn't any child!"

"There wasn't!"

Tom Merry stamped his foot.
"Look here," he said impatiently. "Are you sure of the cottage?"

"It was either the one you want us, or the empty one," replied Manners.

"Are you sure?"
"Possibly certain?"
"Then you condemn yourself," said Tom Merry softly.
"Hum!"

"Because there are only two cottages where the child could have come from, and one of them is empty. The other is tenanted by a truly old man, who says there are no children there, and never have been."

"Which never happened, the Manners' tale is a big lie, invented to excuse his cowardice," said Manners angrily.
"Never then, I never thought Manners was such a scoundrel!"
"He's a rank liar!"
"Rubbish!"
"I've told the truth!" shouted Manners desperately.

"You've told the truth?"
"Certainly!"
"Pish!"
"Kerf!"
"Oh yes, you catch howards?"

Tom Merry and Mervyn Lavison were silent. The affair seemed to have started them. All said and done, Manners was their hero, and they fight it in their hearts to see his name to their indignation. The affair was making the boys nervous, nothing happened, but it seemed to prevent their doing any work for a day and a half. The boys were in a state of alarm as a boy and a dozen of the other members of their club had been invited to had they suddenly discovered Manners to be a thief.

Cousin Ethel stood by, watching quietly, her pretty face wearing a look of worry and anxiety that had no place there. She could not help realizing that all this business was directly due to her wish to be, Jim's, and she wished to know that she had no more to do. It put her through a terrible trial that she was the cause—amount enough to think of this serious matter.

"Let's be getting on," said Tom Merry softly.
"Yes, please, here's done with this latest disappointment," said Cousin Ethel softly.

"Innocent?" repeated Piggins. "My only hat is with me, and nothing more."

"You mean to say you explain—" began Manners.
"No more!"
"That's all!"
"I've got you out!"
"We've heard enough then?" snapped Ethel.



The Reader's eyes glanced in the darkness as a dark form leaped up—dimly he made out the figure of the farm-master, with a bag in his hand. With a thumping heart he watched the dim figure climb the steps; there was the sound of a key grating in the lock, the door opened—then silence, (a startling incident in the great, long, simple story of Jerry's life and his death at Clapham, entitled "THE FALSE POOR-HOUSE" contained in this week's issue of "The Gemmer" Library. YOU should get a copy of this splendid number. See on sale. Price One Penny.)

"Yes, what?"

"Your letter has come with us, Maester," said Fergal Mack.

"Was't?" exclaimed Maester, suddenly becoming serious. "I'll walk to St. Jim's church. Perhaps by the time you get there you'll realize that you're all a set of poor coppers, to mention me as evidence that never shoddyly no weight!"

And Maester turned on his heel and walked away, his eyes glancing, and his chest heaving with passion.

The judges looked after him anxiously, for his hot words had stirred an angry passion that to soothe his conscience will never. And yet the judges were hardly to be blamed; the evidence in their eyes was such that they could hardly see any justice in Maester's statement. Everything pointed to its being a falsehood.

The only justice who remained right was Scott, of the New Haven. The Scots justice was thoughtful, and obviously

inclined to agree with his clients, for he had regarded Maester with a cold and suspicious glance.

The business of the party which had started out so light, suddenly was greatly destroyed, and as soon as St. Jim's was reached Dennis Ebbel took his ways goodbye.

"I'm awfully sorry this has happened, Miss Cleveland!" said Tom Maier sadly.

"So am I," said the girl simply. "And I do hope you'll forgive Maester for his awkwardness."

The justice never slept, but their beds were such that Ebbel had grown lazier than usual, and he no longer cared much about work. His really believed that Maester had let his wife in to drink, and his opinion of him had fallen to zero; but she was large-hearted, and had no wish to make matters worse by displaying her contempt.

"It is a wretched bad world, dear girl, to ask me to forgive the innocent," said D'Arcy thoughtfully. "However, thank you very much."

THE GEM LIBRARY—No. 225.

It is not to be taken into a divorce at present, especially as they are in a more important position to defend it."

"What is the matter?"
 "We are going to have a grand feast in Study No. 4, don't you?" replied Arthur Aspinwall. "and it has been arranged that you are to be the guest of honor. I presume that you are not able to come."
 "You must come, Miss Cleveland," said Figgins eagerly. Cousin Ethel laughed.

"Very well," she said, smiling. "I'll be delighted to come. Only, you must promise that there will be no rehearsal of the improprieties about, Maynard."

"We won't even mention the affair," said Henry Lawther.
 "Thank you," said Figgins.
 "Then I'll come, with pleasure," said Cousin Ethel.
 "Good!"

The girls took her departure, and walked to the Head's house, with a look of satisfied concern upon her pretty face. As soon as she had left them, the ladies gathered together in a corner of the grand, to discuss the situation. Henry Aspinwall was consulted in respect to the matter, and others looked on at his replies, for he was the chief of Figgins & Co. when concerned with their family circle.

But the girls preferring to see totally unacquainted of the various habits and in his profession. To the ladies the matter was hardly serious. Talk as they would, however, they could never do to the other worldliness that that at which they had it done, and it was not possible, and at that time Henry looked very far from his usual air of confidence.

"My dear," he exclaimed. "It's nearly twelve, and we haven't started to prepare! Cousin Ethel's going to be the guest of honor, and my ordinary old suit won't do. My dear father put me the decision until this evening."

"Hush-h!" warned the others. "I suppose it's generally known that Cousin Ethel is to be included in the party."

"Of course," replied Hodge, without hesitation. Maynard can have to be blamed. I'm blessed if I want to be in the same room with a woman! The girl's going to be in Study No. 4, perhaps, and if she shows herself there he'll be checked out on his family card."

"What," cried Hodge.
 "What," replied Hodge.
 "How," said he, "leaves Lawther. "We haven't thoroughly gone into the matter."

"But we know Maynard to be a real and a liar!" said Fatty Wynn. "And I say that he isn't in company for Cousin Ethel."

"How long?"
 "Tommy Maynard said. He and Henry Lawther were not so particular about their domestic affairs as the girls, but they nevertheless agreed with Fatty Wynn's statement. For the present, Maynard was in deep disgrace, and his late claims were the more bitter against him because they had never before supported him of such dishonorable conduct.

Just before six Tom Merry saw Maynard in the School House steps. The latter was still looking pale, and his jaw was not so cheerful.

"I say, Maynard!" exclaimed Tom Merry.
 "Well?" growled Maynard.

"I suppose you know that it won't be my good your coming to Study No. 4 for tea?" went on the blow of the school, in a chilly manner. "The fellows are rather set against you just now."
 "I don't care," replied Maynard bitterly. "You've all against me—you and Henry as well as the rest! I wouldn't have you with you if you asked me, so you can go and get out!"

And Maynard passed into the School House, leaving Tom Merry staring after him.

The grand tea was not nearly a success. Maynard's absence was very noticeable, and the party seemed incomplete. Henry Lawther looked on from a distance with a somewhat doubtful and wary eye, but did not all but concerning that Cousin Ethel, too, who in a thoughtful mood, and declined to talk. So the ladies were really relieved when the party broke up, and Tom Merry and Henry Lawther walked into the Staff passage with glowing faces.

"Kittie!" whispered Lawther. "That was Maynard too good for you!"

"I expect he'll be in the study," said Tom Merry. "I've got you back hold of him, and make him own up. Perhaps he'll do it when all the other lads aren't standing round!"

"It's possible," replied Lawther. "Anyhow, we'll try it."

They entered their study, and, as Tom Merry had expected, Maynard was not there, sitting alone at the end of the passage in the pleasant way in which he looked round in his chair returned, then turned his head away again.

"Look here, Maynard, we want to talk to you privately," said Tom Merry, getting to business without any preamble. "You are Librarian—No. 20."

"We're alone now, and we want you to open up. We want to know why the fellows just ran away from that ball and left Cousin Ethel to face it alone."

"It was none of your!" said Lawther severely.
 "Maynard was in the first and closed the window. Then he walked over into the middle of the study and faced his chair. His face was crimson, and he was most decidedly white."

"Tell me this," he said quickly. "Do you think really think I left Cousin Ethel's side because I looked being the ball? We've known each other a pretty long time—quite long enough, anyhow, to know the stuff we're made of. Do you honestly think I looked at, and then led to you all afterwards?"

"Tom Merry and Lawther were somewhat taken aback. They had expected a fiery answer, and were not quite prepared for this attitude.

"I—I— What else can we think?" stammered Tom Merry.
 "That's not an answer," said Maynard grimly. "I want to know your opinion."

"That's it. Do you think I looked at?"
 "That's rather a rather startling to answer deliberately," said Tom Merry quickly. "If we've misjudged you, Maynard, we'll look ourselves to bits. But if you want a direct answer, I'll give it to you."

"I do want a direct answer," said Maynard.
 "I'll give it to you," said Tom Merry. "I believe you lost your head for a moment, and dived into the hedge without thinking of the consequences."

"And you think the same?" asked Maynard, turning to Henry Lawther.
 "Yes," replied Lawther, after a moment's hesitation.
 "Right!" said Maynard. "It's just as well to know, then, I think you, I'm much disappointed about it. You say I believe you lost your head, and dived into the hedge without thinking of the consequences. Perhaps I'm unreasonable, but I do!"

"Maynard turned away for a moment, but his cheeks could plainly be seen the pale, he gave assistance to. They felt extremely sorry, but before they could speak Maynard had turned again.

"I don't object to this," he went on quietly. "You've admitted that you believe me to be a somewhat—uh—little capable of diverting a girl for no other purpose than to annoy yourself. You believe me to be a liar; you think I ran away from Cousin Ethel, then left her alone, and presented a tale to explain my sudden dive into the hedge. In other words, you admit me responsible to look at—which I should be glad to really share as you suggest. It's a wonder you're not here, and I'm glad to hear it!"

"Hang it all, Maynard," exclaimed Tom Merry, "you're jolly rough on us!"

"Enough!" roared Maynard. "Haven't you admitted it? Haven't you just said that you believe all this nonsense against me? I've only stated the plain facts. It'd really done as you think, I'd be too disgusted with myself to think of presenting an answer."

"Maynard's face was flushed now, and his eyes were blazing. He chose glanced at one another covertly.

"Oh, hang it!" exclaimed Tom Merry. "You make us feel like a couple of pigs, Maynard! Look here, you're sorry really described what happened—fully, I mean. Why not tell us exactly what did occur?"

"That's the good!" said Maynard. "You've said that you don't want to hear it!"

"You must tell us!"
 "You don't judge properly yet," he said. "I think we've been too hardy. Tell us the whole incident fully."

"That's it," said Lawther eagerly.
 "All right, I will," answered Maynard. "I don't mind admitting you've got some sense to respect me, saying that everything I do is a mistake, but I honestly think that you ought to be more liberal to look really to take account of my ground. That inquiry at the cottage seems to tell me a lot."

"We couldn't think anything else," said Tom Merry. "Can you explain why the old man said there were no children there?"

"You blamed it I say," replied Maynard. "I thought the inquiry was about my absence, but I can't have it so plain. This is what happened, and you can have it or children's. All I know is that it's the honest truth, Cousin Ethel and I saw the ball at the same moment, and it was about two hundred yards from us. I didn't fall started, even, but thought honestly that I should have to go and find out of the way, and in a moment's time. Then, just as I was going to get up to look for it, I saw something which caused me to turn my back completely."

"Quite clear to us, was a garden, and over the top of the hedge I caught a glimpse of a little child running towards

the open gate. I don't suppose that was it, as the wren's had enough. However, in a second it dashed through my head that the child would run out into the road, and be tempted to climb by the fence, and without hesitating a moment the breakfast would have been laid—I dried myself into the kitchen.

"You'd think that it would have been easier to rush along the road; but I've seen the gap in the hedge, and know that I could just easily see the child before it got to the gate. Besides, the bird might have got on as I rushed for the gate, so it was better off run out to clear through the hedge. Everything left my mind except the thought of that broken table, and I left the house in a hurry, not realising how poor I really was. I thought for the time to give the child. My work brought in a bundle just after I'd passed through the hedge, and it delayed me for a second, and I only got home by tramping the stone. Here's the box."

"Well, when I'd looked to the gate I looked round to surprise. The child wasn't to be seen anywhere, and the hall appeared just as ordinary as ever. I thought of rushing out and seeing Ethel; but by that time she'd slipped under the fence, and I knew she was safe. I didn't think of her, but couldn't ever see anybody looking out of the cottage windows. The whole business had happened in about ten seconds, and I was feeling dazed. I walked back to the gate, and then passed on into the road, realising that you might have thought I'd turned a corner. It was a jolly rotten situation, and I can't imagine the Fourth Form doing that being so close on me. But I thought you try, my dear, whenever you see me. I think you'd believe in me, whatever the circumstances."

Manners looked, and turned away again. For a moment there was silence in the study. Tom Merry and Mandy Lothrop fell a lump in their throats, and walked how Manners went but it was really true.

"I'm pleased if I don't believe in you, Manners, and may I ask Tom Merry to leave." "Why do you believe you're not the ablest as fully as this before?"

"How could I?" asked Manners. "You wouldn't let me speak, and I could tell by the looks on your face that you thought I was fibbing."

"It seemed so jolly weak, you know," said Mandy Lothrop. "You didn't say any details at all, but you stated the fact plain. Besides, there was that inquiry in the cottage. If Manners really was there—"

"You still don't see that?" asked Manners bitterly.

"No, I've changed if I do," rejoined Lothrop, dropping Manners' hand. "We've been a couple of old ones, Manners, and we ought to be ashamed of ourselves." We both believe you acted exactly as you say—don't we, Mandy?"

"Yes," replied Tom Merry quietly. "I hope you'll forgive me, Mandy."

Manners blew his nose violently, and hid his face in his handkerchief for a moment.

"I'll forgive you right enough, you mean," he said. "I've said some pretty rough things, but—"

"We deserved 'em all," said Tom Merry light-heartedly. "But to return to the public school. How do you account for that old man saying there were no children in the house?"

Manners looked thoughtful.

"I'm blamed if I can account for it," he replied. "It's a fair question, but, I've certain the kid was in one of those two parlours, and you cottage is empty. We shall have to make inquiries."

"I'm not going to," interrupted Lothrop. "It'll take Manners' word for it. We've known him the years, and he's a fair question. But, I've certain the kid was in one of those two parlours, and you cottage is empty. We shall have to make inquiries."

"I'm not going to do that," he said. "I've been awfully wonderful since we got into the village, but now I don't want what the other boys think. You believe in me, or it's all right."

"But I care what the other boys think," said Tom Merry thoughtfully. "And I'm afraid they'll continue to stick to their decision. You know, Manners, the thing looks jolly suspicious, and they can't be ready to take your word to be true of all the witnesses."

CHAPTER 4. Back to Coxsouth!

THE Trouble Three regarded one another for a moment in silence. Tom Merry's words were probably quite right, for the Fourth Formers had by fairly hard in their minds that Manners had been lying.

"If they don't believe me, they can do the other thing," said Manners calmly. "Perhaps they'll make after a day or two that they have been too jolly busy. And I shouldn't make any effort to find proof."

"I shall, then," said Tom Merry kindly. "I'm quite ready to take your word, old man, but I'm not going to have the other three pointing to you, and shouting you as if you were a real school prig. I shall make my own mind up, and the other three will pick their side up. (And I kid you, though, I'm afraid the others will be rather down on you.)"

And Tom Merry was right. While the Trouble Three had been discussing the situation, a meeting had been taking place in the dining-room. Most of the school House parties were there, and Higgins, at Coxsouth, and the other boys, Lawrence, and the boys of the New House. There was a lot of talk, and the other boys of conversation was Manners' conduct. It was surprising how great a hold the incident had taken on the party. Coxsouth was a ripe which was absolutely impossible. And this was no ordinary case. Coxsouth had been exposed in grave danger, and the parties were not with indignation. The other boys heard the story for the first time and condemned Manners without hesitation.

"He's no account as a hero, with red face and wailing arms."

"The whole thing amounts to this," he declared, above the hum of conversation in the dining-room. "Manners has shown the white feather in an absolutely remarkable way. He's run away and left Coxsouth in a position of danger. If one of these boys like most girls, she would have stood with it, and let the bull run at her. So it's only wrong on the part that she was a jolly shabby girl that she wasn't killed! What doesn't show the weakness of Manners' action a bit. He's a coward!"

"Rubbish!"
"A jolly coward!"

"You're wrong," said Tom Merry. "It wouldn't have been so bad if he'd been a coward."

"But he didn't run up," interrupted Higgins wrathfully. "He made up a rotten tale that he'd tried to save a little girl from running into the road! On the face of it, the party was a jolly shabby, and I wonder he had the nerve to say it."

"Shame!"
"You're wrong!"
"I always thought that Manners was done right through."
"So did I," said Lindsay-Lindsay. "It's a huge mistake."

"It's a huge disappointment," added Redfern, of the New House.

"We never thought of him."

"I suppose though, we don't that it's true?" asked Mandy Lothrop.

"Really?" rejoined Blake. "You laughing folks, how can you be so dumb! How's it been proved in the hall that Manners was fibbing? Didn't Tom Merry and Coxsouth find rather suspicious at the cottage?"

"Yes, but—"

"But you?" snapped Higgins. "The fact is, absolutely clear. We know before any inquiry was made that the story was a lie. It was too palpable for words!"

"You're wrong," rejoined Higgins. "You're wrong, you're wrong, you're wrong," cried Higgins. "You're wrong, you're wrong, you're wrong." "I'm the first one to state we had a fellow who's down on it in this case. I really wouldn't think Manners is dishonest of itself, or anything. He showed any reason in a most lawful way, and I shall never forgive him."

"I wouldn't see that, Coxsouth," rejoined Blake. "All I say is that he ought to be punished, and needs to realize that our word's stand are tomorrow! I never suspected Manners of being a liar, but now that I know what he is, we can't be any more than that we don't have any more of it."

"He's wrong!"
"You're wrong!"
"Wrong!"

"You're wrong!"
"Hold on!" shouted Blake wrathfully. "Scolding him isn't enough by a long way! At least Manners is a good enough chap, but now he's all alone he's had a terrible knock, and he's a good deal of a fellow. He's turned back, and then lost to get himself out of it."

"Rubbish!"
"Shameful!" shouted Higgins. "Disgraceful!"
"Rubbish!"

"In a day or two, perhaps, he'll come to his senses and see us," said Tom Merry. "If he does we'll overlook the matter completely and give him a fresh start. He's never been a liar before, and this is the first time. He's not a bad fellow, and he's a good deal of a fellow. He's not a bad fellow, and he's a good deal of a fellow."

"How about his punishment?" asked Clinton Kane.
 "Well, I vote to give him to University and let him go," said Blake. "Being sent to University is about the best we can do for him, and if we let him go he'll find himself drowned by the whole of the lower school."
 "It's a bit thick," began Kerr.
 "Think he's innocent?" ejaculated Figgins fairly. "He deserves all he gets; I consider Blake's suggestion is a good one. If Manning is sent to University and he comes up, he'll soon be sick of it, and make a clean breast of everything. He'll admit that he meant to do all that stuff we told you about. It's the only thing he can do."

The plan seemed to meet with general approval.
 "Good scheme," said Harris. "Send him to University till he gets up."
 "That's it."
 "Couldn't think of a better punishment?"
 "No, no, no, no, no, no, no," went on Blake. "Are we going to let Blake, who's that all the time?"
 The terrible three entered.
 There was a sudden lull, and the ladies regarded Manning curiously. Manning was looking quite absorbed, and affected not to notice the hostile looks sent in his direction.

"What's the excitement, Miss?" asked Tom Merry, looking round.
 "You know well enough," growled Blake.
 "I believe I do," answered Tom Merry. "You've been discussing Manning. Well, Missy Lewther and I have been questioning Manning, and we've come to a decision."
 "What's that?"
 "We believe that Manning has told the truth," answered the captain of the third company. "He's never said anything as far as I know, and we've got certain that he couldn't say both within the space of two minutes."

The meeting ceased.
 "Do do you mean to say that you believe in his falsehood?" asked Figgins.
 "Yes," replied Missy Lewther sweetly. "And it's not half as foolish as you are, but we tell you. He acted sensibly, and, although there's no trace of proof, Tom Merry and I are with all our hearts in the Fourth."
 "But for those a few words of Blake, of the Fourth."
 "What say you now?" said Tom Merry sharply. "The others can say what they like, but I'm not going to stand any nonsense from you."
 "Oh, but how thick," said Manning. "I don't intend what anybody says. My conscience is quite clear, and I don't worry. Well, it's a bit foolish to know that all my claims are made on both sides. I've never given any of you cause to suspect me of cowardice."
 "What's the good of going over it again?" shouted Figgins angrily. "I'm not surprised at Lewther and Tom Merry believing in you, because they're your business chums, but you won't find us so ready. Don't forget that we saw everything, and knew positively well that you turned out well."
 "We've always been friends, Manning," said Blake sweetly. "Why not all equally, and make a clean breast of it? If you'll give your friends here and now, we'll all straighten it, and give you another chance."
 "That's his doing," said Kingston. "By the way, Manning."

"Yes, what's that? Don't throw the change away."
 Manning looked round him with a firm glint in his eye.
 "What would you like to do to give me a chance?"
 "Well, if I agreed as I should be willing to let the simple events that I've already told you nothing but the simple truth. I don't suppose you'd believe me for a minute, but my statement about the little child was true, and I claim that it stood in the only way possible under the circumstances."
 "Here, here?" said Lewther.
 "There you are, my boy."
 "You can't say a thing more than that?" asked Figgins fairly.
 "You still expect us to believe it?"
 "I expect you to believe the truth."
 "The truth! It's a downright lie!" roared Blake.
 "How you can stand there and say it's the truth (listen) Tom Merry went to the cottage with Cousin Ethel, and came away with positive proof that there had been a child all along, the children can't give you any more of that sort of thing."
 "There was a child," replied Manning calmly.
 "What turned you, Tom Merry, sweetly.
 "Was there a child?" inquired. "Answer that question?"
 "There was no child, get it, the cottage I mean."

"And the other cottage was empty?" interrupted Blake sweetly. "My boy, is there if I am understood, but you may change my belief in the matter, although he is your own child! He's getting worse and worse, because he can't admit his guilt."
 "I tell you I've told the truth," shouted Manning, beginning to get his temper. "I've—"
 "What do you expect?"
 "Myself."
 "What?"
 "Things like that."

The common-room was in a state of indignation. To the justice it seemed that Manning had made a mistake, worse by far than that of his job. As it was the truth, Manning could do nothing else, but the ladies had made up their minds that it was not the truth. They passed forward, and Manning found himself grasped.
 "But Blake was on the wrong again."
 "Let him show you change," he roared. "Let the other sleep! We've agreed as to his sentence, so what's the good of jumping him?"
 The crowd drew back, and Manning found himself facing a group of angry, grinning faces.
 "You're in luck, Manning—a lathered blow!" said Blake angrily. "If you'd owned up everything would have been all right, as going to bed with your hands washed and your feet washed in From the corner, wouldn't you be in University? But a simple sleep in the Fourth of this is going to teach you, or take any notice of you, until you give up. When you do that everything will go on as usual."
 "Hold on," said Missy Lewther. "You said just now that you thought in the Fifth is going to speak to Manning, didn't you?"
 "Yes."
 "Well, you're wrong," said Lewther, "because I'm going to. And as I'm Tom Merry, we believe Manning's story, and think you all a lot of noisy coppers."

An angry retort was on Blake's lips, but he forced it back and smiled.
 "As you're both his special chums, we'll include you," he smiled. "But everything is agreed from Manning to be sent to University until he makes a clean breast of it. I'll be out for him, but that's his own look-out."
 Manning strode forward, his eye blazing.
 "If you think I care twopenny about you all, you're mistaken," he shouted furiously. "You're a lot of cowardly brutes, and even if you hadn't sent me to University I should have got you all! You can do what you like, and say what you like, but you'll have to wait until Thursday for me to give up on anything I never did."
 And Manning strode on, leaving the common-room in an uproar.

CHAPTER 7.

Cousin Ethel Intervenes.

THE excitement lasted for some little time, and the ladies were only hardly made quiet by the sudden appearance of a prefect, who proceeded to lay about him somewhat severely with a cane. After that the noise subsided, and the ladies calmed down.
 But they were every bit as incensed. Their anger had left them, but they were all filled with a great indignation. Everybody had looked upon Manning as one of the most honest of the fellows in the school, and to have their belief shattered in this abrupt manner was startling.

Had Mollie or Cooke acted in the same way their conduct would have been looked upon as quite ordinary, nobody would have been surprised, and they would have been treated to a thorough flogging, and left.

But with Manning it was different. His sudden fall from popularity had had the effect of making the bulk of the boys very indignant with him. For him to have come back in the Fourth was undoubtedly for him to leave his friends far, and something understood of. Therefore the papers regarded him with great contempt. Previously he had possessed everybody's confidence—now he was looked on by all.

It was a heavy blow for Manning to lose.
 No doubt the juniors thought they were acting in a perfectly just manner. They really believed that Manning was a liar, and they were not a bit sorry to see him.
 This made the blow all the heavier, for Manning was an innocent of cowardice and falsehood as Tom Merry himself. The incident had happened exactly as he had described, about the details, and it was usual for him to be condemned and punished for absolutely nothing.

Yet he could do nothing to prove his innocence. It was not a matter for the police or magistrates, it was a purely private affair. But, nevertheless, the boys were more than angry because they felt that he had been treated out in the field. A crowd was not to be tolerated at any station especially one who endeavored to attract his attention with palpable intentions. It was in this way that the police looked upon the matter, and they were hardly to be blamed for their attitude.

Manasse explained this perfectly, and so, when he had advised them, he almost forgave the Fourth-Formers for their little "trick."

Shortly after the meeting had broken up he was strolling in the shady quad, with Tom Merry and Mandy Lawford. All three were unusually silent.

"After all," said Manasse gravely, "the show can't be blamed for being done on the sly. I've always given three weeks to treat me, I know, but this thing looks really black, and there's some reason. Even you two have only my word to rely on."

"That's good enough for me, old man," said Tom Merry quietly.

"Of course," said Mandy Lawford.

"Thank! It's good to have those who have confidence in me!" replied Manasse, with feeling. "By the way, do you know what became of the boat? I completely forgot to ask."

"By Gosh, we did!" exclaimed Mandy Lawford. "Did the wind blow back into the High Street, and proceed to make arrangements of all the shops or what?"

Tom Merry laughed.

"No," he replied. "The four boats who were slipping it happened to be in a yard just before it got to the steps. When they got to the steps, it walked back with them to dock at you know. As it looks like there must be three more boats in the harbor, I heard them from Thomson, and he says the village is as quiet as usual again."

Manasse nodded. But he was not looking at Tom Merry. His attention was attracted by the peculiar behavior of these and Cosine, of the Black. These two parties had been strolling across the quad, arm-in-arm, until they were quite close to the Terrace Steps. Then, when they were just about to pass, they looked up, stared at Manasse with complete amazement, and a wide, defiant, but though very anxious, look to reassure the class.

Manasse returned a grin, but made no comment.

Lawford, however, had also noticed the "jokers' behavior."

"The rotten rule!" he exclaimed indignantly.

"That's not worth noticing," said Manasse quietly.

Nevertheless, he could not help to see that these and Cosine repeated the performance and gave the run to Melk and Lawford, of the Fourth. Several New House games too, joined in the "fun," and presently quite a number of boys were watching past the Terrace Steps, grinning their eyes, and with their faces high in the air. They all gave Manasse a very wide berth, but expressed, by their actions, a very pronounced air of contempt.

Jack Black and Arthur Arganton D'Arcy drafted down the School House steps, and saw what was going on. They were both very much interested against Manasse, but they did not believe in this rubbish. "By Gosh!"

"The whole business!" exclaimed D'Arcy indignantly.

"I quite agree with Manasse being sent to Coventry, but what is an excuse why we should be punished like this?"

"What excuse? He did it, and he's a good Black."

"Nothing," replied Black. "It's too late now, anyhow. The rule is getting tired of it."

"But never, so they say," exclaimed D'Arcy. "Nonsense indeed, I would think that we ought to come back to the school and receive our punishment."

"Oh, never!" cried Black. "After all, Manasse deserves rough treatment, and it won't do him any harm. We'll put one more in, though, if Lawford & Co. get up to any more tricks."

"Yes, watch!"

Black and Arthur Arganton walked across the quad. It was very pleasant in the shade, bringing about under the shady old elm. The recreation was a perfect one, warm and clear, with the air tingling with red in the west.

"But Arcy!" exclaimed D'Arcy indignantly.

"What's the matter with you, George?" asked Black.

"I really wish to be called an image."

"All right, I'll call you something worse. Fustled every one by the most appropriate," said Black cheerfully. "What's the matter with you, behind?"

"You watch me!"

"That's not an answer. What were you 'by Jove'ing?"

"I watched the recreation because I caught sight of

Cosine Ethel in the Head's garden," replied Arthur Arganton. "But before we go south there I wish to arrange things with you first—"

"By Jove, Ethel, come back, you watch!"

"By Gosh, I wish," hurrying to the little gate which led into the Head's garden.

"Well, I watch!" murmured D'Arcy. "The whole matter!"

He hastened after Black, and when he arrived at the gate he found Black already in conversation with Cosine Ethel. Figgins, too, had just been at the same moment, and he was still there.

"Furry watch, you New House watch!" said D'Arcy angrily.

"Back to you, Gooey!" pined Figgins. "Good-evening, Miss Cleveland."

Cosine Ethel smiled at the new-comer, and D'Arcy could never see she showed anger. Both he and Figgins noticed that the girl was looking towards them, and that her manner was not so cold and withdrawn as she had been when she had been in the school.

There were another under the elm. The visitors could guess the reason for her worried look, and Figgins hastened to say something.

"Don't you worry about Manasse, Miss Cleveland!" he exclaimed. "He hasn't come up, and he deserves all he's got."

"And what have you done?" asked Ethel quickly.

"I've been down to Coventry by the Fourth and Ethel," said Black at length. "He refused to admit his guilt, so we sent him to Coventry until he comes up."

"Oh, that explains why so many of the boys were walking past Manasse in such a peculiar way," said Cosine Ethel quietly. "It was rather childish of them, wasn't it?"

"Yes, watch, don't get!" replied D'Arcy. "We do not agree with the whole of it. Manasse has been sent to Coventry, and they ought to have let it rest at that."

"But you Merry and Lawford are with Manasse," said Ethel. "Are they in Coventry, too?"

"Oh, no," replied Figgins. "The silly change before in Manasse's regard, and the boys are not to be punished as yet. Of course, they're not special friends, but I think they're a couple of reasonable men, all the same."

Cosine Ethel gave Figgins a severe look, which meant she had New House sent to Coventry quite plain.

"You shouldn't say that, Figgins," said the girl quietly.

"I think it is splendid of Tom Merry and Lawford to stick up for their class."

"Oh, better!" agreed Figgins loudly. "They're braves of spirit."

Arthur Arganton gazed at Figgins through his nostrils in surprise.

"Who, you with me, you just said they were a couple of avocations!"

Figgins glared.

"I think they're acting splendidly!" he said simply.

"Cosine Ethel has just said so, and I agree with her. I-I didn't mean what I said before."

"Manasse wouldn't let Cosine Ethel see nothing very serious," said Black.

"Manasse wouldn't speak to Manasse, they're afraid."

"Oh, course not, don't get. He's in Coventry."

"No, I don't like it at all, sent on the girl. It was all my fault, to begin with—of least, it was going to my discredit. Please, couldn't you let Manasse off? Couldn't you let things go on as usual? I can't bear to think of Manasse being sent to Coventry because of me!"

The latter looked at her girl almost in surprise.

"Oh, really, don't get!" protested D'Arcy. "Manasse is only guilty what he deserves!"

"Oh, course!" said Black.

"He's only got to come up, and he's out of Coventry at once," added Figgins.

"You'll suppose he is innocent of everything?" suggested Cosine Ethel.

"But he's proved—"

"It seems to be, I know," admitted the girl. "But suppose, for a moment, that he were guilty as he said? Wouldn't it be hard and unfair to send him to Coventry—"

"—to show him, and make him feel utterly wretched?" The good sense position, but there is a heavy chance that he was guilty of it. Manasse has always been such a splendid fellow, but that I can't believe he's guilty of such base behavior."

"Neither could we at first," replied Black. "But we were forced to do that. The evidence was all against him—his story was a better invention, with nothing whatever to back it up."

Cosine Ethel smiled gravely.

"Yes, it does seem like it," she agreed. "and I'm very disappointed and grieved. But I can't help to think that you're the best."

"You brought this trouble on him. Can't I do anything—
perhaps I may say in the matter at all?"

"Yes, what?"

"There will you let me suggest something? I am more
concerned than anybody, and I don't want Margaret sent to
Germany," said Charlie Kibbel quietly. "Just for my sake,
will you let him off? I can't alter your feelings towards
him, but I think it's awfully hard to send him to Germany.
Will you please let him off, and allow things to go on as
usual for my sake?"

The janitor shuffled their feet uneasily.

"Of course, Miss Cleveland," said Kibbel, "if you really
wish it."

"I do wish it," said Kibbel eagerly.

"When you get to like that, don't you, my dear, very well
without?" questioned Arthur Higgins. "It would be un-
politeness on my part to do a word of that. But, although
I agree, I am not satisfied about the other boys."

"That's what I was thinking," said Figgins slowly. "As
you really want Margaret for all we shall have to let him off.
As you say, you're more concerned than anybody, and so
I'll let the highest say in the matter. I suggest we collect
the fellows together, and put it to them—they're nearly all
in the wood."

"That is a splendid idea," said Kibbel eagerly.

"I'll see what I can do for you and arrange matters if
And the janitor bowed off, taking his leave. They did
not exactly agree with Cousin Kibbel; in fact, they considered
that Margaret thoroughly deserved to be sent to Germany.
But Kibbel's word was law, and had to be obeyed.

The girl watched the meeting under the elms. A big crowd
had collected to listen to Kibbel's speech, and, after some
amount of discussion, an agreement was arrived at. Then
Kibbel & Co., Figgins & Co., and one or two others, hurried
across in their best coats, and crowded round in.

"It's all over, don't you?" said F'berg cheerfully. "The
elms have decided to move to your residence. Margaret
has been ordered from Germany, and everything will go
on as usual."

Cousin Kibbel looked relieved.

"It is so glad," she said simply. "It's very good of you
all."

She had then goodnight without further ado, and
walked quietly away. The janitors were rather disappointed,
as they wanted to have a talk with her. But it was so
well that Cousin Kibbel had left, for the janitors were
worshipping their prep, as they were called.

Two minutes later the quad was peacefully deserted, and
the two Houses were left with Miss Margaret. In Tom
Mey's study, in the Shell passage, the Terrills Three were
hard at work, but Miss Lovelace and Tom Mey were
various glances to and from to Margaret's direction.

And when supper was over, and the Terrills Three
descended to the common room, Margaret could not help
to notice a certain contrast to his former manner, almost
impenetrable, but, nevertheless, apparent.

And Margaret knew perfectly well that that contrast would
be present until he had proved his innocence—until he had
proved that he was nearly the opposite to a coward and a
liar.

CHAPTER 9.
Kerr's Brilliant Idea.

"I'll do it if I like it," said Figgins.

When Figgins heard Kerr, of the New House,
Figgins & Co. were laughing about their study,
waiting for the dinnerbell to ring. There was at least a
couple of an hour before the welcome clang would ring out,
and Harry Wynn, finding it utterly impossible to wait such
an interminable space of time, was busy with a bag of cards
he had just purchased from (Daisy Figgins's) little shop.
Much to Wynn's satisfaction, his dinner had refused to share
them, so they waited to enjoy their dinner.

"I'm bored if I like it, you change?" repeated Kerr
cheerily.

"Like what?" asked Wynn, with his mouth full. "You
can't be talking about one of those cards, because you haven't
tasted one. Perhaps you're talking about dinner? I know
it's round supper-time, you've promised to follow, but I
think you'd better say so."

"Oh, say up!" interrupted Figgins. "You're always
thinking of your money!"

"Well, if Kerr was't talking about such, what was he
talking about?" demanded Harry Wynn. "Here, you
are."

"Talking to me?" asked Kerr, with a start.

"Yes, you change?"

"What's up?"

"What the diabolical was you laughing about just now?"
asked Wynn. "You said you were bored if you liked it,
and what I suggested that you were talking about to-day's
dinner. Figgins called me an ass?"

"I didn't," said Figgins.

"Good, you told me to dry up?"

"No."

"No, I wasn't talking about dinner at all!" he declared.
"Something struck me, and I must have spoken my thoughts
out."

Furry Wynn smiled.

"Being dirty on the stamp, ain't you?" he asked
sympathically.

"Not quite," replied Kerr cheerfully. "not dirty enough,
perhaps, to look any worse for a jolly good dinner by
going myself with prep."

Furry Wynn merely glared. As a matter of fact, he could
not reply, so his mouth was, at the moment, not left to utter
a syllable. Figgins looked on, grinning, then turned to the
Bell boys.

"What's the idea?" he asked. "What have you been
talking about?"

"Well, it's about Margaret," replied Kerr thoughtfully.
Figgins frowned.

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MR. T. L. NEXT WEDNESDAY
Hit the Gipsy, Harry Noble,
Dick Brooks.

1. JEROLD LIMLEY-LIMLEY.
2. ROLAND RAY.
3. KERRISH.



"Come on, right, and trust to me," said the man, pointing to the little boy. "You're a little fellow, and you'll get your own way." He took the child, and stepped to the main water pipe again. (See Chapter 11.)

"I thought we'd done with all that," he said. "I'm proud if I need to talk about the bigger! For Uncle Eben's sake, we've released him from Coventry; but the way's made to show our good intentions."

"My opinion's been the same right from the very first," replied Jerry. "I think that Manners, in all probability turned traitor, but I've still got it fixed in my mind that the facts might be as he has stated. We've condemned him unconditionally, and I'm pleased if I like it! I think we ought to have had some conclusive and positive proof."

"Yes, you're right, sir," interrupted Figgins. "we have got proof! Didn't Tom MERRY testify of the cottage?"

"Oh, yes, sir," agreed Jerry calmly. "He found out that there had been no children there, and was sent away by a cruel old man. Well, in return for that, this old dog and his boys gave some information of his own. Don't forget that Manners said the child was in one of the two gardens, and Tom MERRY only inquired at one cottage."

"The other was empty, you believe?" roared Figgins.

"How do you know?" asked Jerry.

—THE END—

"Well, the Maxwell 'To Let' label was up, and there were no answers, and—"

"There doesn't seem anything," said Kew cheerfully. "Of course it will be somebody to have just moved in. I'll try to get it for all we know, the woman might have come from some other part of the village to look over the cottage, and brought her maid with her. If this really was the reason it's quite on the cards that Maxwells told the truth. It's impossible. I'll simply wait some weeks for my friend's building plans that was going on quietly. Possibly he was elderly and when Tom Merry looked at the door he was naturally afraid of being arrested."

Figgins stared at Kew thoughtfully, and Fatty Wym actually ceased eating.

"My only opinion," opined Figgins. "I never thought of that before."

"And what I said," decided Kew. "You take things too much for granted!"

"Of course," went on Figgins. "It's just possible that people take, but it's quite inadvisable!"

"Exactly," agreed Kew. "Now, an idea struck me a moment ago which will presumably settle things. If we just press Maxwells to return the key, and if he says anything dangerous, the bell rings. It's pretty probable that he told the truth, wasn't it? He wouldn't look me up, and then set me a puzzle the following day."

"No," said Figgins thoughtfully. "But how are we going to press him?"

"That's too long to talk about now," interrupted Kew. "It's just now dinner-time, and besides, Tom Merry and Leather will have to be in the plot. So I vote we get hold of the landlord, and arrange to meet in the woodshed immediately after dinner. We shall be quiet there."

"Good one!" said Figgins. "And the New House fire having been their study, and arranged on the lines of a game. They decided the 'To Let' was a trap, and they were to be taken into their confidence. Maxwells went before, and Figgins & Co. hurried across. The arrangement was made quickly, for the dinner-hall was at that moment."

The very instant grace was over, at the conclusion of the meal, Figgins & Co. took themselves into the quadrangle, and waited for the number one to arrive.

It was a few minutes before they appeared, for they had encountered a little difficulty in finding Maxwells, who, of course, must have no suspicion of what was going on.

"Didn't get here before," said Tom Merry. "Maxwells kept on talking for a bit. He's talking about with his camera now, so he's safe until the bell goes for dinner."

"Safe as any," said Monty Leather. "Now what's this mysterious business about? What's come and idea, I'd like to know. New House, eh?"

"Look here, you'll begin Figgins wrathfully.

"Pshaw, children," interrupted Tom Merry severely. "Merry, if you start again we'll bump you, and neither you from the public meeting."

"That wouldn't be much loss," decided Monty Leather.

"I expect I shall be forced to do that, anyway."

The five persons, who had hurried away, hurried off in the direction of the woodshed. They did not notice that Peter Mellick, of the Fourth, had been coming there separately, naturally from the shadow of one of the plots. The mouth of the Fourth was possessed of an insatiable desire to know everything's business, in addition to his own, and this morning of the New House, with the subsequent advertisement to the "To Let," was a matter he was anxious to get to the bottom of.

"What are the lawyers on to?" he murmured. "Some silly law, I expect. My lad, I'd give anything to know what they're going to do with the woodshed. I don't see how it would be if they're taken to smoking on the spot? It would be ripping to catch 'em on the hop!"

Mellick moved away from the plot, but at that moment Taggles, the wild cat, emerged from the trees close to the woodshed, whistling a hymn. To Mellick's infinite delight, Figgins and the others came, and sat on the edge of the plot to talk a bit. Mellick murmured an exclamation through his teeth, for he knew that Taggles' note was very often interpreted into quite respectable terms.

Meanwhile, the lawyer in the woodshed had got to business. Kew explained fully why he was not absolutely convinced of Maxwells' guilt, and Tom Merry and Leather, who had already been in a similar case, were silent. Figgins, who had been Kew's man in a similar case, explained Tom Merry's case, and Kew, who had been the judge, it explains everything, it explains why the old man wouldn't tell us anything, and it explains where the child disappeared to. What a beautiful thing it was not to touch at the door of the empty cottage!"

"You were," agreed Monty Leather heartily. "A beautiful thing, indeed."

"Yes, yes, indeed," No. 225.

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"But this idea of mine," said Kew, "will settle matters. I'll tell you how to know it. If you go to the door, you'll agree that it's not a bad scheme," he added, suddenly.

"Agree to what?" said Leather briefly. "Ought it to be all right?"

"Right," said Kew. "This is my plan. If Maxwells is about of a full bell he'll naturally be tired of being opened upon and threatened by a landlord at night. If he stands up to the landlord, and attempts to fight him—the spirit of the law is on his side. He'll be a coward, and if he is a coward, he won't be a coward, even if he is a coward, but there's three or four ways to meet."

The lawyer looked bewildered.

"What the deuce are you jiving about?" demanded Tom Merry. "If you agree we're going to wait until a landlord comes along, and happens to find Maxwells in the lot?"

"I don't see it," said Kew slowly. "Figgins is the landlord, is he not?"

"Look here, Kew," he explained wrathfully. "If you call me a landlord—"

"Oh, well," exclaimed Kew. "Why can't you wait until I've done. Somebody's got to set the landlord, and you're the most suited to the part?"

"Oh, yes, if," exclaimed Figgins. "I should like to know why I'm more like a landlord than Tom Merry. If you're trying to set the lawyer, Kew, you've only got to say, and I'll try to set a snare for you."

"Very much obliged."

"We came here to talk over a scheme," he said, "and to arrange. It's not the talking that has you, you see! When you're done up, won't you look more like a man?"

Figgins calmed down.

"You've your eye," he agreed. "Get on with the business."

"Well, tonight, after locking up, Tom Merry and Leather have got to go Maxwells to go down to Rylands. He'll go right enough because he's doing everything he can to make up for yesterday. It'll be ready dark, and he'll be going down Rylands Lane. Figgins, dressed up as a landlord, will suddenly spring out, and threaten him with a landlord. In the twilight, Maxwells won't be able to see through the darkness, and he'll have to tell by his actions whether he's really a coward."

"How can you tell if you're not there?" asked Fatty Wym.

"Figgins can tell, anyway," replied Kew. "Besides, we can take Figgins & Co. into it, and five or six of us can be crawling behind the hedge. We shall have a fine view of everything. Maxwells will be taken abnormally by surprise, and his actions will prove to us what he's made of."

"By Kew, it's a ripping idea," said Figgins enthusiastically. "I'll see the landlord in the lot. It's a grand scheme, as you all know, and I'll let Maxwells see me through my disguise. We shall have to keep it jolly dark, though. If Maxwells gets a breath of it he'll be prepared, and the whole thing'll be out."

The meeting continued to discuss the great scheme. There was a suitable amount of chatter and glee, however. This was no ordinary House job; it was a job which to test the pluck of one of their old plumes. And the justice, having thoroughly understood the scheme, settled down to discuss the details of the matter.

Finally Figgins started, and looked towards the door.

"What's that?" he asked quickly. "Didn't you hear a note?"

"I heard something," agreed Tom Merry.

He stepped over to the door quickly, unlocked it, and stepped out. "That he closed the door quickly, and called."

"It's all right," he said. "Only old Taggles standing a corner."

"By the meeting settled down again. But, contrary to form, the note of Taggles from the scene was the signal for Mellick to hurry across the Quad, to the woodshed. The mouth of the Fourth had been concerning himself with impudence, and bringing all manner of insinuations upon the unconscious head of Taggles."

"The cat's paw," murmured Mellick quietly, as he approached the woodshed. "I don't suppose I shall be able to hear anything here."

A minute later he was crouched in the back of the shed, with his ear pressed against a slit in the woodwork. Evidently, to Mellick's delight, the meeting was about at its end, for the words he overheard gave him an satisfaction whatever, but only tended to increase his already excited curiosity.

"All right, then," he heard Tom Merry say, "it's all arranged. We'll do our part of the business, and you'll do the rest."

"That's it," said Kew. "We'll be at the old side at half-past eight. It'll be tonight then, and the overhauling"

town will make it darker still. I don't possibly see how the plan can succeed!"

"No, it's a trapline," said Mandy Lortson. "Now, as I've said back, I suggest we pop over to the backshop, and think in the course of the enterprise in groups here."

"Dear, dear!" agreed Fatty Ryan heartily. "And the meeting breaks up. The janitor looped out, and crossed the road, with great suspicion that Mellich was being followed. What people there did not notice his appearance, could he had seen them enter the little backshop. They had returned to the old class, and looped under one of them as though he had been there since dinner."

But Mellich was thinking deeply, and as the plotter emerged from the backshop he made his decision.

"It'll be rather risky breaking through after looking up, but I'll do it," he murmured. "Come to that, I can be out with Tagger's keys the gates, and walk about until half past night. I'll creep down to the old class, and see what's on. It'll be worth it to get to be left out in the cold."

Had Mellich found more of the plot, he would probably have walked to it, and taken no further notice. But, being to Tagger's little rest he had heard nothing definite, and Mellich's curiosity was to cause Kerr's brilliant scheme to read in a very different manner to that intended.

CHAPTER 9.

Not According to Programme.

THOMAS MERRY glanced at his watch. "It's all wrong!" he exclaimed, with satisfaction.

"Manners has started off just at the right moment. It's a quarter past eight, so by the time he arrives at the old site it'll be just upon half-past."

"Could it have occurred to him," said Mandy Lortson.

"The plot had occurred to him," said Mandy Lortson. "He had seen previously Tom Merry had asked Manners to run down to Ryeboume. The amateur photographer of St. Jim's had agreed without hesitation, purely because he was anxious to please his theme as much as possible. For the old relations had not been renewed, there was a lot to be made out of it, which would have led to the greatest success."

Manners wondered why Tom Merry had walked until after looking up to ask him to go to Ryeboume, but he made no comment. He simply slipped on his cap, and departed. But Kerr's scheme was not destined to be carried out exactly as intended.

When Manners arrived in the quad he found it apparently deserted. The sky was overcast, their work heavy clouds, which made the twilight much deeper than usual. A chill wind blew across the quad, and caused the stone to rattle their leaves restlessly.

Manners slipped across to the tree which was usually used to span the top of the wall. But as he was about to clamber up he noticed a shadow.

A dark figure crept out from the back of the greenhouse, and Manners stood stock still. The form was that of Mr. Bartlett, the photographer of the New House. By a stroke of luck Mr. Bartlett had not seen the janitor, and Manners had an opportunity to slip behind the tree-trunk.

"My hat!" he murmured. "If he'd spotted me it would have meant a globe eye."

He waited there impatiently, but Mr. Bartlett seemed to be in a hurry to depart. And all the while the previous minutes were passing, making it impossible for Manners to arrive at the position of the greenhouse, and arranged. He kept distributed over the field with Mr. Bartlett's single angle-camera, though it was dark—would have been covering distance. The Horticulturalist's eyes were suspiciously sharp, and Manners had some reason to remain hidden. Until Mr. Bartlett disappeared into the New House the janitor could not move. And Mr. Bartlett was apparently enjoying his work, and would not go back for some minutes.

Meanwhile, out in Ryeboume Lane, a form was cautiously proceeding down the long slope. It was Fatty, Mellich, all eyes with curiosity and excitement. The course of the Fawcett was more than a little unusual, for as far as he had seen nobody, and had not an inkling of the truth. This had the effect of making him nervous, but his curiosity had taken hold of him, and he went on. Luckily, he had managed to penetrate out of the quad, just before Mr. Bartlett crept from the New House. Not a word knew that Mellich was out of the school gates, for he had not even told Lortson of his project.

"I wonder what the scheme the game is?" he murmured to himself. "I'm interested if I can see a goal. And yet Tom Merry and Manners don't look half-past eight at all odds. It's just a quarter half-past eight, but I can't see a sign of any body."

At first Mellich had walked cautiously, close to the border, but now, as he had seen nothing suspicious, he walked in the centre of the road. Mellich liked the centre of the road, as it was clear and open.

As he walked, he cast furtive glances into the woods. They were not suspicious, and they were evidently not suspicious, probably already, the body form made the road extremely dark. By peering forward, Mellich could just distinguish the side a little distance ahead.

The wind whirled strongly as the wind passed through the leaves, and Mellich felt himself grow more nervous than ever. The total absence of Tom Merry & Co. was rather disappointing, for he had expected to find a whole crowd of janitors.

The hour was drawing, however.

Now and then his eyes. Mellich walked on mechanically, but he had just decided in his own mind that he came except the janitor's plan had been abandoned. For this reason Mellich passed, intending to make his way back with all possible haste. His attention had now got the better of his curiosity.

Then, as the noise around as he passed, a form suddenly broke from the hedge with a crashing of branches.

Mellich started as Sam Mandy, too started to creep up and then, before the newcomers could utter a word, Mellich caught sight of the apartment landscape, and the black mark, which constituted the upper portion of the "backshop's" tree.

A startled gasp escaped Mellich's lips as he started to retreat, quite impossible to accompany as a rule.

For a second he stood rooted to the spot. Then, before Figgins could approach, and such a lot, Mellich turned on his heel and fled. But as though a thousand hands were after him. He flew up the road, and as he disappeared into the gloom a chorus of excited yells rang out, and the road became filled with forms.

"My only Aunt Mary Ann!" gasped Figgins, waving off his aunt.

"My hat!"

"Geez! Geez!"

"He's broken!" exclaimed Jack Biker heartily.

"He's broken it—looked it like a little second game!" speculated Figgins.

"There's no doubt now about the matter. Manners hasn't got any more plans than that."

Mellich's little figure: "quite right, Figgins!" said Fatty appreciatively. "I am hardly out on my own here! This is absolutely rotten! I am Mandy has totally disgraced himself!"

The janitors were all standing in the road staring up towards St. Jim's as though they could not believe their eyes.

In their hearts they had expected Manners would stand up to the supposed landscape, and they had only looked upon it as possible that he would run away. He kept talking to the janitors in such a nervous and excited manner, that the janitors were almost ready to be moved, filled with amazement.

Never for a second did it enter their heads that the janitor had not been Manners. They had entirely no reason but supposing that it was anyone else. Manners was the same height as Mellich, was dressed in blue, and wore the school cap. In the dark gloom it had been impossible to distinguish Mellich's face, and as he had not uttered an intelligible remark there was nothing to prove his identity.

Nobody else but Manners was expected to pass down Ryeboume Lane at that moment; the janitor had not the faintest suspicion that Mellich had previously got on the track of the plot. In addition, Manners himself was not there.

In the janitors were not to be blamed in the least for coming to the conclusion that Manners had acted the part of an object lesson.

His conclusion was proved beyond dispute. He had been given by some party of eyes to see the life without even offering a moment's resistance. Being accustomed was ready to agree that it was he who had come down the lane, and when Manners could prove conclusively that Tom Merry & Co.



that he was at the Zoo's the whole time his position was infinitely more than it had been before.

The Zoo, which had been supposed to save his pluck had ended in further disgrace. Had Manservant been able to walk free the disguised fugitive, the New Haven chief would probably have been the recipient of several nasty letters. Indeed, however, to Mellich's vicinity, and to Mr. Hatfield's unobtrusive possession of the quest, the whole plan had failed.

But the trouble was, the plan had failed primarily to its perpetrators. To them it seemed eminently successful.

"Fugitive was the first to rebuke himself—which he did as Mellich's form disappeared into the shade."

"After him?" asked Fuggles lustily. "No! He rolls the log, and then lets up on the quest. My hat, he drives to the hotel out of the village!"

"Come on!" said Melich scornfully.
And the seven persons raced to Mr. Zoo's at top speed.

CHAPTER 10. Just Like Mellich!

THINK he is?"

"After him?"
"After the runner?"
"Yes, certainly, such boys!" explained Arthur Symington, in a ringing way. "Girls hold of the girls' traffic! I have made my mind to give Manservant a severe talking! To persuade a few more youths will make him wretched! But Zoo, come back, you foolhead!"

But Mr Zoo was talking to this girl. His companion had dashed up to the gate. Mellich's form had been seen crawling up the wall, and for a moment Fuggles, who was looking back over his shoulder. But, as that moment, Melich had seized Fuggles at the gate, and, instead of being, the whole seven persons burst through into the quest. Fuggles had been standing at the gate for a moment, and had heard the runner's shout.

"No here?" he ejaculated, as they steamed past. "Come on, you young lot! I want all five names! My hat, if they don't slip past!"

Fuggles closed the gate desperately. Halse & Co., and the New Haven men, had hurried straight to the zoo, which stood close to the high wall. This tree was cut at the same place Mellich had disappeared, and consequently, Manservant, who was standing there had not seen Mellich cross.

Mr. Hatfield had stopped to smoke his pipe out, as was only natural, and Manservant had not dared to climb the wall during the Housemaster's close proximity. It was, indeed, fairly two minutes since Mr. Hatfield had disappeared, and Manservant had waited a moment longer, because, to increase his impatience, Fuggles had just recovered from his fall, which, it is worth a moment's last pausing, was to end in Manservant's disgrace. The waiting runner's attention was attracted to the gate, and he did not notice Mellich's form dash behind a tree barely thirty feet distant. The first moment the runners dashed into the quest, and instantly commenced searching for their quarry.

They Manservant hadn't a ghostly a chance. Nobody had known of his presence! He himself was not aware of Mellich's proximity, and Mellich reached down against the wall, breathless and too light-headed to move.

Manservant was obstinately surprised to see the runner stream in at the gate, and he could not help wondering that they were off in a very excited condition. He walked toward cautiously.

"What on earth's the matter?" he exclaimed. "What

"How he is?"
"He's on his way!"
"Have him over?"

And Manservant was indeed looked over. The startled runner simply reached up to him, and he fell in the quest, with a pile of gapping stones on top of him. Every one of the runners believed that they had captured the boy who had run from them. As Mellich remained silent, they could believe nothing else.

They had been looking for Manservant, and Manservant was here.

Therefore the quest was successful. The final link in the chain of misadventure was complete.

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"What's up?" queried Mamma impatiently, straggling to the door. "What's wrong? Don't keep us, you bewitched! Show us your ailment!"

"You, or I got off it when we've collapsed you," gasped Blake wistfully. "There's no reason for this this time! There's no need to make inquiries for the present—and if you tell a shaver all you've been in the last it won't make any difference."

"Walk in, son!" exclaimed D'Arcy indignantly. "We've got you back and again, back here—Mamma, you wretch!"

"How can I appear so grieved, Mamma, if I am indisposed—no indisposition, for I feel as though I had been working. The justice's midnight had left him quite exhausted." "What the deuce do you mean—fair and square? Why have you tried us on?"

"What up?" shouted Flaggie angrily. "My only lot, I believe has been going to eat the innocent grapes!"

Two forms leaped through the curtain jostling. They were Tom Merry and Mandy Lawless, and their faces were grave.

"What's up?" asked the captain of the third, eagerly.

"What's that you're so excited?"

"Mamma, of course," explained Blake.

"Mamma, the second?"

"What! Do you mean that—?"

Tom Merry broke off.

"I mean that Mamma has acted about her things as bad as he did down in the village," replied Blake gravely. "He's shown himself to be an absolute coward—no amount of talk, and I can tell you I don't want to have any more to do with him."

"Good heavens!" said Tom Merry, aghast.

"Mamma's behaved wretchedly. He was on his feet now, and he should walk into the circle of eggs from round him.

"I don't know what you mean, Mamma. I've been in the queue, ever since bedtime! I don't know what you're talking about!"

"Don't know what we're talking about?" roared Flaggie, indignantly. "You haven't in Hydrobia Lane been a hundred men, wife no. You didn't think were the well and dry? You're the great! You're come into the gate, did you?"

"No," roared Mamma. "I didn't."

"No, you didn't!"

Flaggie fell back into the arms of Betty Wynn and Kate.

"Do—do you mean to say you don't?" he gasped. "Do you mean to tell me you're going to stick out that you weren't there? We saw you with our own eyes—we all saw you, and when I jumped out of the lodge you can like a frightened pig!"

"I haven't been out of the queue since bedtime!" howled Mamma, packing round him with wild excitement. "What do you mean? What's all this rubbish about somebody jumping out of the lodge? You're all dirty! You're all over all your bodies!"

The justice simply gasped.

"Do—do justice at!" ejaculated Flaggie.

"Good heavens! I wonder how he can think so!"

The justice's Mamma's denial sounded simply astounding. They were positive in their own minds about the matter, but a single boy had a good deal to say. Yet Mamma denied having been in Hydrobia Lane at all!

It was amazing.

"What happened?" asked Mandy Lawless indignantly.

"Tell me what happened, Blake!" the lodge for him, as arranged.

"Why, we all jumped!" explained Blake, as if he were a common little schoolboy before he reached out, and I must say we were all very nervous. Then Peggy jumped out and stood him. My only lot, you should have seen him!"

"What happened?" asked Tom Merry, eagerly.

"He let me a straggled pig—he was too frightened to yell properly—and you got his lot!" said Blake. "We chased him on, and collected him just as he was in the road. And how he says he wasn't there! He has the audacity to tell us that he's been within touch of the door!"

"It's the truth!" roared Mamma wildly. "I was going down to the village, but I couldn't get out of the queue, because old Betty has been. I was just going when you all rushed up! I tell you I don't understand! I tell you on my honour that it wasn't me you saw in the lane!"

"The awful Blake!"

"The leading hand!"

"The lying rascal!"

The justice's denial to a degree, Mamma's denial sounded awful to their ears. They had never believed him capable of such terrible falsehood. Then Merry found it hard to believe such lies about his own.

"Are you sure of this, Flaggie?" he asked anxiously. "Are you sure it was him?"

"Sure!" repeated Flaggie, in desperation. "You see, if you see the man! Didn't he all see him? And who else could go down the lane at just that night! It is really not somebody else, where is he? I tell you it was Mamma!"

"Oh wretch!"

"We all saw him!"

"How can he play on us as you?"

"There's no doubt in it!"

"Walk in, son, Tom Merry," exclaimed Flaggie. "I am very anxious to have you see it, but Mamma has so lately disgusted me. I shall never regard him as a friend again."

"He's so covered in the room!" said Blake.

"And a lot to his honour!" added Flaggie warmly.

Mamma stood in the middle of the group, pointing with confusion. His mind was in a whirl of uncertainty; he could not grasp the fact that he was suspected of being guilty of such treason; he did not realize that Peggy would be obliged to reveal his lie to the ears of his father.

And, almost within touch of the crowd, Peggy Mellich stretched. The extraordinary words of the justice had surprised himself by now and a slow grin was accompanying his lips. He had heard practically everything, and explained how completely he had placed Mamma in a false position.

If he said nothing, it would be impossible to say that it had been he whom the justice had seen. He had told us one of his projects, and—well had taken place as possibly that Mamma was actually involved.

Mellich knew that if he spoke the truth he would be severely punished and looked upon with some suspicion for the whole lower school. And Mellich was no child in his temper; and his position in the school of popularity was his second object. By keeping silent he could escape all trouble.

And Mellich had no question whatever about letting the blame rest upon Mamma. He was quite old enough to let matters rest as they were.

So, telling himself that he had got out of the scrape mostly by accident, he went behind the tree, and passed the crowd. He imagined that he had left his place of concealment nearly covered in the darkness. But it so happened that Mamma, whose way was that about darkness and in the darkness, was really he was in that direction as he went. Mamma, whose way was that about darkness and in the darkness, was really he was in that direction as he went. Mamma, whose way was that about darkness and in the darkness, was really he was in that direction as he went.

At the present moment he was too deeply involved in this effort to think of anything else. He could not imagine why it was the justice had seen. It occurred like some wild nightmare to him, and he passed into the night lane with all sorts of things to his mind. He was in the lane, but he had all sorts of things to his mind. He was in the lane, but he had all sorts of things to his mind.

It was a terrible time for him to hear, and he again endeavored to prevent his entrance. But by now he had succeeded his temper, and was cool and pale.

"I can't imagine what has happened," he said quietly.

"The party of witnesses. I agree to you that I have not been outside the gate of the Jew's shop tonight! I don't know who you saw in the lane, but it was not me!"

"Lie!" exclaimed Blake furiously.

"Do you, you do?"

"He's getting worse and worse—he can't speak without lying!"

Mamma's words, quiet as they were, had aroused the justice to fury, and they aroused round him excitedly. Thus, to relieve their feelings, they asked Mamma with hands that were by no means gentle, and banged him again and again on the head ground.

Then, looking somewhat relieved, they trooped into the entrance-way, leaving their unfortunate victim in pain, blood up and follow in his tracks.

Half an hour later, after an exciting meeting in the common-room—during which Mamma had been severely reprimanded by Flaggie for not coming—Tom Merry and Mandy Lawless entered their study in the third room. At first they had both been rather surprised, but, after looking the whole story, all their doubts were dispelled. And they were so disappointed, so grieved, that they entered their study with gloomy faces and silent tongues.

Mamma was there, and he looked up eagerly.

"I say, Tommy, you don't believe that your, do you?" he asked indignantly. "You don't think that?"

Tom Merry gazed at Mamma steadily, and then, with—

Tom Merry gazed at Mamma steadily, and then, with—

not a word, he mentioned to Towler, and the pair left the room again. For a moment Masters gazed at the closed door in consternation. Then he recalled the full extent of the robbery which had befallen him.

He crouched back into his chair and buried his face in his hands.

CHAPTER 11.
Stunned by All.

MASTERS did not sleep that night. For hours he lay tossing in bed, making his beds for an explanation of the events which had taken place on the previous evening. But try as he would, he could not arrive at any satisfactory conclusion. He could not imagine a single boy who could have been left in the lane.

Of course, it was obvious that the boy, wherever he was, was keeping himself from the world, while he lay thought in a secret hideout. This Masters realized at once, and he set on his thought that when he found out the culprit, he would first take in a hiding such as would live in his memory for years.

At last he fell off to sleep, and when midnight rang he was looking haggard and pale. Nobody took any notice of him. His very existence was ignored. While dressing Towler made a few remarks concerning Masters, but Frederick Allen and Kingston were not a step to it. It had been universally agreed that the whole subject should be forgotten, and that Masters was to be treated as though he had no existence.

To the incident by this was a terrible outcome. He went through evening lessons dull with misery, and when dressing came he walked out into the quad, and propped himself against the gate.

The hardest blow for him to bear had been the fact that Queen Ethel had departed, and had, like the rest, ignored him. She had made no display whatsoever, but had left without even giving him a nod.

As Masters leaned against the gate his glance wandered off over the lawn, where a group about the quad, presently it rested upon Mellich, and, unconsciously Masters commenced thinking about the incident of the day. And back to his memory came the incident when Mellich had crept down behind the tree the previous night. Suddenly Masters started, and his eyes shone with excitement.

"By Jingo!" he murmured. "I've got it! Mellich was the thief who was kept Black & Co. Of course! He's the very thing who would, in a panic, commit some thing like that. It is just like Mellich! If I'm wrong, why was he so cunning about that?"

Masters walked into the quad, and paced up and down restlessly.

"It must have been Mellich," he said himself. "What can I do now but to think of it before! The matter must have got out of the quad, before old Batty came out, and

in the gloom the Fourth Formers mistook him for me. He's about my size, and— By Jingo! I'll tell the boys about it."

He looked round him, and then walked boldly towards the chains of Study No. 3. But Black & Co. had seen him coming, and they turned and walked away.

Masters passed, and uttered a sigh. In a moment all his excitement had vanished. He realized how useless it was to ask the janitor to believe him.

"What's the good?" he asked himself miserably. "What's the good of stating anything? They all think I'm an awful liar, and will tell me to my face that I'm simply taking for an excuse. There's nothing to prove that Mellich was one; nobody saw him except me when he crawled out from against the wall. No, I'd say nothing. It'd be the best way, and only ever another day."

And so, although he was positively certain in his own mind as to the culprit, he knew it would be useless to breach the subject to his former thieves. They all looked upon him with contempt, and refused to believe a word he uttered—refused, in fact, to listen to him at all.

But Masters was a just boy, and he did not condemn his class for the attitude they adopted. He knew perfectly well that the evidence was all against him, and he would not see how they could think otherwise. Therefore, although he was strictly against the boy, he was really with him. Mellich, the worst of the school. For, by this time, Masters had won a single death as to the real culprit's identity.

It was a half-holiday today, and after dinner most of the juniors gathered themselves in smoking benches and walked out to the gymnasium.

As few Masters contented himself with standing by the rope watching a game match. On the fence which a game was in progress between the Fourth and Sixth, and when Masters looked in their direction he remembered, with a gasp, and in a moment, that he himself should have been taking part in it.

Once when Kilburn, the captain of St. Jim's, scored a magnificent boundary, he turned to Lindsay Lindsay, who stood by his side.

"By Jingo!" he said. "That was a ripping hit!"
Lindsay Lindsay looked at the other way, and slowly walked off.

Masters was chastened by overwork. Miserable all day, having lost all interest in the game, he was weary from the heat, and he lay on the ground in the deserted area, wondering as to how to spend the afternoon.

Then an idea struck him. Why not go to the picture-gallery at Weyland?
There was a picture every Wednesday, and it was a lovely day for a game.

Masters did not hesitate long. Left to himself, he slipped by all, he looked upon the line as a splendid one. He soon made up his mind, and he slowly enjoyed moving-pictures. The janitor would fill the afternoon perfectly.

Five minutes later he had secured his bicycle from the shed and was off. He rode bravely, and although he tried to dismiss unpleasant thoughts from his mind he was fit to be made miserable.

Even when he entered Weyland, with its quiet, sleepy looks, he still thought of the disaster which rested on his shoulders.

At the picture-gallery he stopped his machine, then went into a comfortable shop to drink a glass of ginger-beer. Refreshed by his hot drink, and walked across to the picture-gallery.

He was looking in his pockets for some papers, when a policeman down the street caught him to task. The world he witnessed turned him to stop his money back into his pocket and rush to the edge of the pavement.

Far down the street, coming at full pace, was a three-wheeler. It was a modern one, and its chimney was belching forth a cloud of smoke and sparks.

On a turn, past the picture-gallery, with a rush and a rattle from its gear, behind, started and backwards, a crowd of people were rushing about, first upon following the engine to the scene of the fire.

Suddenly Masters' miserable thoughts were banished. His eyes in coming to Weyland was Weyland, and he looked in the picture-gallery to find the culprit, but he found it not, and peddled off at top speed after the three-wheeler.

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CHAPTER 12.
Manners—Hick.

"**B**Y your paper statement, that's a big bluff, ain't it?"

"My dear little boy," said Manners, "it's awful!"

"The place is there, ain't it?" he asked, "that was left, ain't it?"

"The child who was standing next to Manners shook his head gravely.

The pair were almost at the front of the crowd, and Manners' boyish face was being contorted against the ledge he had down the road. The crowd was of considerable proportions, but it was kept in check by the firemen and police. The engine was already pumping water on to the burning building bravely, but the water supply was low, and the pressure was not sufficient to meet the requirements.

For the house, a large one on the outskirts of the town, was built a story or two above the level of the street, and it was the second story which seemed to be suffering most. Nearly every window looked dark inside and flames.

"Is there anybody in the house?" Manners asked eagerly, turning to the man.

"I couldn't tell you that, sir," replied the other. "I'd just stepped in to see the woman on the top, at all events. They say that the woman's husband shows considerable interest in the way the house looks."

"Well, if the house is empty it doesn't matter much," said Manners.

"That's quite right," agreed the police officer. Manners watched with eager eyes, scanning the building from end to end. Suddenly his gaze became fixed, and he lifted a protesting finger and pointed.

"Look!" he shouted hoarsely. "Look!"

His shout was heard by many, and following the direction of his pointing finger the crowd was able to distinguish through the haze of smoke a small fire at the topmost window of all.

"Good heavens!" shouted somebody.

"It's a child!"

"He's being killed!"

"Who's the woman?"

"Oh, why don't you bring him?"

Wondering what they were up to, and as they watched the people on the window raised, and then the small head of a little boy appeared.

"Hold!" he screamed. "Here we are! All the water is being up, and I can't get down. Oh, I don't know what to do!"

The crowd became restless, and dozens of people showed encouragement to the little fellow at the top of the burning house. But that was of no material help. The firemen, with one exception, paid their heads toward the window, but none that it was impossible to do. The engine had not yet arrived, and there was no prospect of its coming for many minutes.

For a moment Manners turned his eyes from the upper window, and looked at the clear space below. A gentleman of about thirty was standing there, wearing his hands with great and fury.

"Can't you do anything?" Manners heard him say to the lead fireman. "Can't you save him? Good heavens! To think that I should stand here and see my own child burnt to death!"

"The crowd will be here presently, sir," replied the fireman.

"Presently!" shouted the father desperately. "What is the good of that? The fire will reach that room in less than five minutes, and if the crowd come at this moment it could hardly be created in time."

"It's not so bad as that, sir," protested the fireman. "I should say the little one's safe for ten minutes at least."

A man dashed through the crowd, and stopped, pointing, toward the lead fireman.

"They can't get to the engine here in less than fifteen minutes!" he shouted hoarsely. "It's broken down, and—"

"Broken down?" echoed the father miserably. "Good heavens! Then there is no hope. Have you no ladders of any description?" he asked hoarsely. "Have you anything—anything?"

The fireman's answer was unhelped by Manners, but the father's repeated pining up and down told its own story. Meanwhile, for about the child was leaning out of the

window, crying piteously. The crowd was in an uproar, but nobody could be seen to help the crying child.

There were no ladders, no ropes, and it was utterly impossible to reach the top story from the interior of the building. And all the time the flames were creeping nearer and nearer, in spite of all the efforts of the firemen working bravely.

Manners stood looking on with his heart in his mouth. He looked longingly at the child.

"Can't anything be done?" he asked himself, again and again. "Great Heavens! To think of all these good-looking boys, unable to do anything, while that little boy is burnt to death!"

Eagerly he scanned the building again, and a gleam of hope returned to his eyes as he saw, running quite close to the burning window, a large, four-foot gutter pipe. The flames had not reached it yet, but it could easily be seen that the iron would soon make headway in its direction.

With a gasp he had started Manners' head-on thought which caused him to turn back with a start.

"They will use it, of course, but they'll command the ladder,"

"By Jingo, I'll give you my word, at any rate, that they're wrong!"

"You're a damn fool that I can reach the window by that pipe, and I'll try to do so even if I'm killed in the attempt."

He seemed to go mad for a moment. Everything left his mind except the fact that the little boy was in immediate danger of being burnt to death. There was a chance open to save him, and Manners meant to take that chance, come what may.

With a cry he pushed through the people in front of him, and dashed across the open space toward the building.

A shout went up on every side. But Manners never heeded it. Two policemen rushed after him, and he was cut from between their pressure. Straight to the gutter-pipe he ran, and, reaching it, kept at it like a mad dog.

Depression had his extra agility, and he crept up the pipe with amazing speed, being quite out of reach by the time that the two policemen arrived at the top.

"You young idiot!" shouted one of the constables. "Come down!"

"What?" he yelled. "If you go on!"

repeated the other.

Manners had recovered his composure by this time, and he knew the gross peril of his position. Without looking down, without pausing a second, he continued his upward ascent.

By this time the crowd had reached him in front, and a roar began from dozens of perfect gentlemen of all ages. There, as though by magic, their voices were hushed, and they stood watching breath-

lessly, toward the spot.

All eyes were turned upward, and every a hand was clapped. The old Manners watched. A hot gust of smoke was being blown into his face by the breeze, and for a second he was forced to cling to the pipe with both hands, feet, and fingers, and press his forehead against the iron band passing.

"I shall do it!" he thought bravely.

Yes, he was too daring the boy, back by back he went on, until at last he arrived opposite the window. The pipe was quite close, and he was able to step on to the sill with practically no trouble. But the effort was terrible, dangerous, and he would have been cut below on to the lead pipe.

"Thank!"

"He's in! Hurrah!"

"He's in! Hurrah!"

"He's in! Hurrah!"

The crowd yelled with joy and enthusiasm. Manners was indeed within the room. For a moment he leaned against the wall, breathing. But he knew that it would be fatal to waste time, for the fire below was steadily creeping, little by little, toward the ceiling. In a very short time it would be too hot to step. When he had ascertained it was warm beneath his hands.

The little boy was crying copiously, but hoarsely did as Manners told him.

Climber on to his father's back, he would be sure of saving his neck, and when there was a chance to

and don't miss your chance, said Manners hoarsely.

The youngster nodded vigorously, but was too choked with sobs and fright to reply.

For a second, as Manners stood looking from the window, his heart almost failed him. There could be no doubt that the ground in safety!

THE NEW LIBRARY.—No. 225.

A BATHING, LADY, BATHING, THE, AT THE NEW YORK.

BY MARTIN CLIFFORD.



It seemed an impossible task.

But Manners, with his teeth and clenched fist upon the sill, refused himself that he failed to be clever. He had another life to live now as well as his own, and he simply had to reach the ground in safety.

The most difficult part of all was gaining a hold upon the paper pipe, but at last he succeeded—after being within an inch of disaster.

Clearly, even so slowly, he descended. Then, as he gained confidence, he allowed himself to sliding down more rapidly. Presently this seemed slow, and the pipe was almost unobtainably low in his hands, and only a moment after he had did just the thing came a long flame roared up from a lower window, and lashed the pipe lengthwise.

A gap of relief swept over the watching crowd. Had that flame come a minute earlier, both Manners and his charge would have been dashed to the ground, many feet beneath.

"H'll do it! By Heaven, he'll do it!" cheered the father joyously.

Wonderfully startled a cheer, but it was instantly silenced. Manners was not down yet. But it was now, in a way that he had accomplished his object. Through chinks, indistinguishable to him, he was through—and he was none the worse for his adventure. He was hot, disoriented, and dizzy, but he had performed his act without being burned by the ever-increasing fire.

But he had only been in the very nick of time.

As fast as he got hold on the ground, and again the crowd roared with excitement and confusion. The little father was at the foot of the pipe, and he dragged his child precariously from Manners' back.

The hero of the hour stood wiping the perspiration from his brow, and smiling quietly to himself. He was real now, and thanked Heaven that he had been allowed to descend to the ground in safety.

But he was nervous, and looked round him almost in fright.

The best thing in the world he wished for was an oration, but he knew plain well that unless he made his escape at once he would be seized and interrogated. And Manners, the most wise lawyer, was extremely modest. Personally, he could not see anything great in what he had done, and his only wish was to get away.

By a stroke of luck, his opportunity came at hand. The father, who had been his chief aid, and had sent off a messenger to his wife to say that everything was all right, and had then the belated fire-engine arrived, and everybody's attention was drawn to it.

"Now's my chance!" thought Manners heartily.

He dropped his hands to St. Jim's cap from his head, and slipped away towards the back of the burning building. There, making a detour over the garden, he came out in the park way further down. "Gone by," he had calculated, his help was becoming almost of little use.

In a moment he had crossed it, seeing Manners into the stable, and was proceeding at full speed for St. Jim's.

As he left Wyland behind he gazed with relief, and stopped presently to straighten his clothing.

At St. Jim's he talked himself up, and when his father came he had the satisfaction of knowing that not a word had slipped away of the identity of the boy who had saved the whole town from disaster. He thought he could have been told that, but he was not Manners' son. He had performed a noble action, and he did not wish to be paid for it.

For Manners was made of the right stuff—yet to the backbone.

CHAPTER 18.

The Messenger Report.

ARTHEUR AUGUSTUS SPARTY received his father's message into his ears, and surveyed his clothes through it.

"I have really no exact information to give you, dear boy," he said, "but from what I gather, the blow at Wyland was of fearful proportions. At any rate, the fire was one of the biggest in the town, and it was practically unaided."

"But?" said Blake. "I say, I wonder if any of our chaps was in it?"

"I'm not heard of anybody," said Sparty thoughtfully, "it should have been in the news, if it was. We never have heard of any one being burnt here."

"Well, Sparty, one might imagine you are quite fond of seeing burnable folk!"

The names of Study No. 4 were collected in a little group in a corner of the street. It was the day following Manners' adventure in Wyland—namely, the day after the "Messenger."

The Little Messenger, No. 286.

his lessons were over, and summer of the fire at Wyland had revealed the school through various sources. Justice in all parts of St. Jim's was discussing the affair.

The Merry and Mitty Leathers looked up to Blake & Co., and the lawyer was receiving in his hand a folded newspaper.

"I say," exclaimed Tom Merry, "have you seen the latest news?" There's been a shocking great fire at Wyland, and—"

Blake called.

"Do you call that the latest news?" he asked. "It's about forty miles!"

"Yes, that's so."

"The fire itself may be," replied Tom Merry. "But there's a full report in this paper, and it says that a St. Jim's boy—a justice, too—saved his life in what a terrible way was performed at the top of the house."

Blake & Co. were all attention at once.

"My son?" exclaimed Blake. "That's news, anyhow?"

"Who was it?" demanded Merton.

"They don't know."

"Don't know who it was?" asked Digby curiously.

"No," Mitty responded him, and he was all this very instant he had performed that rescue. "They say in this report that it was one of the policemen there that was ever been done, and, by the look of it, I should judge it is."

"Let's look at the guilty thing," said Blake.

They crowded round, and read the entire full report which was given. The newspaper, however, was unable to furnish the identity of the boy who had performed such an act of heroism. It merely stated that he belonged to St. Jim's, and was a justice—probably a member of the Fourth of July.

"I wonder who on earth it was!" said Arthur Augustus thoughtfully. "It is worth remembering, you know, that the boy should say nothing whatever about the matter."

"It's jolly queer," said Mitty Leathers. "Anyhow, it shows that the chap was very modest, or he'd have said something. He must have gone to Wyland, and come back without saying the word in anybody's ear."

"Oh course," said Tom Merry. "He wouldn't," said Tom Merry. "Anyhow, I'm pleased if I can name anybody. Nearly all the chaps were on the playing-field. I believe the Shell were there to a man, and the Fourth—"

"What a nonsense, dear boy," interrupted M'Arry.

Manners was not there. But, of course, it could not have been Manners, as he is a weak coward.

The justice laughed, but it was a rather a cold-bone laugh.

"Manners is not here," said Tom Merry. "He's about the last chap who'd do a thing like that. Any what's being proved about Manners, I should say he'd be too much of a coward to even stand and look on."

"Well, who could it have been?" asked Sparty. "The way it was a justice, and as all the Shell fellows were at St. Jim's it seems to prove that he was a Fourth of July."

"Oh course," said Blake. "You don't think a Shell chap would do a thing like that, do you?"

"I think Shell chap's do some things to have done it than a Fourth of July," replied Tom Merry.

"If you call it a job—"

"Oh, don't start a giddy one," interrupted Leathers. "I can see you had an inquiry to find out who the guilty hero is. We can't be too wide about anybody's name, can we?"

Wyland was, doubtless, agreed M'Arry. "At least what I mean in that paragraph I feel like good 'up to the chap as—"

"What's not right, Sparty?"

"That's not right, Sparty," said Leathers. "You can't say a chap's bad. It's not a bad, you know?"

"You might laugh!" I said "what, you wing!"

"Honest if you're not talking about wings now," said Leathers in an affected surprise. "What's it got to do with wings? We were talking about a chap's legs, not about wings."

"And as was I talking about a Shell," said M'Arry warmly. "I said I should like to win the chap's Shell, and you, like an old man, attempt to make a worse job. I regard you as a silly dunce, Leathers!"

Arthur Augustus glared somewhat wrathfully at the lieutenant of the Shell. Leathers was not feeling very humorous, but he thought that he had better keep up appearances to some extent. The interruption from Manners had been a great blow to Leathers and Tom Merry, and they had only just begun to rally in courtesy.

"I wonder that," began M'Arry, "that—"

But when M'Arry really thought the justice were never destined to leave. For at that moment their attention was attracted by a man dressed yell of bright from the back of the fire.

The first yell, however, was merely a preliminary, for it was succeeded by a perfect series of hoars.

"Halo, B. Co. and the two Shell fellows gazed at one another in astonishment.

"What on earth is that, dear boys?"

"Somebody's certainly in pain," growled Lewther. "If Mr. Mellick's voice, you'll see, I've a hunch." By Jove, he's evidently receiving a terrible kicking from somebody! Suppose we go and investigate?"

The others, however, had already moved off, and they hurried round the grove. They all passed in a group as they came within sight of the Shell-house which was being erected there.

Manners had a few groups of Mellick, and was treating him in a lenientish fashion. The group of the Fourth was too frightened to defend its comrade, and by appearing when Manners at that point had done so.

"Now, you confounded old—" growled Manners. "Perhaps that'll work you a better."

"Oh?" roared Mellick. "Verush! Oh!"

Suddenly he struggled to his feet, and, in a fit of bitter rage, he flung himself at Manners, slaving and kicking for all he was worth.

"My, ha!" ejaculated Manners. "Do you want more work?"

He knaped up with his fist. It landed full upon Mellick's nose, and the Fourth Fencer went to the earth with a loud thud and a wail.

Halo, B. Co. passed forward, forgetting, for the moment, that Manners was in Company.

"What the dickens are you knocking Mellick about for?" demanded Halo roughly.

"I've given him a punishment that he fully well deserves," replied Manners quietly.

"If you think him a wren we'll thank you to get off the spot," roared Halo. "We're not going to have such like you."

Manners smiled grimly. "Don't get excited," he said. "Mellick has got something to explain, which will cause you a lot of trouble, perhaps. And when you've heard him out I've a hunch you'll agree that you sent me to Company for taking kicking but the truth."

CHAPTER 14.

The Turn of the Tide.

"W HAT'S THAT you saying?" demanded Halo roughly. "Now listen, you fellows, what you find like a prospect? If you think we're going to believe"

"I'm not asking you to believe me," interrupted Manners. "You can believe what you like, but I'm going to make Mellick explain something that I perhaps for a couple of days."

"Now, Merry and Merry Lawther passed forward eagerly. "What is it?" they asked.

"Simply that Mellick is the coward who ran away from you in Hyacinthe Lane the night before last," replied Manners. "It was he who you saw—the who climbed over the wall. As I told you at the time, I'd been in the spot, ever since he, because Harry was there?"

"It's a lie!" shouted Mellick shrilly. "Don't believe him!"

"No!" said Halo grimly. "If you think you've come to watch us, Manners, that—"

"I'm going to make Mellick tell the truth," replied Manners angrily. "He confessed it to me just now, and I'll make him confess it again. If you don't tell the truth within two minutes, Mellick, I'll give you a kicking worse than the one you've already had."

"I'll do what I like," said Halo shrilly.

"I'll do what I like," declared Manners. "This is my game, Halo, and I'm not going to stand any interference from you! You can think what you like about me, but I'm going to make Mellick tell the truth."

"Yes, give Manners a chance," said Tom Merry.

"Here, boys," growled Manners. "Manners doesn't want to go in his hat, and he'd like to come before the justice. Mellick was in a state of considerable trepidation, and some phrase at Manners' grim face told him that the Shell fellows did in deadly earnest."

"Now, tell the truth," said Manners, turning to Mellick.

"Well, the things what you said, I've seen a fellow—there's a rascal, but if you don't speak within ten minutes, I'll—"

"I'll tell you all," Manners, in terror. "I'll tell you if you'll let me off, Manners, in terror. "I'll tell you if you'll let me off, Manners, in terror."

"Oh, no, then," said Manners contemptuously.

"I was one who was in the Hyacinthe Lane," said Mellick quickly. "I wasn't Manners at all. You were all mistaken, and I was afraid to say anything, because I knew you'd

keep me. I climbed over the wall, dropped down into the canal, and hid my hat. Then I saw your collar Manners, and across him, so I knew I was safe."

"The Merry stopped forward angrily.

"Do you mean to say that Manners was telling the truth all the time?" "Were you hiding close by, listening to everything, and being so all his every words come under the hat?"

"Yes," admitted Mellick, calmly.

"You rascal!" growled Tom Merry angrily. "You—you were!"

"But why were you in the lane?" asked Halo, who now began to look a trifle wroth.

"I must have known I wanted to know what you were up to," admitted Mellick, thinking that he had better make a clean breast of everything. "I saw you all go in the wood-shed, and listened to what you were saying. But I only heard that there was going to be something on at the old side at half-past eight. So I went down to find you. Manners wasn't there at all. I didn't see a sign of him until I got back to the spot. And then I let you collar him, knowing that you'd never find out about the Shell-house."

"Where—then, Manners didn't tell a lie at all?" ejaculated Halo.

"Not that I know of," said Mellick. "He said that it wasn't him that was in the lane, and that was the truth, anyway."

Manners rebuked Mellick, and pushed him away. "Now you can leave off," he said quietly.

"You've got to be honest, and you can thank yourself lucky that you didn't have a moment, dear boy?" exclaimed Mr. Merry.

"I'll give you a punishment, dear boy?" exclaimed Mr. Merry. "If you will wait while I arrange my jacket, I will myself go for Mellick and administer a healthy flogging! I have never heard of such wicked conduct in all my life."

"I'll take my share," said Manners. "I've given him a good beating."

Mellick ducked off, followed by the gaze of the amazed and indignant justice.

"I suspected it was Mellick since yesterday," said Manners. "I suddenly struck me that I'd seen him come from behind a tree that night in the spot. When I got thinking, and realized that Mellick was upon the only place where I'd be capable of such a mean trick, if I hadn't happened to have seen him, the truth might never have come out."

Tom Merry laid his hand on Manners' shoulder.

"And you were telling the truth the whole time," he said quietly—"you were telling the truth, and we thought that every word was a lie! My hat, it seems too good to be true."

"If a hole's been for Mellick's confession I should never have been surprised," said Halo. "Everything happened so perfectly that it seemed positive that you were the chap in the lane, Manners. I'm glad glad that I can say to know the truth—shameless glad!"

"Can you ever forgive me, old man?" asked Tom Merry apologetically.

Manners smiled grimly.

"Don't be so soft!" he said. "Of course I can forgive you, Tom. In the first place there's nothing to forgive, because the proof was so conclusive that you couldn't think anything else. And in the second place—"

"Oh, here the second place?" said Lewther light-heartedly. "It's good enough to know that all this heavily unpleasantness is over. I've been severely miserable for the last day or two, and it wouldn't have been to call Manners a liar again I'd have been any more!"

Arthur Augustus if any enjoyed his share with a very wrong look.

"Think it one thing I should like to say?" he exclaimed.

"Manners has made Mellick confess and prove his innocence. Now I want you to all agree, dear boys, that we all ought to be thoroughly ashamed of ourselves for such having doubted him at all."

"Yes," agreed Halo. "Thoroughly ashamed of ourselves!"

"We had only thought of the match," went on Mr. Merry. "We should have realized that it was just the thing that Mellick would do, and a thing that Manners is absolutely incapable of doing."

"Of course," said Tom Merry. "We're a set of plain boys, and it is always easy to say these sort of things when the real truth comes out. I think she has said about the matter, the better, for the more we say the more certain we become. For it was sudden—sudden—sudden, to suspect a chap we've known for years to be truthful and honest."

Manners looked awkwardly.

THE END OF THE FIRST PART.—No. 22.

"She's tall, isn't she said, "It's very nice, cheap, and I'm taking good. I think you'd about that I'm not truly a coward."

"Admit it!" interrupted Wade. "Why, we'll go and follow it from the headquarters!" He looked round him rapidly, and beckoned to Wilfred to get up the road. "Hi, Pudge! Hey, you! Manganoff! Over! Over! You're wanted especially!"

Justice from all parts of the quad came over, and they were told the truth about the Hydrocarbons affair. The excitement was intense, and Manganoff found the tide turning in his favor with wonderful rapidity.

And while the excitement was at its height, Manganoff happened to look over towards the gates. Then he started, and turned again pale. For a stranger had just entered, and was now at this moment approaching.

It was the master of the lower house in Wyland—the father of the child Manganoff had saved from certain death!

"My hat!" murmured Manganoff to himself. "What you fellows had to come here! He! He was master!" For Manganoff didn't think. He pushed his way through the justice, and hastened across the quad. They were about to catch him here, when the stranger came on.

"Good-morning, my dear friend,"

"I'm the owner of the house that was burned in Wyland yesterday, Mr. Overton," he went on. "A day before that to this school performed one of the most heroic acts I have ever witnessed. He saved my little son from death, and then, while I was just looking, slipped off without even giving me his name. Perhaps you know who the hero is—perhaps he has told you of his adventure."

"No, sir," replied Tom Merry. "We've no idea who it could have been. We were talking about the matter only a little while ago. The chap must have come in and told you about it."

"Then he is a man with a big will," said Mr. Overton. "It's no wonder to mention his heroism. But I must be off on my way to the office."

"My hat!" exclaimed Master Leather suddenly. "Could it have been Manganoff, after all? He wasn't on the playing-field yesterday afternoon."

The justice looked at one another curiously.

"Guess you, I wouldn't if you are right, Manganoff," exclaimed D'Arcy. "If you are, it will be a treat to be acquainted with a vengeance. He will be worth knowing if we have been discussing him as a coward while he is a hero all the time."

The justice looked at one another curiously.

"Where is Manganoff, anyhow?" demanded Tom Merry. "I'm bound if he hasn't looked it."

"Then you may be sure he is the boy I'm looking for," said Mr. Overton. "He must have been on campus, and returned while he had the chance. This Manganoff is a modest fellow."

"How is it?" roared Binks.

He pointed towards the gates, and then rushed forward, followed by all the others. Manganoff had just entered, and between the group of two student heroes. He was looking rather sheepish, and exceedingly uncomfortable. He had endeavored to escape the justice by going to the village, but to his chagrin, he had not outside the gates one of the dozens who had been present. They had recognized him instantly, and had followed him here.

Mr. Overton took his hand in a warm grasp.

"My boy," he said fervently, "I shall never be able to thank you for the service you have rendered me. My words are inadequate, and I can only say that I was grateful from the bottom of my heart!"

Manganoff murmured some words gratefully. And when Mr. Overton had returned to his headquarters to look through the voluminous ring of justice.

"No, you don't!" declared Pudge, grinning like. "My hat, I don't think we've ever done a greater injustice to anybody than we have to Manganoff! We've got a set of rules, and we mean those laws that we've all fully sworn!"

The impulsive nature of the justice had indeed changed even all his justice. It was according to looker that they had dismissed Manganoff as a coward and a liar when he was really exactly the opposite. And so do the justice realize, they did not even discuss him in the hall. They condemned one another abundantly, and Manganoff received only one mention that when the bell rang the dinner he was hot, delighted, and breakfast.

Three times he had been carried round the quad, and his claims had always been more tremendously many, they were.

And when a difference from yesterday. They were now all discussing him. Now he could do the justice wrong. He was the hero of the day, and he all opportunities, he was to be the hero for many days to come!

The Little Librarian—No. 288.

CHAPTER 25. All Over.

TOMMY's meeting, in the presence of the whole school, that he was about Manganoff by the hand and told him the story of the fire was closed, and the old hall rang with cheers from justice and justice alike.

The justice were no longer anxious about Manganoff's heroism, and one pointed over the Hydrocarbons affair, in dream of wanting proof that Manganoff's story of the hall had been correct.

And yet the truth of Manganoff's statement was to be proved to the justice before a few days. The following day, the Terrible Three and Blake & Co. took a joint drive to the village to look a hamper from the station. And as they proceeded on their way, indignantly complaining what the contents of the hamper would be, they passed the cottages which had been the scene of the adventure, early in the week. They were all talking and laughing cheerfully, and had almost reached the gate, when Arthur Augustus D'Arcy came in a sudden halt.

"Hi, Jim!" he remarked.

"What's the matter, Jim?"

"Good night," murmured the owner of the School House.

"Oh, excuse! It's 'Good-morning,' now!" exclaimed Wade.

"Have you suddenly remembered that you've got your school-bag on back—and?"

"Purge don't be so silly, Blake!" said D'Arcy. "I mistake the explanation because I had observed something which had escaped everybody's notice. Pudge look at those two cottages, don't you?"

Arthur Augustus turned to the cottages which they were so well. For a moment, the justice could see nothing remarkable. Then Tom Merry drove his breath in quickly and glanced at Manganoff.

One cottage was precisely the same as before. But the other—the one which had been empty—was now very much occupied.

"What's that?" said Wade.

"Yes, that's the one," replied Manganoff. "But, never mind, we shall never get in the station if we stop here."

The crowd was complete.

Manganoff had told the truth from the very first. The following morning, a parcel arrived for Manganoff, and he opened it with some anxiety, for he could see by the contents that he had been deceived from the first. To his delight and joy, it contained a magnificent camera—one of the most expensive variety, and with it were all requisites for the immediate business. A card inside told Manganoff that it was a little return from a grateful father.

"My boy, Mr. Overton's a hero!" declared Manganoff, gazing at his new possession gratefully. "This is a splendid camera, cheap, and I'll bet I'll take magnificent photos! But now the doctors don't know I've interested in photography."

"I told him," said Tom Merry. "He asked me what your job hobby was, and I couldn't tell a little, could I?"

"You shouldn't," exclaimed Manganoff. "He'll get you to thank for this!"

"Hi!" said Tom Merry.

"It wouldn't be a bad thing to let Charlie Ebbel be the first to know of this," said Manganoff thoughtfully.

"Hi!" said Tom Merry.

"Hi!" said Master Leather. "She's coming to St. Jim's next week, so you won't have to wait long, Manganoff."

But before Charlie Ebbel arrived, Manganoff was pined with applications by numerous persons to have their photographs taken with the new gear. Manganoff had the same answer for them all, and they all went away disappointed. He decided that he would take Manganoff's photo and Charlie Ebbel agreed, that he would be as good as his word. The girl was the first to pose before the new camera, and when the plate was developed, Manganoff produced quite a number of prints from the negative.

And in practically every junior study a photo of Charlie Ebbel adorned the mantelpiece, and everybody admitted that that it was the best photograph of their pet whom they had ever been taken—a compliment which Manganoff did not fail to appreciate.

That camera was in constant use, and it never failed to record all the happenings of the time when its owner had been especially discontented, and, as they now realized, grievously misunderstood.

THE END.

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THE CHEER-ON CHUMS!



 "Come rain or sun or hail or
 sleet, come fair or stormy
 weather;
 Whichever comes the Cheer-on
 Chums will always stick
 together—
 We'll always stick
 together!"
 —The Cheer-on Chums' Anthem.

A Grand, New, Short Serial Story.

THE FIRST INSTALMENTS BRIEFLY EXPLAINED.

The Cheer-on Chums are the greatest of friends. Three of them are girls, whose names are Pat Wymore, Polly Hale, and Mary Weston, and three are under the auspices of Miss Weston, headmistress of the Mayborough High School for Girls. The other half of the Cheer-on Chums are three jokers belonging to a college within easy walking distance of Mayborough. Their names are Jimmy Dean, Billy Denton, and Dick Reveron. The Cheer-on Chums have a row of seven seats, with six girls, and which is in a corner but quite close to the two windows.

One day the chums arrange an excursion together to the neighbouring town of Gifford.

After spending a jolly day, they get into the wrong train to come home, finding themselves in a railway station in London. In desperation, Jimmy pulls the communication cord, and the chums scramble out as the train comes to a standstill, and fly over the bridge, accompanied by an overcast young man named Mattie, whom they met in the train. They come to a house which Mr. Mattie declares is occupied by his Aunt Sophie. He afterwards explains one of the passages which appears to be inserted. "The girls are over to the left," declares Mr. Mattie.

(Now go on with the story.)

Mr. Mattie's Little Mishaps!

Just then a door opened somewhere on the floor above, and a feminine voice called down to them.

"Mary, what's that you're shouting?"

Mr. Mattie made reply in a good imitation of a woman's voice.

"Nothing much, Edith," he answered, "only the last two people in a few places, and one of the lamps!"

"Come on," he said, "we'd better go up and see Aunt Sophie and explain matters."

They hung back, not feeling quite equal to seeing Aunt Sophie at the present moment, but Mr. Mattie insisted, and there was nothing else to be done but fall in with his wishes. With Aunt Sophie's excuse leading the way, they descended the basement staircase.

In an instant, and in that fleeting time the performance had been such disastrous to see what damage had really been done.

She started with her fingers which was an account of dirty plates, a soap suds, and a shawl, but still more, articles of fact on a dish. At the sight of the girls cowered on the

stairs, she screamed, hastily turned the key from her, and retreated into the dining-parlor.

The key fell with a crash which would have rivaled the explosion of a Nitro gun.

"I am also retired," said Mr. Mattie, as the others looked a startled glance at him, "that this has completely torn it."

There followed a roar that any hall might have rivaled, and heavy furniture tumbled one by one to the hall. Next moment a little man appeared at the head of the stairs, and quail at their entrance, retreating and hurrying.

He was a very odd little man, and his face revealed that of a populace he had seen on several Norman shores. His looks were not improved by his expression, which was one of unbridled amazement and awe.

"I suppose," said Mr. Mattie, still with an unbridled expression, "that you are my Aunt Sophie's butler?"

"No, I'm not, sir," the other made reply in a quavering voice. "I am Benjamin Higgins, the owner of this house."

Mr. Mattie bowed. "And I," he said, "am Harold Mortimer H.-B." To be sure and addressed the "landlady." "Hello and good," he said, "I am afraid we have been in the wrong house." To the Girl Landlady—No. 25.

"I quite share your view of the matter," Mr. Higgins

replied. "I am sure," continued Mr. Moffa, "there is nothing for you to do but to apologize and retire."

Then for the first time, they knew that Mr. Higgins had been looking a good deal like his horse. He now pointed a sharp eye at them.

"Hold hard!" he cried. "You're not going yet! Wait a moment!"

"The hours I spend with this fine horse," Mr. Higgins asserted, "are as a matter of fact, his own. Hence you will wish to remain, perhaps, for a while, in order to contribute to me, something for which, I'm bound to say, Mr. Higgins would be obliged."

"I have your intentions?" he started. "How did you know?"

"Through the window. We took the liberty of examining it. I saw you scribbling for this day, and for the twenty or more days you would be back. Will five pounds cover the amount?"

"He hastily left in his pocket, took out a pocket-book, extracted a note, and handed it up to Mr. Higgins, who grumbled and muttered it without a word of thanks.

"And now," said Mr. Moffa, preparing to withdraw, "does your horse appreciate our apology?"

"My horse? Mr. Higgins?"

"Well, Moffa, or Tommie, or whatever you call your pet, you can just remember that I've still got your reward. You'll come up here, all of you, and no pretences! You have heartily accepted my horse, and I am going to send for the police."

A shrill ring of horses' hoofs behind him, made Mr. Higgins start. "What noise is that?" asked Jimmy. "You've got your eye, you know?"

"Remember the young ladies!" Mr. Moffa exclaimed. "Bring the young ladies! Do as you are told, or, unless you wish me to be. Approach, all of you, with your hands raised above your heads!"

Huddled, they obeyed him.

"How many of you are children?" Mr. Higgins demanded. "How many of you are soldiers?" he asked with a stern dignity.

"I can only count six," the youngest boy bravely asserted. Mr. Moffa looked round. In some circumstances, say Jimmy had disappeared. He smiled reproachfully at the others.

"We were seven," he said, "but now we seem only to be six. Have I not omitted you of the five little ladies here?"

"Bring the five little ladies here," Higgins ordered. "You will go up those steps in obedience to me, and if any of you get up to them."

"I don't know if this is your notion of treating girls!" Dick cried loudly.

"Is it my notion of treating horseholders?" Mr. Higgins snapped. "Kindly obey me without any more words!"

They did as he bade them. It is hardly to describe an angry man with a pocket-book, in the space of three minutes they found themselves locked and bolted in an empty room upstairs, and with unfeeling lockings heard the bell door bang as Mr. Higgins walked back in front of others of the law.

Billy turned upon Mr. Moffa when they were alone.

"Well," he cried, "what is a jolly man you've treated us like, and no mistake. You may think it heavenly funny, but it's jolly enough on the girls."

"Mr. Moffa loved his lead."

"When you are as old as I am," he retorted, "you will have found out that talking really means."

He turned and addressed the girls.

"My dear young ladies," he said, "I cannot say how sorry I am that I have put you into this predicament. I can only promise that I will do my utmost to get you out of it."

He had a pleasant smile, and, upon as the girl Charlotte spoke, they could see that it is in his heart to thank him. "And others that are, Jimmy, I should like to know."

"He isn't a quiver," Dick answered hopefully. "I bet he's knocking about somewhere. Where your hands are out of the window, Pat."

Pat obeyed, with a result that was almost immediate, and immediately springing to the prisoners. They noticed later the top of a ladder banged against the window.

With signs of renewed hope and freedom, the girls, the party proceeded, to find Jimmy waiting downstairs.

A NEW FREE CORRESPONDENCE EXCHANGE.

The only names and addresses which can be printed in these columns are those of readers living in any of our Colonies who desire Correspondence in Great Britain and France.

Columns reading in their names and addresses for insertion in the columns of this popular year-book must state what kind of correspondence is required—by or for: English, Scotch, Welsh, or Irish.

Wanted correspondence must send with each column two stamps, one taken from "The Gem," and one from the other weekly issue of its companion paper, "The Standard Library," stamps and stamps to be found on page 2 of both papers, and requests for correspondence not containing those two stamps will be absolutely disregarded.

Readers wishing to reply to advertisements appearing in this column must write to the advertiser direct. No correspondence with advertisers can be undertaken through the medium of this office.

Columns may be inserted in this Free Exchange through the medium of "The Editor," "The Gem" Library, The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.2.

Mr. Alfred B., George's Street, Warwick, Warwick, Australia, wishes to correspond with a girl reader living in England, age 18 1/2.

Mr. E. Barrett, Post Office, Coolgardie, West Australia, wishes to correspond with a boy reader, age 15 1/2. Miss H. Arden, of the same address, wishes to correspond with boy reader of the age 15 1/2.

C. H. Russell, 25, Armada Street, Northcote, Melbourne, Australia, wishes to correspond with a girl reader living in England or Scotland, age 15 1/2.

John J. Stevenson, P.O. Box 4000, Johannesburg, South Africa, wishes to correspond with a girl reader living in England.

Miss D. Page, Fremont, Baymore Street, Observatory C. P., South Africa, wishes to correspond with readers living in Australia, New Zealand, and Ireland.

E. Meade, care of H. Lawrence, Kilmore, Victoria, Australia, wishes to correspond with readers interested in books.

J. E. H. Harrison, 208, Ross Street, Lynn, Mass., U.S.A., wishes to correspond with a girl reader, age 15 1/2, interested in geography.

H. Horrocks, Colingwood Post P.O., British Columbia, wishes to correspond with girl readers in Kent.

Miss G. Haysmore, German Street, Southampton, South Australia, wishes to correspond with girl readers of "The Gem" Library.

A. Greenway, Lamella, Constitution Road, Chesham, South Africa, wishes to correspond with a girl or boy reader living in the British Isles.

Mr. Frederick, 25, Chesham Road, London, Montreal, Canada, wishes to correspond with boy readers interested in stamps, age 14 1/2.

Miss D. Hall, 25, Eld Avenue, Toronto, Canada, wishes to correspond, age 15 1/2.

J. Fitzgerald, 25, Eld Avenue, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, wishes to correspond with girl readers living in England, age 14 1/2.

Miss E. Fitzpatrick, of the same address, would like to correspond with a boy reader living in England, age 14 1/2.

Miss Anderson, Kingston's Avenue, West Northam, Western Australia, wishes to correspond with readers, age 14 1/2.

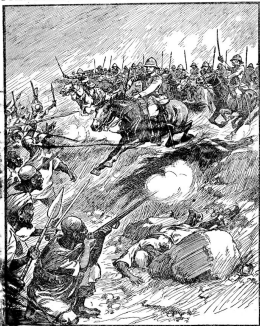
J. E. Corbridge, 15, Mount Street, Melbourne, Melbourne, Australia, wishes to correspond with readers living in England and Ireland.

Miss J. Hunt, care of Mrs. Moore & Co., Hay Street, Perth, Western Australia, wishes to correspond with a reader in Wales or Ireland, age 13 1/2.

A. Meade, 15, Central Road, Fordingly, Johannesburg, Transvaal, South Africa, wishes to correspond with a girl reader, age 15 1/2.

The Editor specially requests Colonial Readers to kindly bring the Free Correspondence Exchange to the notice of their friends.

FAMOUS FIGHTS FOR THE FLAG. No. 12



This illustration "THE GEM" Library by G. H. Smith.
The scene of the 21st December at India's Gateway at the Battle of Omdurman on September, 1898, was one of the greatest
of the century's military achievements. The English, 100 strong, fought bravely against 10,000 Dervishes, who were annihilated in a
few minutes. A remarkable feature of this victory was the fact that Colonel Stewart made use of the enemy's
artillery against them. A complete list of the names of the men who were killed is given at the end of the story.

OUR SPECIAL WEEKLY FEATURE



For Next Wednesday.

"FRIENDS DIVIDED!"

By MARTIN CLIFFORD.

In our next grand, complete tale of the chances of St. John's a certain development arises in the form of Tom Henry & Co., and the changes particularly seem to be in danger of being...

"FRIENDS DIVIDED!"

are called over now.

BY REQUESTS

Every reader of the graphic bits of composite papers, "The Magnet" and "The Penny Popular," should make a point of going in for the next

"Pupils" Competition

now coming in the bi-monthly paper. This latest new competition is both new and interesting, while the most attractive one is used in selecting the winner. Rewards are in royal splendor and there is no entrance fee whatever.

CASH PRIZES

are being now given by means of "The Penny Popular." The latest list of prizes will be found on page 1 of the cover of the issue of "The Gem" Library, "Pupils," in becoming quite a crowd with "Penny Popular" readers. You have only to try your hand at this grand competition to discover how pleasingly interesting it is...

OUR LATEST NEW SERIAL.

In next Wednesday's "Gem" Library, my readers will find the opening installment of a

Great New Sporting Serial.

which I confidently expect to "take down the house." The title of the story is

"THE CORINTHIANS"

and it deals with the romance of the lifetime following in the happy days of the Prince Regent. The author, Wren Kingston, is well qualified to write of such a subject, being himself a possessor of all branches of the art of stagsfoot...

invaluable, and the plot and staff be shown in fighting by way up into a happy resolution. The latter comes the admiration of all, but we could not otherwise have printed such an serial, which has been written specially for "The Gem" Library.

"THE CORINTHIANS"

By Wren Kingston.

is a winner all the way!

HOW TO BECOME A MOTION PICTURE OPERATOR.

Whatever branch of the trade you wish to enter, though you get to see the trade journal, it is not the only way to get up to date. In this branch of the trade, you must have the best of the best, for when you are in the trade, you must have the best of the best.

According to you, there is a great deal to be learned in the trade, there are several ways of becoming a motion picture operator. The first is by taking a course of training at an operator's training school, which takes several months, and costs an many pounds. The only remark I have to make about these schools is that the conditions are not exactly the same as in the trade. There are several ways of becoming a motion picture operator. The first is by taking a course of training at an operator's training school, which takes several months, and costs an many pounds. The only remark I have to make about these schools is that the conditions are not exactly the same as in the trade.

In any of these it is not a good idea to get a trade journal, but "The Gramophone" is the one with the largest circulation, which would not cost you more than a pound for one year.

To deal more fully with Chapter II, this is the simplest way of getting into the operator's line, provided you are capable. First of all, you must have a manager that you are sure, intelligent, and who will be well connected. The manager must be interested in his work, and he must be able to get on with the public. Next, get on with the public, and if you are not, it will not agree, with him, and you will be in a position to turn the single handle. If possible, get the manager's permission to have a few hours, and you will be in the line of your regular work. The only way to get up to date in this branch of the trade is to have a manager who is well connected, and who will be well connected. The manager must be interested in his work, and he must be able to get on with the public. Next, get on with the public, and if you are not, it will not agree, with him, and you will be in a position to turn the single handle.



SHILLINGS FOR STORYETTES AGAIN THIS WEEK.

Our Weekly Prize Page.

LOOK OUT FOR YOUR WINNING STORYETTE!

A NEW POWER.

An old country woman pointed up to stars one day in the same direction, she, for the first time, a team worked by the mechanical engine.

"Well," she said, when she got over her astonishment, "I've seen 'em worked by horses, I've seen 'em worked by oxen, but I've never seen 'em worked by a clothes-wop before!"—*Seen in by C. Kiffin, Portland.*

WHY HE SPOKE!

A temperance lecturer was lecturing in a hall, and one of the men turned up to speak.

"I wish there all the drink in the world was at the bottom of the sea."

"So do I!" said a man emphatically.
The lecturing brother got up, and the lecturer caught up the man who had called out so emphatically, and asked him if he was a temperance reformer too.

"No," replied the man, "I'm a diver!"—*Seen in by R. C. W. Murray, London, W.*

ABOUT HIM UP.

Three youths had been out for the day and were leaving tea at a local inn. They asked for something to eat and drink, and the lady of the house brought them some cups of excellent water-bread-and-butter. After a while one of the youths, rather impatiently, quickly edged the whole lot.

"Where are the cakes?"
"We do not give cakes to dogs!" she said.—*Seen in by Mrs. Jackson, Colchester.*

A MOTHER'S PRIDE.

There was once a lady and her little daughter travelling in the railway, and the little girl happened to have a very beautiful doll in her lap.

At last one old lady, sitting next to the other passenger, asked:

"Where did you get such a lovely little doll, my dear?"
"I got this doll for my birthday. It's darling even if it can't talk as well as the one I had when I was a child."
"Come along at once," cried her mother, who hurriedly got off the car.—*Seen in by J. Brooker, West Hartlepool.*

POO BAD.

"My brother," said the waggish creature, "is all attention and a chatter when a new place where one can always find something new is opened."

"Why?" "When?" demanded the crowd.
"In the dictionary!" Manfully replied the wagger.—*Seen in by C. A. Bagshaw, Duffield.*

CANNY!

A foot went to London by a hansom. Walking along one of the streets, he observed a bald-headed chariot at his door, dog, and inquired if he had any hair.

"Yes, sir," said the hansom. "Stay inside, please! There's an article I can likely give you more of."

"How great is it?"
"It grows in the hair, and it makes hair grow in unexpected places."

"Ah!" said the foot, "I've got my in my pocket, and I'll come back this time to measure, and see if you're worth the trade!"—*Seen in by Mrs. Rogers, Tring.*

Mike: "Fink, Pat, how do you tell those trines apart?"

Fink: "Same, 'em all is the same, Mike. I stick my finger in Danahy's mouth, and if he bites, 'em know 'em. Mike!"—*Seen in by H. Martin, Duffield.*

BE-BEVENING!

Pat was suffering from a bad attack of toothache, and therefore decided to have a man off the coast to a dentist, where the name of the collector was required. After paying the dentist his fee, Pat asked for the work.

"Why?" asked the dentist.
"I'm going to put some more on it, and watch the biggest who!" said Pat.—*Seen in by J. Turner, Southampton.*

THE INTERNAL APPLICATION.

Eliza Jones: "Come, Clara, take your powder. You a good girl. You never hear me making any complaint when I take my powder."

Little Clara: "Neither would I if I could dash it on my face. It's wonderful to find I don't like!"—*Seen in by J. Longdon, Hill.*

CONCLUSIVE EVIDENCE.

Tommy arrived home on his last day with a silver and gold ball in his pocket, and, delighted with his find, proceeded to show it to each member of the family in turn. Father looked at the ball rather suspiciously.

"Are you sure that it was really lost, Tommy?" he asked gravely.

"Oh, yes!" replied the young hero, with a smugly twinkling in his eye. "I saw the pulley and his rabbit looking for it!"—*Seen in by H. Martin, Don's Hospital.*

NO USE FOR THAT!

A little boy went to school for the first time, and the teacher, to give him an interest in the new law, called him out.

"What is your name?" she asked.

"Thomas Blackrod, and I've five brothers!" he answered. The teacher wanted to be very generous about this, so told him to bring his names, ages, and date of his birth on a piece of paper.

In the afternoon when Tommy appeared again he searched in his pocket, only to find there he had lost the leaves.

"I've lost it, ma'am!" he cried, lowering his head.

"Lost what?" asked the teacher, looking at his book.

"These, ma'am, my names for being born!"—*Seen in by Mrs. E. Wilson, South Shields.*

NOT STARTING YET.

The vicar's clerk stopped at a little inn in the mountains where he found a woman surrounded by an unusually large family.

"I am taking the census," he said. "How many children have you between the ages of six and—"

"Between six?" he asked in the good lady. "There's Kate and Mary and Susan and Lucy and Sylvia and Bob and John and Bill and Henry and Tom and—"

She paused for breath, and her questioner took the opportunity of putting in a few words.

"No other children, if you can just tell me the number."

"Number?" almost shrieked the mother. "My dear! what are you numbers for?"

"What is the number of your children?"
"That is, by Mrs. W. Smith, Boston, Conn'd."

"What, Pat, have you a boy to take your traps?"

"None a bit, nor! How do you like to have my traps?"
"No, my traps are not for sale, but I'll let you have 'em for nothing!"—*Seen in by G. Brown, Manchester.*

MONEY PRIZES OFFERED!

Readers are invited to send **ON A POSTCARD** Storyettes or News, interesting Paragraphs for this page. For every contribution used the writer will receive a Money Prize.

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