THE JEW OF ST. JIM'S!

A Magnificent New, Long, Complete Tale of School Life at St. Jim's.

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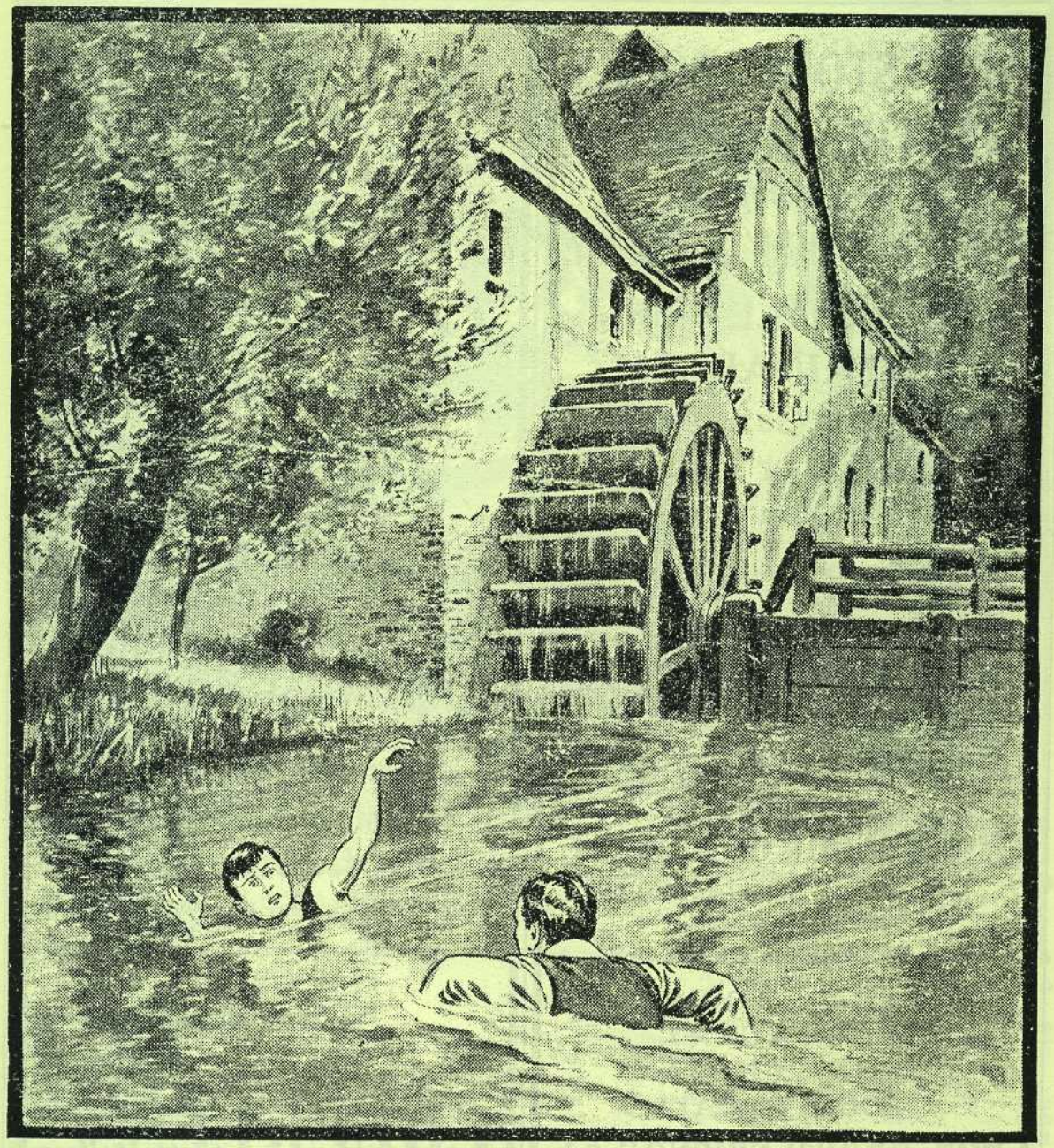

SAVED BY THE JEW HE WRONGED!

(A great scene from our magnificent long complete school tale.)

PUBLISHED IN TOWN AND COUNTRY EVERY WEDNESDAY MORNING

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COMPLETE STORIES FOR ALL, AND EVERY STORY A GEM!

THE JEW OF ST. JIM'S!

A Magnificent New, Long, Complete School Story of Tom Merry & Co.

By MARTIN CLIFFORD.

Julian handed the four packets round, apparently blind to the unwelcoming look on Crooke's face, and the peculiar expression of Monty Lowther. "That's eight bob," said Julian. "Better give the kid a bob—he looks a nice boy—that's three bob each for the three of us." "Wha-a-t!" (See Chapter 7.)

CHAPTER 1.

The Joke of the Season.

MONTY LOWTHER chuckled.

Tom Merry and Manners knew what that chuckle meant.

Lowther had been silent for about three minutes, almost a record for Monty Lowther. Then he had chuckled. It was quite evident that an unusually ripping "wheeze" was in the mind of the humorist of the Shell. It was not all "lavender" to be study-mate to a humorist. It necessitated listening to all his little jokes, and laughing heartily on the spot, on peril of having the jokes explained at full length.

When Monty Lowther chuckled, after three minutes of unaccustomed silence, Tom Merry and Manners knew what to expect.

Tom put down the list of the junior cricket eleven, which he was conning over, and Manners left off cutting films. They looked inquiringly at Lowther. Not that they were specially anxious to hear the joke. But it had to be heard, and it was just as well to get it over at once.

Next Wednesday:
"YOUR EDITOR AT ST. JIM'S!" AND "UNDER THE DRAGON!"

No. 324. (New Series.) Vol. 9.

"Well?" said Tom Merry.

"Well?" said Manners.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Lowther, evidently very much taken with the humorous idea that was working in his fertile brain.

"Let's hear it," said Tom. "Don't keep us on tenter-hooks. Get it off your chest!"

"And when you've told us, I'll tell you whether I've seen it in 'Chuckles,'" said Manners.

"Fathead!" said Lowther.

"We're waiting," said Tom, taking up the cricket list again. "Get it over, old chap."

"It's the joke of the season," said Lowther impressively.

"Fire away!" said Manners. "Tell us when to laugh."

"There's a new chap coming this afternoon——" said Lowther.

Tom Merry and Manners looked astonished.

"Is that the joke?" asked Tom.

"No, fathead!"

"Oh, get on to it, then!"

"His name's Julian," said Lowther. "Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Tom Merry and Manners dutifully. They could not see the joke, but, as Lowther laughed, they laughed. It was only civil. Then Tom Merry bent his brows over the cricket list, and Manners resumed cutting films.

"What are you cackling at?" demanded Lowther.

"Eh? Your little joke," said Tom.

"You silly ass, I haven't told you yet!"

"Oh, dear! Go on then."

"He's coming this afternoon, and his name's Julian," repeated Monty Lowther severely. "That isn't the joke, you duffers. There's nothing funny in that, is there?"

"Not that I can see," confessed Tom Merry. "But I don't always see anything funny in your jokes, so——"

"Why, you silly ass——"

"I—I mean, get on with the washing, old fellow."

"He's a Jew," said Lowther.

"Ha, ha, ha!" shouted Lowther's chums.

"You thumping duffers!" shrieked Lowther. "What are you cackling at now?"

"Isn't that the joke?"

"No, you burbling jabberwock! Nothing funny in a chap being a Jew, is there?" exclaimed the exasperated humorist.

"Of course not!" agreed Tom Merry. "Look here, you'd better make a signal when you get to the joke. The Scout signal will do, or hold up your hand."

"You frabjous ass! Put that silly cricket list away. You're not going to play cricket this afternoon. Look here, this chap Julian is a Jew, and we're going to pull his leg, see?"

"My dear ass, I shouldn't cut the cricket match to pull his leg if he was King Solomon himself," said Tom Merry. "Besides, I don't approve of pulling the legs of new kids. Let him rip."

"Don't I keep on telling you it's the joke of the season!" shouted Lowther. "We're going to pull his leg! Now, this chap don't know anybody at St. Jim's, and he will feel a bit lonely when he drops in all by himself. Therefore, we're going to meet him at the station."

"Too deep for me," said Manners, wrinkling his brows.

"Eh? What's too deep for you?"

"That joke. Where's the joke in meeting a new kid at the station?"

"I haven't got to the joke yet!" shrieked Lowther.

"My hat! You're as long getting to the joke as the Huns are getting to Calais. I'll tell you what, old chap. Put it in the 'Weekly' instead. Let it come as a surprise to us."

"Jolly good idea," said Tom Merry heartily. "Now, the question is whether D'Arcy plays in the Grammar School match——"

"Will you listen, you silly fatheads? We're going to meet this new kid, Julian, at the station, and greet him—give him a warm reception, and all that. Take him to our hearts, and welcome him to the school. Treat him like a long-lost brother, you know."

"What on earth for?"

"Because he's a Jew?" asked Manners, utterly mystified. "Is there anything specially nobby in being a Jew?"

"That isn't all," said Lowther.

"Great Scott! If you put this joke in the 'Weekly,' it had better go in in instalments," said Tom Merry.

Monty Lowther glared at his chums. Really, it was very discouraging to be a great humorist in the Shell at St. Jim's.

"You blithering asses!" said Lowther. "If you'd leave off burbling for a minute or two, I'd get to the point. The idea is this—the chap's a Jew, you know——"

"We've had that."

"And we're going to be awfully chummy——"

"And we've had that."

"And pilot him round the town, and show him the places, especially the tuckshop and the cinema——"

"Well?"

"And make him spend money," said Lowther.

"What?"

"Don't you see?" exclaimed Lowther eagerly. "That's the joke."

"Is this where we laugh?" asked Manners.

"Yes, if you've got brains enough to see the best joke you've ever heard of!" yelled Lowther.

Tom Merry wrinkled his brows in a great effort of thought. He was manfully striving to see the joke.

"Laugh, you ass!" said Manners. "He'll explain if we don't laugh! Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" echoed Tom Merry.

"Oh, you burbling idiots!" said Lowther. "Oh, you crass asses! Lot of good thinking out the wheeze of the season, in this study. Stop your silly cackling, you dummies, or I'll start on you with this bat! Shut up, you fatheads! Look here, do you see the joke, or don't you?"

"Well, to tell the frozen truth, we don't," said Tom. "But that's all right. That often happens. Now, about the Grammar School match——"

"Don't you see?" roared Lowther. "This chap Julian is a Jew——"

"Ye gods! We know that by heart."

"And we're going to make him spend money, and pull his leg, see? Every time he parts with a bob it will give him a pain. See?"

"Why should it?"

"Because—because they're awfully keen on money, you know," explained Lowther. "That's how we're going to pull his leg, see?"

"Oh!" said Tom Merry, working it out in his mind like mental arithmetic. "This chap is named Julian, and he's a Jew, and we're going to pal on to him, and lead him into spending money, and it will give him a pain. That's the joke?"

"Yes, you burbling ass!"

"And it's funny?"

"Can't you see it's funny?" shrieked Lowther.

Tom Merry shook his head.

"Blessed if I can! Suppose the chap don't mind spending money, then where does the joke come in?"

"But he will. They're all like that."

"How do you know?"

"Well, I don't know any Jews," admitted Lowther, rather taken aback. "But—but—but, of course, it's so. Anybody will tell you."

"Anybody who doesn't know any Jews, perhaps," chuckled Tom Merry. "Not good enough, Monty. Not worth chucking the cricket."

"Besides, the chap mayn't have much money, and then it would be rather mean to lead him into spending it," said Manners.

"He's rich," hooted Lowther. "I've heard about him. He's got an uncle rolling in money, who's sending him to St. Jim's. Levison heard Kildare say so. I don't know the uncle's name, but it's a fact. He's got tons of 'oof."

"Then he won't mind spending it, and the joke will fall flat—if it is a joke. I'm not quite sure about that, though I'm willing to take your word for it."

"But he will mind spending it," howled the unhappy Lowther, "because he's a Jew, you know. We'll take him round and make him pay for everything. Of course, we'll square up afterwards. We don't want to sponge on the chap. But all the afternoon we'll watch him going green and yellow."

"But suppose he don't go green and yellow?"

"But he will!" roared Lowther. "If he don't you can use my head as a football!"

"'Tain't the football season yet. Besides, a wooden football would be very rough on our toes," argued Tom Merry.

"Why, you—you—you——" gasped Lowther. Like a true humorist, Lowther failed to appreciate humorous remarks that were directed towards himself. "Oh, you're a pair of howling asses, and I wouldn't take you with me this afternoon at any price! You'd spoil the best joke going with your fatheadedness! Rats! Br-r-r-r!"

Slam!

Monty Lowther departed from the study, and closed the door after him with a concussion that rang the whole length of the passage.

Tom Merry and Manners looked at one another and grinned. Then Manners went on cutting films, and Tom Merry resumed conning over the cricket list. Monty Lowther went in search of kindred spirits with a more highly-developed sense of humour.

CHAPTER 2.
No Backers!

"YOU fellows busy this afternoon?"

Monty Lowther asked the question, and he addressed Study No. 6.

Study No. 6—otherwise Blake, Herries, Digby, and D'Arcy of the Fourth—were standing in a little group outside the School House, talking cricket. Arthur Augustus had lately been cultivating a late cut of which he was exceedingly proud. Being an authority on late cuts, he was generously telling his chums all about it, so that they could go and do likewise.

But he paused politely as Monty Lowther came out of the School House and chipped in.

"Yaas, wathah!" he replied.

"Cricket!" explained Blake. "Anything else on?"

"The jape of the season," said Lowther.

"Oh, one of your Shell japes!" said Herries disparagingly. "Go and bury it, old chap!"

"Something up against the New House?" asked Blake. "It's time we gave Figgins & Co. another whopping!"

"Not this time," said Lowther. "Look here, you can chuck cricket for once. After all, you won't be missed."

"Why, you fathead——"

"Weally, Lowthah——"

"It's only a practice match this afternoon, too," urged Lowther.

"Yaas," said Arthur Augustus. "But we've got to get weady for the Gwammah School weturn match, you know. Those Gwammawian boundahs are in gweat form! I am givin' a lot of attention to a late cut lately. You may have noticed my late cut, Lowthah."

Lowther nodded.

"I've noticed that some of your cuts are rather late!" he assented. "They come after the wicket's down sometimes—very late, indeed!"

Arthur Augustus glared, and Blake and Herries and Digby chuckled. As a matter of fact, they were growing fed-up with Arthur Augustus's celebrated late cut.

"I wegard you as an ass, Lowthah."

"Besides, the team will be all right for the Grammar match," said Lowther. "Talbot and Tom Merry and Mayne and myself! Why, the Grammarians won't have an earthly! No need to stick at it this afternoon. There's a new chap coming to St. Jim's this afternoon."

"What the deuce does that matter?" asked Blake.

"He's a Jew."

"Well?"

"Well, I want you chaps to come with me, and meet him at the station and give him a rousing reception," said Lowther.

Blake and Herries and Digby stared. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy smiled blandly. He gave Monty Lowther a look of the warmest approval.

"Lowthah, I wegard that as a wippin' suggestion. I take back my wemark about your bein' an ass."

"Good!" said Lowther. "You'll come?"

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Rats!" said Blake. "I'm playing cricket."

"Weally, Blake——"

"Same here," said Herries.

And Digby nodded. They were not in the slightest degree inclined to "chuck" cricket for the sake of meeting a new boy, whether he was Jew or Gentile.

"Weally, deah boys, we can chuck the cwicket for once to act on Lowthah's wippin' suggestion," said Arthur Augustus. "Lowthah, I congwatulate you! I have nevah wegarded you as a fellah of tact and judgment, but I see now that you are weally quite thoughtful. I wegard your suggestion as bein' in good taste. I shall be vewy pleased to go and meet the Hebwew."

"What for?" demanded Blake. "If you want to see a Hebrew, there's old Moses at Wayland—the moneylender who got Levison into a scrape. You went to see him once, and it got you into trouble."

"Wats! Old Moses is certainly a vewy unpleasant chawactah; but that is because he is a moneylendah, not because he is a Jew. I wegard Lowthah's suggestion as wippin', and I am backin' him up. You see, some persons have wathah a pwejudice against Jews, and this new chap, bein' a Jew, may feel wathah doubtful about his weception. By meetin' him at the station, and tweatin' him civilly, as Lowthah suggests, we shall wemove any uneasiness fwom his mind, and show him that he need not feah meetin' any widiculous and old-fashioned pwejudices at St. Jim's. I wegard it as vewy thoughtful of Lowthah."

Monty Lowther looked rather peculiar.

Arthur Augustus, in the innocence of his heart, had jumped to quite a wrong conclusion. It was not precisely with the intention of putting the new boy at his ease that Lowther was planning to meet him at the station.

"Ahem!" said Lowther. "I mean——"

"I know exactly what you mean, Lowthah, and I congwatulate you!" said Arthur Augustus. "And we are backin' you up."

"I'm playing cricket!" roared Blake.

"You are not playin' cwicket, deah boy. I twust that you are not goin' to allow the Shell to outdo us in good mannahs, Blake!" said D'Arcy severely. "We are all goin' with Lowthah to meet the new kid."

"Oh, all right!" said Blake resignedly. "Anything for a quiet life."

"When does the new kid awwive, Lowthah?"

"Three-thirty," said Lowther. "But—but you haven't exactly cottoned to the idea. It's a jape."

"Eh?"

"We're going to jape the new kid," explained Lowther. "You see, he's a Jew, and the idea is to make him spend money and give him a pain. See?"

Arthur Augustus extracted his eyeglass from his waistcoat-pocket, screwed it into his eye, and surveyed the humorist of the Shell with a freezing stare.

"Is that a jape?" he inquired.

"Of course it is! The wheeze of the season!" said Lowther warmly.

"I wegard it as wotten!"

"Look here, you fathead——"

"I wegard it," said Arthur Augustus sternly, "as absolutely wotten! I am sowwy to see, Lowthah, that you are the victim of pwejudice. I am still more sowwy to see that you are willin' to wound the feelings of a stwanger for the sake of a wotten joke. And I am sowwy to see——"

"Thanks! That's enough," remarked Lowther. "I don't really want to be acquainted with all your sorrows, Gussy."

"Weally, Lowthah——"

"Are you fellows coming?" asked Lowther.

"My fwiends are not comin' for such a purpose, Lowthah. I wegard your idea as bein' in bad taste. I shall make it a point to be vewy fwiendly with the new kid, to show him that we are not all sillay duffahs heah. I wegard wace pwejudice as a widiculous thing. Of course, a decent fellah must be a bit standoffish with lowah waces like the Germans. But a Jew is not a German. When you weflect, Lowthah, that there are many Jews now at the fwont, fightin' for their countwy, I wondah that you are not ashamed of yourself."

"Go it, Gussy!" said Blake admiringly. "It's all right, Lowther. He's only getting into training for the House of Lords. Gussy is going to wake them up there some day."

"Pway don't be fwivolous, Blake——"

"Look here, I didn't come here for a sermon," yelled Lowther, "and I've no time to waste talking to a prize idiot."

Arthur Augustus sniffed.

"Gentlemen," he said, "I put it to you that Lowthah's idea is uttahly wotten. I suggest that we show him what we think of it by bumpin' him!"

"Hear, hear!" said Herries.

"Collah the sillay ass!"

"Why, you—you—— Hands off! Chuck it!" shouted Lowther. "Why, I'll—— Yarooh! Stoppit! Yoooop!"

Bump!

Study No. 6 grasped the humorist of the Shell, and he descended upon the hard, unsympathetic earth with a heavy bump. Then they strolled away, grinning, leaving Monty Lowther gasping for breath, and glaring like a Hun.

Once more the great humorist of St. Jim's had failed to find support for his ripping wheeze. It really looked as if that screaming joke would go begging. .

CHAPTER 3.
Kindred Spirits!

"OVER!"

The cricketers were at it.

Monty Lowther looked on the cricket-field with a morose brow.

Tom Merry & Co. of the School House, and Figgins & Co. of the New House, were slogging away in the practice match, which was to put the lid on, so to speak, on their form for the big match that was coming along shortly.

But Lowther was not in flannels.

Lowther was in a morose temper.

To do him justice, Monty Lowther didn't want to hurt the feelings of the new kid. He didn't want to be lacking in good taste, and he didn't want to be anything like inhospitable.

But Lowther's sense of humour was too strong for him. When he was on the track of a joke, the humorist of the Shell could not be held in.

It had not occurred to him that his great jape might be considered in doubtful taste. Now that it had been pointed out to him, he wasn't in the least inclined to admit it. Lowther could be obstinate.

His chums having failed to see the matter from his point of view, he was only made all the more determined to carry the jape through successfully.

But he did not want to do it by himself. Naturally, he wanted an audience. He could not enjoy a solitary joke.

His study-mates and Study No. 6 had failed him. Kangaroo of the Shell, and Talbot, and Mayne, had preferred cricket to the best joke under the sun. Grundy and Dane and Glyn, when they were acquainted with the scheme, had pronounced it rotten. So had Reilly and Hammond and Kerruish and Gore.

Never had there been such a plentiful lack of appreciation.

Monty Lowther felt sore about it.

Certainly, there were some fellows who would have entered into a joke against anybody, fellows like Crooke and Levison and Mellish, and the more ill-natured it was, the better they would have liked it. Lowther would not admit that there was anything ill-natured in his scheme. He was the best-natured fellow in the world, really, only his sense of humour was unduly developed.

But it really seemed that if he wanted anybody to share that great joke with him, he would have to fall back on Crooke & Co.

That went against the grain. Crooke & Co. were black sheep, and Lowther did not like them. Tom Merry and his friends had little to do with them—especially Crooke, who was an arrant blackguard.

Chumming up with Crooke & Co. for the afternoon was not pleasant, and Monty Lowther did not like the idea.

He came towards Tom Merry, as the captain of the Shell came away from the wickets.

"Look here, Tom——"

"Taking a turn with the bat, Monty?" asked Tom cheerily.

"No. Are you coming with me?"

"Can't, old chap!"

Lowther frowned.

"You mean you won't, Tom."

Tom Merry paused, and a troubled look came over his sunny face.

"Don't get ratty, kid," he said pacifically. "I'm playing cricket, you know."

"That's not the only reason you won't come."

"Well, no. As a matter of fact——" Tom hesitated.

"Well?" said Lowther grimly.

"Well, don't you think it's a bit rough to jape a new kid like that. What's the good of being down on him?"

"I'm not down on him."

"He would take it pretty sorely, you know, getting at his being a Jew——"

"What does it matter how he takes it?"

"Well, it does matter. I shouldn't like to hurt his feelings," said Tom. "All Jews are not like old Moses at Wayland, you know."

"Who said they were?"

"Well, nobody," said Tom. "But——"

"Oh, have it out!" growled Lowther. "You think what I'm going to do is caddish—is that it?"

Tom Merry coloured.

"I hope you're not going to do it, Monty."

"You think it's caddish?" repeated Lowther savagely.

"I don't think you'd do anything caddish, Monty. But—but I don't like the idea of—of—of——"

"Of what I'm going to do. Well, if you think it's caddish, that's enough. I'll tell you what I think, in return. I think you're making a mountain out of a molehill, and that you're a silly ass!"

"Monty——"

Monty Lowther walked away.

Tom Merry looked after him in distress. But Monty Lowther did not look back. He was decidedly ratty. Tom Merry hesitated a moment or two, and then ran after him and caught him by the arm.

"Monty, old chap, don't get ratty about nothing——"

"Are you coming with me?"

"Well, I can't. But——"

"Well, if you won't, Crooke will."

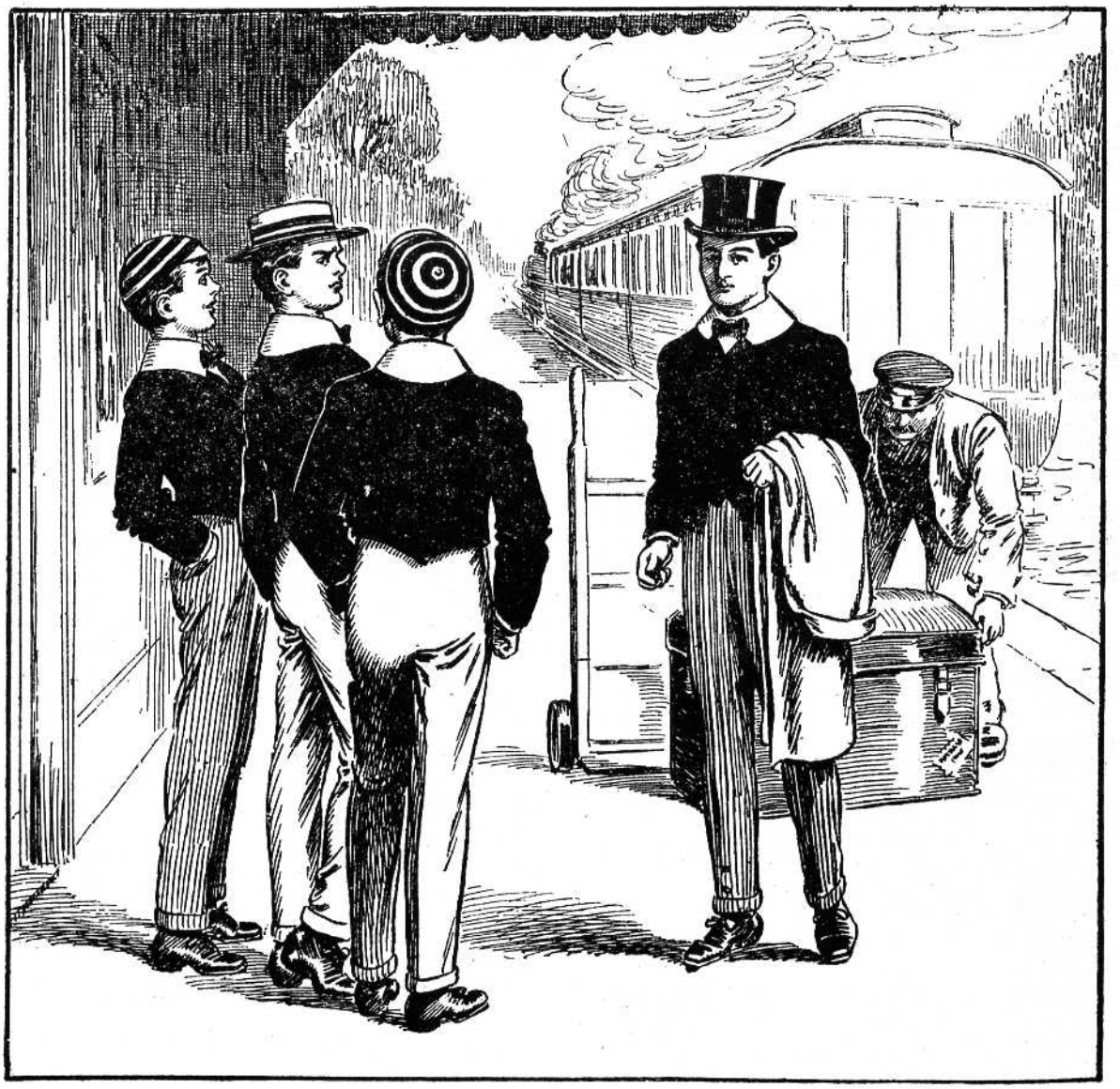
Tom Merry's brow clouded.

"I hope you're not going to chum up with that cad, Monty."

"Why not, if my own friends give me the go-by," said Lowther, with something like a sneer. "Get on with your cricket."

Lowther jerked his arm away, and walked off the field. Tom Merry's face was clouded as he returned to the cricket. It was something very like a quarrel with his old chum: and quarrels were almost unknown among the Terrible Three. But it was a point they evidently could not agree upon.

Lowther marched off the cricket-ground in great dudgeon. He went to look for Gerald Crooke. Crooke was easily found; he was hanging about the tuckshop



"We're rather gone on Jews, you know," said Crooke. Lowther kicked his ankle. "Gone on Jews!" repeated Julian, in wonder. "What do you mean?" "You're a Jew, ain't you?" "Yes." "We like 'em at St. Jim's," explained Crooke, "that's why we've come to meet you." (See Chapter 4.)

with Mellish. The two slackers were not interested in cricket.

"You fellows busy?" asked Lowther.

"Yes," said Crooke, with a grin. "Mellish is busy trying to borrow half-a-crown from me, and I'm busy stopping him."

"I've got a little joke on," explained Lowther. "There's a new kid coming——"

"I've heard about him," said Crooke. "His name's Julian, and he's a Jew. I heard Cutts of the Fifth mention him. He's rolling in money."

"They always do," said Mellish. "Blessed if I don't wish I was a Jew!"

"What's the jape?" asked Crooke.

"Meet him at the station, chum up with him——"

"What rot!"

"And take him round, and make him spend money," said Lowther.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Crooke and Mellish.

Monty Lowther brightened up. His great wheeze was meeting with its just appreciation at last.

"You see, being a Jew, he will have a separate pain every time he parts with a tanner," he said. "We'll take him round, and make him stand treat——"

"Bet you he won't."

"Well, if he won't, we'll order expensive things, and make him pay his whack," said Lowther.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I'm stony!" growled Mellish.

"Oh, we'll do the ordering," said Lowther. "I'm in funds."

Crooke jingled money in his trousers-pocket. There was always a jingle of cash about Crooke of the Shell.

"I'm on!" he said. "We'll make him spend money, and watch his face. Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" echoed Mellish. "I'm on!"

"Come on, then," said Lowther. "He gets to Rylcombe by the three-thirty. We've got time to walk it."

"We'll have a cab home," chuckled Crooke. "We'll make him shell out. By Jove, we'll telephone for a taxi from Wayland, and run up a bill."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Monty Lowther began to feel that Crooke wasn't such

a bad chap after all. He hadn't been done justice, Lowther reflected. There was good in everybody; and he had found some in Crooke. Such was the influence of a proper appreciation of his humorous scheme.

The three juniors strolled down to the gates in high good-humour. Several fellows glanced at them curiously; it was very unusual to see Lowther strolling with the cad of the Shell.

Once safe outside the gates, Crooke drew a cigarette-case from his pocket.

"Have a fag," he said genially.

Lowther flushed uncomfortably.

"Oh, chuck that!" he said. "That isn't what we've come out for."

"Pooh! We sha'n't be spotted here."

"I'm not thinking of that," said Lowther sharply.

Crooke shrugged his shoulders and lighted his cigarette. Mellish followed his example.

"Look here——" began Lowther.

"Oh, bow-wow!"

Monty Lowther debated in his mind whether he should turn back, and abandon his great wheeze, and join the cricketers.

But he would not be beaten.

He walked on, with a very red face, and Crooke and Mellish exchanged a wink and went on smoking. Lowther did not say another word, but he was very glad when the cigarettes were finished, and the stumps were pitched into the hedge.

CHAPTER 4.
Expensive!

"RYLCOMBE!"

The train stopped, and a handsome, athletic-looking lad in Etons stepped out upon the platform.

From the guard's van a large trunk was dumped down.

The lad in Etons walked along the platform towards it. And three juniors, who had just come on the platform from the entrance, spotted him at once.

"That's the kid," said Monty Lowther.

"That's the merchant," said Crooke. "Not quite such a bounder as I expected."

"Sheeney right enough," said Mellish.

"Put on your best smiles," said Lowther. "Mind, we've got to be jolly chummy. Make a good impression on him."

"You bet!"

"Taking the stranger in!" grinned Mellish. "All right, I'm on. We can fool a new kid easily enough."

Lowther frowned for a moment. He did not like to hear his great wheeze described as taking a stranger in, and fooling a new kid. However, he led the way towards the youth in Etons.

The new-comer was giving the porter instructions regarding his box. He was also giving him a shilling, as the trio could not help seeing.

He glanced round as they came up, and looked at the three juniors. Monty Lowther raised his straw hat very politely.

"Good-afternoon!" he said.

"Good-afternoon!" responded the stranger genially.

Somewhat to the disappointment of the juniors, he did not say "goot-afternoon!" Somehow they had expected him to speak in the same manner as Mr. Moses, of Wayland, whose weird accent was very pronounced. But the new-comer spoke quite nicely, and in a pleasant, musical voice.

"We're from St. Jim's," said Lowther. "I suppose you're the new kid, Julian?"

The new-comer nodded.

"My name's Julian, and I'm going to St. Jim's," he said.

"We've heard about you," said Crooke. "Thought you might feel a bit lonely at first, so we've come to meet you."

"Sort of give you a welcome to the school," said Mellish.

"Ahem! Exactly!" said Lowther.

The new boy looked very pleased.

"That's very kind of you," he said. "I don't know anybody at St. Jim's. It's jolly decent of you to come and meet a new chap you don't know, and I'm very much obliged."

"We're rather gone on Jews, you know," said Crooke.

Lowther kicked his ankle.

"Gone on Jews!" repeated Julian, in wonder. "What do you mean?"

"You're a Jew, ain't you?"

"Yes."

"We like 'em at St. Jim's," explained Crooke. "That's why we've come to meet you."

Julian looked rather hard at Crooke.

"You're very good," he said.

"This way, young shentleman," said Mellish, with a chuckle.

Julian flushed.

"Shut up, Mellish!" said Lowther sharply. His two assistants seemed likely to spoil the whole game.

"What's the matter?" said Mellish. "I'm only showing Chewlian the way. You pronounce your name Chewlian, don't you, young 'un?"

"I pronounce it Julian," said the new boy quietly.

"My mistake," said Mellish, sniggering. "I say—yow-ow!" Mellish broke off suddenly as Lowther kicked his leg.

"Don't mind that silly ass!" said Lowther reassuringly. "Mellish thinks he is clever, you know—a big mistake—but he thinks it. I'm jolly glad to meet you, Julian. My name's Lowther—Monty Lowther of the Shell. This chap is Crooke, one of the ornaments of my Form, and that duffer is Mellish of the Fourth. Do you know what Form you are going into?"

"The Fourth," said Julian. "That's arranged."

"Then we sha'n't have you in the Shell," said Lowther. "I was—ahem!—hoping that you would be in my study. Have you told the porter about your box?"

"Yes. He's going to put it in the cab."

"You were thinking of taking the hack to the school?" asked Lowther, with an air of surprise.

"Yes. Why not?"

"Rotten old rattletrap," said Lowther. "Let them send your box, and we'll take you with us. There's plenty of time before us, and I thought you might like a look round."

"You're very kind. I'll have the box sent, then."

"Hold on a minute.. Have it sent in the hack," said Crooke. "It will cost about twice as much as the man taking it, but—ahem!—it looks better."

"Seems to me a waste of money," said Julian, with a stare.

"Oh, I suppose you think a lot about money?" said Crooke, his lip curling.

"I suppose a fellow ought to be careful with his money?" said Julian, with a puzzled look. "There's no sense in wasting it, is there?"

"You see, we're giving you the tip," said Crooke. "As you're new to the school, we thought we'd show you the ropes a bit. Better send it in the hack, or it will look—well, as if you're rather mean."

"Much better," said Lowther.

"I'll take your word for it, as you know the ropes," said Julian, still looking puzzled. "Porter, put the trunk in the cab, please."

"Yessir," said old Trumble.

The juniors followed Trumble from the station.

The box was deposited in the ancient hack, and Trumble opened the door for Julian.

"That's all right," said Lowther. "You're to take that box to St. Jim's, Robert. Better pay him in advance, Julian, in case you don't see him again."

"Certainly! How much?"

"It's three shillings to drive to St. Jim's," said Lowther. "But Robert is a poor man, and he has fifteen children—is it fifteen or sixteen, Robert?"

The old driver grinned; he knew Monty Lowther.

"Seventeen, Master Lowther," he replied.

"So, if you paid Robert four bob instead of three, he would take it kindly, Julian," said Lowther. "We're rather liberal at St. Jim's, you know."

"I don't mind," said Julian. "I should have given him a tip, anyway."

"Well, as you're so generous," remarked Crooke, "you might make it five. Robert's a poor man, and with eighteen children——"

Julian laughed.

"Yes, make it five," said Lowther. "Robert's a good sort. He served his country when he was a young man, didn't you, Robert?"

"I was in the Die-Hards, sir," said Robert.

"And he's keeping up the reputation of the regiment, and dying hard," said Lowther. "That was in the reign of George the First, wasn't it, Robert?"

"No it wasn't, Master Lowther," said Robert indignantly. "Which I ain't seventy yet, and you know it!"

Julian smiled, and placed five shillings in the brown old palm. Robert touched his hat very respectfully.

The old hack, and the old horse, and the old driver rolled off with Richard Julian's box. The three practical jokers felt a little disappointed. Julian was spending money according to programme, but it did not seem to give him a pain so far.

"You've got lots of dibs, I suppose?" Mellish remarked enviously. "Simply rolling in filthy lucre—what?"

"Oh, no," said Julian, "I am not rich, but I have an uncle who is very kind and generous, and he makes me a large allowance—more than I need."

"He isn't a Jew?"

"Yes, he is a Jew, of course," said Julian. "Do you think it is impossible for a Jew to be kind and generous?"

"Blessed if I wouldn't swap all my uncles for him, Jew or not," said Mellish, with a laugh. "I should like a good allowance from somewhere."

"I suppose you're hungry after your journey, Julian?" said Lowther.

"Yes, a little. I expected to be at the school in time for tea."

"N.G.," said Lowther. "Tea at school is simply rotten! Bread and scrape, you know. And tea as weak as the Kaiser's brain. You'd better come and have a snack in the tuckshop. It's just handy, and we'd like a snack, too."

"Certainly!"

"This way!" chortled Mellish.

That seemed the best part of the joke to Mellish. As he was stony, evidently he couldn't be expected to pay his "whack." But he intended to have his "whack" in the feed at the village tuckshop.

"Hold on, though!" said Lowther. "There's Trumble."

"Trumble?" repeated Julian.

"Yes; the porter. It's usual to hand him something. You don't mind my mentioning it, as you are new here," said Lowther blandly. "A St. Jim's fellow is a St. Jim's fellow, you know, and something is expected of him."

"I gave him a shilling," said Julian.

"Ahem! Of course, if you don't want to make it a decent tip, there's no law to make you," said Crooke. "I'll stand him something myself, as we're with you."

Julian crimsoned.

"But I don't want to be mean!" he exclaimed. "I will give him whatever is customary. I should have thought a shilling was enough for lifting a box out of a train."

"Not for St. Jim's," said Mellish. "We do things rather in style at our school, you know."

"I should suggest another half-crown," said Lowther.

"You usually give him half-a-crown?" asked Julian.

"Ahem!" Lowther hesitated.

But Crooke chimed in. Crooke had not been brought up at the feet of George Washington, and a "fib" came quite easily to him.

"Always! It's the thing, you know."

"He must make a lot of money, I should think," said Julian, in astonishment, "with so many fellows at the school, all handing out half-crowns; he must make a pretty good thing of it. But I don't mind in the least, of course. Naturally, I don't know your school customs till I have been among you a bit."

He crossed the pavement, and presented the astounded Trumble with a half-crown. Then he rejoined the juniors, who checked their grinning as he came back.

Old Trumble bit the half-crown to assure himself that it was a good one, suspecting a joke. But it was quite good, and Trumble whistled, and slid it into his pocket. Trumble sometimes had good tips from the richer fellows at the school, especially fellows like D'Arcy of the Fourth; but he was surprised that a junior should come back and tip him half-a-crown after tipping him a shilling. But he had no objections to make.

"Now for the feed," said Mellish.

And the new friends of the new boy piloted him to Mrs. Murphy's tuckshop.

CHAPTER 5.

Making the Money Fly!

MONTY LOWTHER led the way into the tuck shop.

As yet his little joke could not be said to have "panned out" well. Julian had plenty of money, and, according to Lowther's theories, he ought to have had a pain whenever he parted with any of it. He had parted with a good deal already, and had shown no sign whatever of having a pain.

But Lowther intended to put him to a severe test in the tuckshop.

Mrs. Murphy came out of her little parlour, and orders were given liberally.

"By the way, I suppose you know it's the custom for a new boy to pay his footing?" Lowther remarked.

Julian looked at him inquiringly.

"I don't know it," he said. "But I have no objection, I'm sure."

"You're ready to stand treat—what?" asked Mellish.

"With pleasure."

"Of course, if you don't like the idea——" said Lowther.

"But I do," said Julian. "It was very kind of you to come and meet me, and it will be a pleasure to me. Pile in!"

"Oh, good!" said Mellish. "Do you mind if I try the cream-puffs?"

"Anything you like!"

The three practical jokers took the new boy at his word. They piled in!

Julian himself appeared to have a good appetite, and he did full justice to the good things of Mrs. Murphy.

But Lowther and Crooke and Mellish outdid him easily. They made it a point to choose the most expensive articles, and they chose them in large quantities.

Julian did not turn a hair.

The feed was going strong, when three fellows in Grammar School caps came in. They were Gordon Gay and Wootton major and minor, of Rylcombe Grammar School.

"Hallo, St. Jim's cads!" said Gordon Gay.

"Kick 'em out!" said Wootton major.

Monty Lowther held up his hand.

"Pax!" he said. "Gentlemen, you're welcome! This is a great occasion. Crœsus minor has arrived, and he's standing treat all round. We shall be very happy if you will join us. Order anything you like!"

"That is rather a big order," said Gordon Gay, laughing.

"Not too big for Julian," said Lowther. "He simply loves spending money. And he's got a tame uncle who loads him with it. Allow me to introduce you. Julian of the Fourth—Gay, Wootton major, Wootton minor. The chap with the nose is the major, and the chap with the ears is the minor."

"Why, you silly ass——" began Wootton major and minor together.

Julian nodded and laughed.

"You're very welcome," he said. "Pile in—it's my treat!"

"Hear, hear!" said the three Grammarians.

They piled in.

Mrs. Murphy looked at Julian rather curiously as the bill mounted up. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy sometimes stood tremendous blow-outs in the tuckshop, but he had seldom allowed his expenditure to reach the figure it was now reaching. The good dame made up an account upon a sheet of sugar-paper.

"How is it going?" asked Lowther jovially.

"Two pounds three shillings," said Mrs. Murphy.

"My hat!" said Crooke.

"Better ease off, if the new kid isn't made of money," grinned Gordon Gay.

"Go ahead!" said Julian. "Don't ease off till you've finished. It's all serene!"

"But look here——"

"Oh, pile in!"

"Better fill our pockets while we're about it," said Wootton major humorously. "I'll borrow a sack, too!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"This is what I call something like," said Mellish, whose face was looking very shiny. "You're a pearl of price, Julian!"

"A gem of the first water!" grinned Crooke. "Pass over the tarts, Mrs. Murphy!"

"Yes, Master Crooke."

Monty Lowther regarded the new boy in wonder. Either his estimate of Julian was quite mistaken, or else the new junior was an adept at concealing his feelings. If he was suffering any inward pain, his handsome face did not show it. He seemed to be enjoying the feed as heartily as any of the fellows present. Unless appearances were very deceptive, he certainly was enjoying it.

Yet the bill was running up into pounds! Monty Lowther felt that there was something wrong somewhere. His great wheeze—the joke of the season—seemed to be falling flat.

The time came when the juniors, healthy and hungry as they were, were more than satisfied. Even Mellish had to slack down.

"Trot out the little bill," grinned Crooke.

Mrs. Murphy trotted out the little bill.

"Four pounds four shillings and ninepence," she said, in almost an awe-stricken voice.

"Oh, crumbs!"

Lowther watched Julian's face. Any fellow might have felt a "pain" at being called upon to pay such a bill.

But Julian did not seem to feel the pain.

He took a five-pound note from an expensive little pocket-book, and dropped it on the counter.

"Fivers, by gum!" murmured Mellish, whose covetous eyes had noted that there were more banknotes in the pocket-book. "Rolling in money, by gad! If this chap wants a chum in the Fourth, I know where he can find one."

Mellish's manner was full of cordiality now. If Julian had been a Prussian, Mellish would have been cordial to him after the sight of those fivers.

Julian dropped his change carelessly into his pocket.

"About time we got on to the school," he suggested.

"Time we got off, too," remarked Gordon Gay. "Thanks awfully for that ripping feed, kid! When you feel inclined to share a frugal tea, you can drop in on us at the Grammar School. Don't expect the fat of the land like this. We're not giddy millionaires. But we'll be glad to see you."

"Thank you!" said Julian.

Gordon Gay & Co. sauntered away, and Julian left the tuckshop with the St. Jim's juniors.

"Walk to the school?" he asked. "The lane looks very pleasant."

"Walk!" said Lowther. "My dear chap, you can't walk! A new kid is supposed to arrive in—ahem!—some sort of style."

"There was only one cab at the station, and that's gone with my box," remarked Julian. "There doesn't seem much choice."

"Oh, that's all right! There's a telephone-box at the station, and you can get a taxi from Wayland."

Julian paused.

"A taxi from Wayland?" he said. "But Wayland's further from here than the school is, isn't that so?"

"Oh, the taxi will get here pretty quick!" said Lowther carelessly. "Of course, if you object to the expense——"

"Not at all, so far as that goes, but it seems to me that you fellows at St. Jim's must be very extravagant, if you spend money like that. It's rather slacking, too, isn't it?"

"Got him at last!" murmured Lowther to himself. "He's feeling the pain."

The thought that his great wheeze was not falling flat after all quite bucked up Monty Lowther. He smiled cheerily.

"Well, something's expected of a new boy," he remarked. "Of course—ahem!—we won't stick you for the taxi. We'll whack it out."

"Fair whacks!" said Crooke, with a grin. "We'll stand it fair all round."

Julian hesitated.

"Oh, come!" urged Lowther. "We're really putting you up to a wrinkle, you know. I suppose you don't mind standing your whack in a taxi?"

"It seems to me a waste," said Julian, "but if you fellows want a taxi, I don't mind at all. Let's go and telephone."

"This way!" chortled Mellish.

They walked away to the station, and Lowther telephoned to Wayland for the taxi-cab. Julian stood with a very thoughtful expression on his face while the humorist of the Shell was busy with the telephone.

An idea seemed to be working in his mind. Good-natured and facile as the new boy had shown himself to be, he was no fool—indeed, he was decidedly keen.

"Let's make an afternoon of it," said Crooke genially. "We're all pretty well heeled, you know. Let's have a run round the country in the taxi, and finish up with a cinema at Wayland, and a taxi home. Equal whacks all round."

"Rather an expensive amusement for juniors," said Julian, giving the Shell fellow a very curious look. "But I'm game."

"You'll have to lend me the tin, some of you," said Mellish.

Crooke grunted.

"We three stand the exes," he said. "Mellish is stony, so he'll have to be a passenger. I'm sure Julian won't mind."

"Not at all," said Julian.

"The taxi will be here in ten minutes," said Lowther, coming away from the telephone-box. "We'll go and have some ices while we're waiting for it."

"Good egg!"

Perhaps Julian considered that he had already paid his footing to quite the required extent, for he said nothing more of standing treat. Neither did the others. For that expensive afternoon out it was agreed that "exes" should be whacked out among the three. Lowther was in funds, and he would have spent his last sixpence in a practical joke, and Crooke, as usual, was reeking with money, and he was given to indulging in expensive amusements. As for Mellish, he was a "passenger." The trio intended that expenses should be run up till the Jewish junior simply could not stand it any longer. They were convinced that he was already suffering inwardly, and they meant to draw blood, so to speak.

So they paid for their ices, and when the taxi came puffing up they embarked in it in great spirits. And Julian, whether he was suffering an inward pain or not, was as cheerful as any of the party, and seemed to enter into the excursion with the greatest zest.

CHAPTER 6.
Turning the Tables!

"LET'S have a jolly long run!" said Crooke. "Blow the tuppences!"

"Blow 'em!" agreed Julian heartily.

"Besides, it's good for the taxi-man!" argued Lowther.

"Of course it is!" assented Julian.

"Then we'll have a run round country," said Monty. "We'll show you Abbotsford Castle, and come back by the moor."

"All serene—so long as I'm not too late at St. Jim's."

"We'll see to that," said Lowther. "The Head don't wait on the steps of the School House for new boys, you know."

"I suppose not," said Julian, laughing.

"If you didn't drop in at all, I dare say he wouldn't

notice it," grinned Crooke. "This is going to be a real outing, and confound the expense!"

"Confound it, with all my heart!" said Julian.

If Dick Julian was humbugging he was doing it remarkably well. The taximeter was clicking off twopences at an alarming rate, as the car spun along the green country roads. Julian did not even glance at the indicator, however. He was looking at the green wooded country, with great enjoyment.

It was a sunny afternoon, and the pleasant countryside of Sussex was delightful to the eye. All four of the juniors enjoyed that run. It was Crooke who first looked at the indicator with some uneasiness.

"Phew!" he ejaculated. "Fifteen bob already."

"Oh, let it rip!" said Julian. "That isn't much, when we're whacking it out among three, you know."

"Let it rip by all means," agreed Crooke.

And it ripped!

But after that Crooke's eye wandered many times to the taximeter. Somehow or other the leaping twopences seemed to trouble him. He wanted to "stick" the new boy for a good sum, but there were limits, since he had himself to whack out as much as the Hebrew junior.

He wondered how much was needed to give Julian the required "pain." No sign of pain showed yet in Julian's face. His face, in fact, was beaming. He was thoroughly enjoying the scenery, and the rapid rush along the roads.

The taximan seemed to enjoy it, too. It was but seldom he came upon such very good customers.

The car whipped on, and Crooke caught Lowther's eye several times. He was mutely asking whether the joke had gone far enough. Lowther held out grimly. He had money in his pocket—money he had intended for certain purchases—and it looked as if those purchases might not be made now. But he was not going to give in. He was going on spending money till the Jewish junior cried halt, at any rate. It would be too absurd an ending to his wheeze if he cried halt himself.

"Dash it all, it's turned the quid!" said Crooke. And a little later he made another remark. "Twenty-five bob! It'll be nearly as much back to Wayland, you know."

Mellish grinned. He had a sense of humour as well as Lowther and Crooke, and it struck him as funny to see the two jokers getting "stuck" in this way.

"What does the money matter?" said Julian breezily. "We're whacking it out, you know. Let it rip!"

"Ye-e-s, keep on!" said Lowther.

"Make it an even fiver before we chuck it," said Julian.

"A fiver!" gasped Crooke.

"Why not?"

"By gum! I'm not going to whack out a third part of a fiver for buzzing about in a taxi—not if I know it."

"Pooh! We're having an afternoon out, you know," said Julian. "Don't think about the money. That's nothing."

"He, he, he!" cackled Mellish.

The biters were getting bit'en.

Monty Lowther shot a quick, searching, suspicious glance at the Jew boy. For a moment it flashed into his brain that Julian might have "spotted" the little game, and was turning the tables on the practical jokers. But Julian's face was quite calm and placid, and expressed nothing but pleasure in the drive, and appreciation of the kindness of the juniors in taking him out like this on his first day at the school. Was the fellow an ass, or was he awfully deep? Lowther wondered, but he decided that the fellow was an ass. For he reflected that he would have had to be awfully, awfully deep to take him—Monty Lowther—in, and pull his humorous leg.

The taxi rushed on. At thirty shillings on the meter Crooke struck.

"We're exceeding the speed limit," he said, "and I'm fed up, anyway. Let's get back to Wayland."

"Yes; we sha'n't have time for the cinema, otherwise," said Lowther.

Julian nodded.

"Just as you like," he said.

The taxi turned for the return journey. Julian had seen Abbotsford Castle—and Abbotsford Camp with the men in khaki swarming there—and the old bridge over the Upper Ryll, and a great deal of the country. He was learning quite a lot of that part of Sussex, in fact—at a price. But he did not seem to care about the price. It was Crooke who was chiefly worried about that.

Wayland came in sight at last. The taxi buzzed up to the cinematograph show, and the juniors alighted. Crooke gave something very like a snarl as he read the figures on the taximeter.

"Two-pound-ten," he said. "And there's the extra passenger, too."

"Tanner each," said Mellish.

"Oh, no!" said Julian. "Tanner isn't enough, considering that the driver has taken us such a whopping distance. Better give him half-a-crown each for the extra passenger."

The driver looked quite enthusiastic as he heard that. He regarded it as a simply splendid idea.

But Crooke glared at the new boy as if he would eat him.

"You can hand out half-crowns if you like!" he snapped. "I'm jolly well not going to."

Julian looked surprised.

"I understood that you St. Jim's fellows always whacked out half-crowns in tips," he remarked. "You remember what you told me in Rylcombe."

"Ahem! Yes; but—but——"

"And then there's a tip for the driver," said Julian calmly. "Can't hand out less than five bob for a drive like that."

"Oh, dear!" murmured Lowther; and Mellish's unpleasant cackle was heard again.

The afternoon was turning out to be more amusing than Mellish had anticipated. The look on Crooke's face was worth almost anything.

"Two-pound-ten on the meter, half-a-crown each for extra passenger, and five bob for the driver," resumed Julian cheerfully. "That's three quid in all—I can do figures, you know, being a Jew. That's a quid for each of us. Here you are, driver."

Julian placed a sovereign in the driver's hand.

After that, even Crooke could not hold back. Crooke and Lowther each handed over a sovereign.

"Thank you, gentlemen!" said the taxi-man. "Any other time you want a car, I 'ope you'll remember me."

"Catch me!" murmured Crooke, under his breath.

"Now for the cinema," said Julian cheerily. "I say, this is a ripping afternoon! I don't know how to thank you fellows for taking such a lot of trouble over a new kid."

Julian's kind entertainers did not answer. They were beginning to doubt whether it was a ripping afternoon after all.

CHAPTER 7.
The Biters Bit!

DICK JULIAN and his somewhat morose companions entered the hall of the cinema show. They had stopped at the best picture palace in Wayland. True, there were sixpenny seats to be had, if they had wanted them. But Julian, at least, did not appear to want them. He ran his eye over the list of prices and found that there were extra-special seats at five shillings each.

"Four at five bob, please!" he said, dropping five shillings down into the little orifice, at the end of which a woman's face appeared.

Crooke glared at Lowther.

"The beast's getting five-bob seats," he whispered.

Lowther grinned, a sickly grin.

"Why not, Crooke? He's simply playing our game for us!"

"There's a limit, you ass!"

"Well, we can't help it now—unless you're going to look mean."

Crooke grunted. He had come out to make the Jew junior look mean, not to look mean himself. He sulkily

dropped his five shillings down, and Lowther followed his example.

"Don't forget little me," said Mellish.

Crooke seemed deaf; he walked on into the house.

"He's forgotten," said Julian calmly. "Never mind—half a crown each for us two."

Lowther nodded without speaking, and Mellish's ticket was taken.

The four juniors entered the darkened apartment and were shown to their seats. There were war pictures on the screen—a scene showing the desolation of Belgium where the savage Huns had passed.

In the interest of the pictures, the juniors soon forgot other matters. But there came an interval soon, and the lights went up.

Then the voice of a diminutive youth in buttons was heard.

"Chocklits! Chocklits!"

The youth in buttons probably meant chocolates, for he carried a tray of those comestibles.

"Who says chocolates?" asked Julian.

"Little me!" grinned Mellish.

Crooke grunted, and Lowther appeared to be deaf.

"Chocklits! Chocklits!"

Julian made a sign to the lad, who approached. The new junior selected the most expensive-looking packets on the tray.

"How much are these?" he asked.

"Two shillin's each, please."

"Give us four of them."

"Suttinly, sir!"

Julian handed the four packets round, apparently blind to the unwelcoming look on Crooke's face, and the peculiar expression of Monty Lowther.

"That's eight bob," said Julian. "Better give the kid a bob—he looks a nice boy—that's three bob each for the three of us."

"Wha-a-t!"

"Oh!"

Julian laid three shillings on the tray. Lowther followed his example. Julian nudged Crooke, who did not seem in a hurry.

"The lights will be going down," he said. "Better settle with the kid."

Crooke choked back some remark that rose to his lips, and clinked three shillings on the tray.

Then the pictures came on again. But when another interval arrived, Julian had a proposal to make.

"Chocolates make a chap thirsty," he remarked. "Let's go and get some ginger-pop. I noticed a shop next to this show."

"We should have to pay again to come in!" growled Crooke.

"Oh, that's all right!"

"Is it?" growled Crooke. "If you want to throw your money away, I don't!"

"Shurrup!" murmured Lowther.

Crooke snarled.

"Oh, come on," said Julian. "Let's have some ginger-pop."

He rose from his seat, and the other juniors followed him. Exactly what they had to complain of they could not really have said. They had come out with the Jew boy to make him spend money. He was spending money—more recklessly and extravagantly than they had hoped or expected. They ought to have been eminently satisfied.

But they weren't!

Somehow or other that complete success of the little plot had a disconcerting effect upon the plotters.

It was going a little too far. They had fully expected Julian to turn green and yellow, and every other colour of the rainbow, when he was bamboozled into spending a sovereign or so. Instead of which he seemed prepared to spend sovereign after sovereign without turning a hair. And as they were compelled to keep pace with him on the principle of "whacking it out," it was the practical jokers who seemed likely to turn green and yellow.

For Lowther was near the end of his resources, and Crooke was suffering internal pains at parting with money. There was a limit—and Crooke had reached it. He didn't want to part with any more. He hadn't even the consolation of swanking over his heavy expenditure, for Julian was expending at the same rate, and in the most careless manner in the world.

In the bun-shop they imbibed ginger-pop, and then ices. Then Julian proposed getting back into the picture-palace.

"I've had enough cinema!" growled Crooke.

"Same here," said Lowther. "Give it a rest. It—it's about time we got to St. Jim's, I think. As you're a new kid, Julian——"

"The Head won't be waiting on the steps of the School House for me, you know," remarked Julian.

"Nunno! But——"

"If I didn't drop in at all he wouldn't notice it, you know."

"Ahem! But——"

"I'm going back to St. Jim's!" growled Crooke.

The cad of the Shell made hardly an effort to conceal his bad temper.

"All serene!" said Julian. "Here's a taxi."

"We—we could get the local train and walk from Rylcombe," murmured Lowther.

"But it's more comfy in a taxi," said Julian, in surprise. "Why should we go by train? As Crooke says, confound the expense!"

"Oh! Ye-es!"

Julian had already signed to the taxi, and it drew up beside the kerb. The practical jokers looked at one another, and stepped into it. There seemed no way of escape.

The cab buzzed away out of the market-town on the road to St. Jim's.

"What a ripping afternoon!" said Julian. "It was awfully good of you chaps to pick me up like this."

"D-d-don't mench!" said Lowther.

Lowther seemed to be in a state of depression. His humorousness had disappeared.

"I've seen a lot of the place," said Julian. "I never expected such kindness to be shown to a new kid."

Crooke grunted.

"After all, we've lots of time," said Julian brightly. "What do you fellows say to a run round before we get to the school?"

"I'm going straight to St. Jim's," snapped Crooke.

"In a hurry?"

"Yes."

"Oh, all serene!" Julian looked out of the window. "Driver, how long will it take you to get to St. Jim's?"

"Ten minutes more, sir."

"Do it in five, and we'll pay you double what's marked on the meter."

"My eye! I'm your man, sir!"

The taxi shot forward like an arrow from a bow. Julian settled back in his seat with a smile.

"Now we sha'n't be long," he remarked.

Crooke gave him a look that was positively homicidal.

"You—you've promised the driver double fare?" he gasped.

"Yes, for double speed, you know. You said you were in a hurry."

"I'm not going to pay double!" roared Crooke.

"Yes; we're whacking it out, you know," said Julian.

"I'm not paying double," said Crooke, throwing all disguise to the winds now. "I jolly well won't, and that's flat!"

"But we agreed——"

"Hang what we agreed! Don't be so jolly quick in offering drivers double fares," snarled Crooke. "I'm not standing it."

"But you suggested confounding the expense, you know," said Julian.

"If you want the man paid double, pay him double yourself," said Crooke savagely. "I tell you I won't, and that settles it!"

"I shall certainly pay him double, as I have promised to do so," said Julian quietly, "but if you don't care to whack it out, I'll pay."

Crooke snorted, and made no rejoinder.

"I'll take my whack!" said Lowther quickly.

"Pax!" said Monty Lowther, holding up his hand. "Gentlemen, you're welcome. This is a great occasion. Crœsus minor has arrived, and he's standing treat all round. We shall be very happy if you will join us. Order anything you like." (*See Chapter 5.*)

"Right-ho! It's between you and me, then," assented Julian.

The taxi was buzzing along at a great speed. It came up to the gates of St. Jim's with a terrific rush. The driver had done it under five minutes—just!

"Just done it, sir!" he remarked.

"Quite so," said Julian. "Let me see. Four bob on the meter; double that is eight. Bob for extra passenger is nine, and a bob over is ten. That's five each for us, Lowther."

Lowther felt in his pockets. He had been feeling in his pockets most of the way home, making wild attempts to count what remained of his money by the feel. But without taking it out of his pocket he could not be quite sure which were shillings and which were halfpennies—only he knew that the halfpennies considerably outnumbered the shillings. A dreadful doubt was in his mind whether he had enough cash to pay his "whack."

"Crooke——" he began.

"There's my bob," said Crooke savagely. "A bob's my share, and that's all I'm paying, and you can whistle for any more."

Crooke's manners were really leaving much to be desired; but the Shell fellow was haunted by the ghost, as it were, of the cash he had been forced to expend that afternoon, so much in excess of his intentions.

Lowther extracted the money from his pocket, and turned almost green as he looked at it.

"Look here, Crooke," he began hotly, "you agreed ——"

"Go and eat coke!"

Crooke strode away to put an end to the argument. Lowther turned an almost beseeching glance on Mellish.

"I say, Mellish——"

"I told you I was stony," said Mellish coolly. "It was agreed that I was to be a passenger, you know that."

And Mellish walked after Crooke, grinning.

Lowther was left with Crooke's shilling, and one-and-ninepence of his own with which to pay the half of ten shillings.

Evidently, it could not be done.

The greatest efforts in mental arithmetic could not make two shillings and ninepence into half of ten shillings.

Julian gave him a cheery smile. There was a humorous twinkle in the dark eyes of the Jewish junior.

"Run out?" he asked. "It's all serene; let me square. I've got lots!"

Lowther gave him a fierce look. His humiliation was complete now. He had played his great joke on the Jew boy, and the new kid had "spotted it"—that was only too clear now, the twinkle in his eyes told as much, and he had calmly turned the tables on the practical jokers. Crooke had been shown up as what he was—utterly mean—and Lowther was reduced to taking advantage of the generosity of the Jew.

There was no other resource. The taxi-man was waiting for his money.

"I—I shall have to let you lend me two-and-three," muttered Lowther, almost hoarsely, so greatly was he disturbed.

"All serene. Here you are!"

The taxi-man drove away, more than satisfied. Lowther stood for a moment looking at Dick Julian.

"A very pleasant afternoon," said Julian. "Thank you so much."

Lowther almost choked.

"I owe you two-and-threepence," he muttered. "I'll settle it within ten minutes. I can get it here as soon as I see one of the fellows."

"Don't trouble."

"I'm not going to remain in your debt, if that's what you mean," said Monty Lowther savagely, as he strode away.

Lowther was generally a nice-mannered youth, but he was feeling so sore and defeated now that his manners were really not much better than Crooke's. But Julian did not seem to mind. He smiled, and strode cheerfully across the quad towards the School House.

CHAPTER 8.

Funny or Not Funny?

TOM MERRY and Manners were in the study when Monty Lowther arrived there.

They were waiting for him.

The two chums had determined not to remember their little disagreement with Lowther, and to act as if there had been none. Least said was soonest mended, and so they greeted him with the usual cheery nod.

The table was laid for tea in the study, and there was half a loaf on the table. There was nothing else, so far. Funds were short in the study, so far as Tom and Manners were concerned. But, as the Terrible Three had their funds more or less in common, and as Lowther had had an unusually large remittance that morning, that was all right. At least, they supposed so.

"We've been waiting for you, kid," said Tom. "It's past tea-time."

Lowther grunted.

"You've had a long outing," remarked Manners.

Another grunt.

Monty Lowther did not seem communicative.

"I suppose you're hungry, after being out all the blessed afternoon?" said Tom Merry.

"I'm not hungry."

"Fed?"

"Yes."

"Well, we haven't," remarked Manners, "and, as you've got all the funds in your pockets, we're waiting."

"Oh!" said Lowther.

"We want something for tea," said Tom Merry, looking a little puzzled as Lowther coloured up.

"I—I can't stand tea," stammered Lowther.

"Oh, you mean the money was sent to you for something else?" asked Manners. "Well, your uncle might have sent you a few bob over."

"He did send me a few bob over," said Lowther.

"Then why can't you stand tea?"

"Because I can't."

Tom Merry and Manners looked very curiously at Lowther. Certainly Monty had been angry when he left them; there had been a rift in the lute. But it was not like Lowther to be sulky—and even if he had been sulky he would not have been mean. It was impossible that Lowther was refusing to stand the study tea because they had had words of disagreement. That was not to be thought of.

There was a short silence. Lowther was very red, and evidently irritated and angry. He stared at the bare table.

"Is that loaf all you've got?" he asked.

"That's all."

"Well, I—I'm sorry. I've got no tin," blurted out Lowther. "I suppose you don't think I'd keep it back if I had any, do you?"

"Of course we don't, old chap," said Tom. "We've waited because we knew you had a big remittance. But if it's all gone—— I suppose you've done your shopping while you've been out, so——"

"I haven't done any shopping."

"But you've blued all the tin?" asked Manners.

"Yes."

"Well, you'll excuse me if I say you're an ass," said Manners. "You might have remembered that there was nothing in the study. It's too late now for tea in the Hall."

"I didn't think it would all go," said Lowther, "and I forgot about tea, too. I had other things to think of."

"Well, never mind," said Tom Merry consolingly, "it can't be helped, and I dare say we can scare up some tea along the passage. Talbot will lend us something, if he's got anything."

"The fact is——" said Lowther.

"Well?"

"I want to borrow some money of you chaps."

Tom Merry whistled.

"I must have two-and-threepence," said Lowther. "I must have it at once. Haven't you got any tin?"

"Just one ha'penny," said Tom, while Manners shook his head. Lowther uttered an exclamation of annoyance.

"You don't seem very joyful after your great jape," said Manners, in wonder. "Tell us about it."

"Oh, rats!"

"Didn't you find the Jew kid at the station, after all?"

"Yes," growled Lowther.

"And how did the great wheeze go?" asked Tom. "Did you make him spend money right and left? And did it give him a pain?"

Lowther gritted his teeth. Never had he looked—and felt—less humorous.

"Oh, pile it on!" he growled. "You can snigger as much as you like. It was a rotten failure, so now you can cackle!"

"Keep your temper, old son," said Tom Merry mildly. "We're not cackling, and we're not sniggering. I didn't really think the wheeze would be a howling success. How did it go wrong? Wouldn't the chap spend any money?"

"The rotter!" snapped Lowther. "Yes, he spent money—like water! He's as keen as a razor, as it turns out. He spotted the little game, and never let on."

"Oh!" said Tom.

"Then he played us at our own game," growled Lowther savagely. "Led us into spending money, and—and busted us."

"Oh, my hat!"

"He didn't care two pence how much money he wasted, he was just fooling us; and I never saw it till the finish," said Lowther moodily. "He was an extravagant beast. We'd agreed to whack out the exes equally, and—and we were willing to spend money just to make him spend it. And—and the beast spent more than we could; so—so, instead of showing him up, we showed ourselves up. Crooke refused to pay his whack at the finish, the mean cad, and the Jew paid for him."

"Oh, dear!"

"And—and as Crooke wouldn't square, I couldn't pay up, and—and I had to borrow money of the Jew to settle with the cabman."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Lowther glared furiously at his chums. His sense of humour had failed him now, but to Tom Merry and Manners the ludicrous ending of his great scheme seemed extraordinarily funny. They roared.

"What are you cackling at now?" yelled Lowther.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You silly, chortling asses!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look here——" bellowed Lowther.

"Oh, dear!" gasped Tom Merry, wiping his eyes. "Ha, ha, ha! It was Crooke who turned out mean instead of the Jew chap, and you who couldn't pay your whack instead of the Jew chap. Ha, ha, ha! And it was jolly decent of him to lend you the money, too, if he knew you'd been pulling his leg."

"The cad!" said Lowther savagely. "He stuck me for it, and simply enjoyed lending me the money—I could see that."

"A Jew enjoyed lending you money!" grinned Manners. "You'll have to revise your ideas about Jews, then."

"I've got to settle with him at once!" snapped Lowther. "I'm not going to remain in the cad's debt."

"Is he a cad?" asked Tom Merry.

"Yes, he is—a howling cad!"

"What has he done?"

"He's done Lowther!" chuckled Manners. "Monty,

old man, you shouldn't be such a funny merchant. You woke up the wrong passenger."

"I don't want any more of your cackle!" growled Lowther bad-temperedly, and he went out of the study and slammed the door.

"Oh, my hat!" said Tom Merry. "Poor old Monty! He did wake up the wrong passenger that time. And now we sha'n't have any tea."

"Let's go and see Talbot," said Manners.

The two Shell fellows proceeded to the next study, where they found Talbot. They also found Monty Lowther there, and heard him saying:

"Can you lend me two and threepence, Talbot?"

"Certainly!" replied Talbot. "Here you are."

"Thanks, old man!"

Lowther passed his chums in the doorway with a frown. They were smiling; they simply could not help it. Talbot of the Shell looked surprised as Lowther strode away after that black look at his old pals.

"Nothing wrong, I hope?" he remarked.

"Nothing—only Monty has been rather too funny," grinned Manners; and he related the story, and Talbot roared.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And as Monty's blued all the cash, we can't have any tea," said Tom Merry; "so we're looking for a loan. If Lowther hasn't cleared you out, Talbot——"

Five shillings were forthcoming at once, and Tom Merry and Manners made their way to the school shop to lay in supplies. There was very soon a handsome spread in the study, and then they looked for Lowther to share it. Meanwhile, Monty Lowther was looking for Dick Julian.

CHAPTER 9.
Trouble in the Family.

"BAI Jove, deah boy, I congwatulate you!"

Thus said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

He addressed Monty Lowther. Lowther was waiting at the end of the passage for Julian to come out of the Housemaster's study. At present the new boy was shut up with Mr. Railton, and Lowther had not had an opportunity of returning that two-and-threepence, though it was burning a hole in his pocket. Lowther was savagely anxious to get out of the new junior's debt.

He stared at the smiling swell of St. Jim's as Arthur Augustus offered his congratulations. Arthur Augustus's noble eye was twinkling behind his eyeglass. He looked like a fellow who felt himself in possession of an uncommonly good joke.

"Eh? What do you mean?' askede Lowther crossly. He could see no grounds whatever for congratulation in the unfortunate events of that afternoon.

"It was wippin', deah boy!"

"What was ripping?" snapped Lowther.

"Your little joke, Lowthah! Ha, ha, ha!"

"You didn't think it was ripping when I told you about it before," growled Lowther, surprised and irritable.

The Honourable Arthur Augustus chuckled.

"Certainly not. I wegarded it as bein' in bad taste, and I think I wemarked as much to you at the time."

"You made a good many idiotic remarks," said Lowther. "I can't remember them all."

"Weally, Lowthah——"

"Oh, buzz off!" said Lowther.

"But I am congwatulatin' you. It turns out, aftah all, a wippin' joke," said Arthur Augustus, beaming. "The joke was up against you, as it turns out, but that only makes it all the more humowous, you know. Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look here, you fathead——"

"I've heard it from Mellish," grinned Arthur Augustus. "Mellish is tellin' it all ovah the school."

"Oh, he is—is he?" snarled Lowther.

"Yaas, wathah! And all the fellahs are simply woarin'," chuckled the swell of the Fourth. "I congwatulate you, Lowthah, on havin' bwought off a wippin' joke, when you only intended to be guilty of bad taste. Ha ha, ha!"

"You cackling idiot——"

"I wefuse to be called a cacklin' idiot, Lowthah. I thought I would congwatulate you. Most of your jokes are wathah wotten, but this one is a wegulah wippah. I saw Cwooke's face when he came in. Ha, ha, ha! It was worth a guinea a box! And you are lookin' wathah gween, now I notice it."

"I'll make you look green and yellow and blue if you don't go and cackle somewhere else!" said Lowther, breathing hard.

"That's the worst of you humowists," said Arthur Augustus, with a nod. "You can nevah take a joke when it turns against yourself. Evewybody is woarin' ovah it. Why don't you woar?"

"I'll jolly well make you roar, you tailor's dummy!" shouted Lowther; and he advanced upon the swell of St. Jim's with his hands clenched.

There would have been a case of assault and battery in another moment, but just then the Housemaster's door opened. Dick Julian came out, and Mr. Railton looked into the passage.

Lowther dropped his hands suddenly. Mr. Railton gave him a somewhat severe glance, and closed the study door.

"Weally, Lowthah——" began D'Arcy.

Lowther did not heed him. He hurried along the passage to greet the new boy—not with a friendly greeting. Julian looked at him placidly.

"Here's your money," said Lowther roughly.

"My money!" repeated Julian.

"Yes; the two-and-threepence I owe you."

"Oh, thanks!" said Julian carelessly, and he took the two shillings and the three pennies and dropped them into his pocket. "You needn't have hurried."

"I don't choose to remain in your debt," said Lowther bitterly. "You will be pleased to hear that all the fellows are laughing over the way you fooled me. You see, I'm not quite a dummy, and I know that you fooled me."

Julian stared at him for a moment, and then burst into a hearty laugh.

"I admit that," he said, "I pulled your leg, and I think you deserved it."

"Oh, you think that, do you?" said Lowther, between his teeth.

"Yes, certainly. I was grateful when you met me at the station, because I thought it was kindness. I soon tumbled to it that you were out to make game of me—because I am a Jew. I turned the tables on you, and serve you right. There's nothing for you to be ratty about. I wasn't ratty when you tried to pull my leg. You ought to take the joke as good-temperedly as I did."

"Bai Jove! That's quite wight!" chimed in Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, with a nod of approval. "It's up to you, Lowthah."

"When I want advice from a tailor's dummy I'll ask for it!" said Lowther savagely.

"Bai Jove! If you call me a tailah's dummay, Lowthah——"

"I'm sorry if I've offended you by turning your joke against yourself," said Julian. "Don't you think your sense of humour is rather one-sided? But as you seem to take it badly, I'm sorry."

This was spoken very frankly, and would have appealed to Lowther if he had been in a better humour. But Lowther was very much out of humour just then. Neither did he, the great humorist, like to be supposed to take a joke badly. It was a true bill; but it was not agreeable to hear.

"Oh, you're sorry!" he snapped. "Well, you can keep your sorrow. I suppose you mean you're afraid I'm going to lick you. I've a jolly good mind to. It was like your rotten cheek, anyway."

"I don't see it. And as for being afraid that you will lick me, I am not in the least afraid," said Julian quietly. "There is nothing for us to fight about but I am certainly not afraid."

"Well, keep your distance from me, that's all," said Lowther. "I don't like your sort."

Julian crimsoned.

It was an unworthy sneer, and Lowther repented of it the moment he had uttered it. But his evil genius was in the ascendant at that moment, and he walked away without another word. Julian stood quite still.

Arthur Augustus looked after Lowther, in surprise and disgust. He would not have been astonished by such a remark from Mellish or Crooke or Clampe, but from Lowther it was very astonishing.

"Pway excuse me, deah boy," he said; "pway excuse my chippin' in, as I do not know you. Don't mind Lowthah; he is wathah watty because his gweat joke has been such a wotten fwost, you know."

"I suppose he was alluding to my being a Jew," said Julian. "I am not ashamed of the blood in my veins. If I were, I should deserve to be despised. But a taunt like that is mean."

"Lowthah isn't weally mean, though," said Arthur Augustus. "He's only wathah watty. Pway don't think anythin' about it."

"I am not likely to worry about him or his opinion," said Julian, with a slight smile. "It does not matter to me."

"You have seen Mr. Wailton?" asked Arthur Augustus.

"Yes."

"Wippin', isn't he?"

"He was very pleasant," said Julian.

"Did you notice his fin?"

"His—his fin? Oh, his arm!" said Julian. "Yes; it is in a sling."

"He got that in Flandahs," said Arthur Augustus. "Whackin' the Huns, you know. The beasts winged him, and he come home wounded. We're jollay pwoud of him, I can tell you!"

"You should be," said Julian.

"Come for a stwoll wound the place, and I will show you the sights," said Arthur Augustus hospitably.

Julian gave him a quick look; his experience with Lowther and Mellish and Crooke had made him a little suspicious. But there was only friendly kindness in the noble countenance of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. Julian walked away with him, and they joined Blake and Herries and Digby in the quad. Tom Merry and Manners came up to them as they were chatting, and they nodded genially to the new boy.

"Seen Lowther?" asked Tom.

"I saw him ten minutes ago, deah boy," said D'Arcy. "He did not seem in a vewy good tempah."

"Well, tea's ready, and there's nothing like a feed to soothe the savage breast," said Tom. "We're looking for him. Hallo, there he is!"

Monty Lowther was sighted under the elms. He was standing there moodily by himself. His chums joined him amicably.

"Tea's ready," said Tom. "Talbot shelled out, and it's all right. Trot along!"

"A really good spread," said Manners.

Monty Lowther did not move. He looked moodily at his chums.

"I saw you just now speaking to that new cad," he said.

"Just nodded to him," said Tom. "What about it?"

"I suppose you're going to take him under your wing, and make much of him, as those Fourth-Form kids seem to be doing?" said Lowther sarcastically.

"Well, I don't know that we are," said Tom. "I suppose we shall be civil to him, as he's done no harm."

"I'm not going to be civil to him," said Lowther. "I don't like that kind of person; I've got a prejudice, you see. And I'm going to have nothing to do with him."

"That's rather fatheaded, you know. Still, you can please yourself, I suppose," said Tom. "I believe he's in the Fourth, anyway. There's no need for you to speak to him if you don't want to."

"And I don't want you fellows to speak to him, either," said Lowther

"Oh, draw it mild!" said Manners warmly. "I suppose we can say good-morning to a new kid if we like."

Lowther's face set obstinately.

"You can say good-morning to him if you like, but if you do, you needn't trouble to say good-morning to me," he replied.

"Monty, old man——" said Tom.

"I mean it," said Lowther grimly. "I dislike that fellow——"

"It's rather unreasonable——"

"I dare say it is; likes and dislikes often are," said Lowther coolly. "But there it is. I want you fellows to give him the marble eye, the same as I do."

"Well, I suppose we sha'n't seek him out, if it comes to that," said Tom, after a pause. "But I suppose we shall be civil to him."

"Then you needn't be civil to me," said Lowther.

"You're out of humour, old chap," said Tom. "Let's go and have tea now, and talk about it another time."

"It's got to be settled now. Are you going to back me up, or aren't you?"

"In what?"

"In being down on that sheeney."

"Certainly not," said Tom warmly. "Why should we be down on him? He's done nothing, except decline to be japed, and I suppose that's not a crime. Wait till he does something rotten before you're down on him. So far as I can see, he looks decent enough."

"Perhaps you like Jews," sneered Lowther.

"I've never known a Jew before," said Tom; "and before I make up my mind to be down on a fellow, I'd give him a chance to show what he's like. I'd give fair play even to a Prussian Hun."

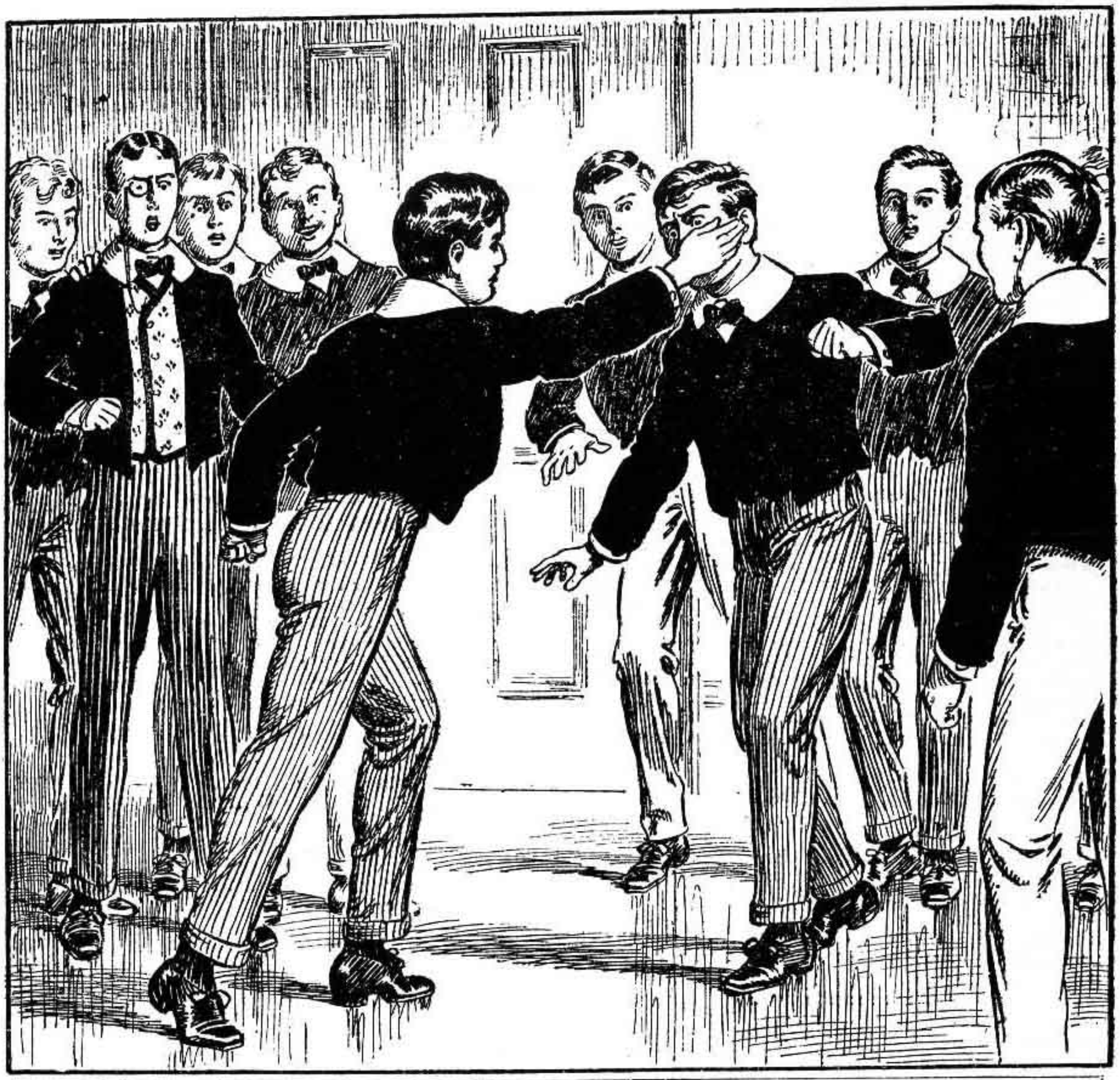
"Fair play?" said Lowther. "You told me this afternoon that I was a cad, and now you say I don't give fair play. No need to say any more."

"Monty, old chap, don't get ratty about nothing. What a fellow you are!" exclaimed Tom, in perplexity. "Come in and have tea."

"I don't want any tea, thanks."

"Monty!"

Monty Lowther walked away with his hands in his pockets, whistling. Tom Merry and Manners looked at one another in silence, and then went in to tea. But tea in Tom Merry's study was not an enjoyable meal that day.



Monty Lowther started back as Julian's palm struck him on the cheek. Then the new boy faced him with flashing eyes. "That's my answer! You are an insulting rotter, and I have no other answer to give you." (*See Chapter* 11.)

CHAPTER 10.
Lowther Goes His Own Way.

DICK JULIAN dropped into his place in the Fourth Form at St. Jim's.

He might have dropped there, like any other new kid, without any special notice being taken, but for the unusual conduct of Monty Lowther of the Shell.

Lowther's great jape on the Jew junior, and its ludicrous ending, had become a stock joke in the School House, and from there it spread to the New House; and the whole Lower School of St. Jim's cackled over it. Indeed, the story got to the seniors, and even great men like Kildare and Darrel grinned over the story of how Lowther had gone for wool and returned shorn.

Besides making Monty Lowther very sore, the incident drew general attention upon Julian of the Fourth, so that he came in for a good deal more limelight than a new fellow was really entitled to.

Then, too, Arthur Augustus D'Arcy made it a point to be very nice to the new junior, simply on the ground that it was up to Study No. 6 to show him that they hadn't any unreasonable racial prejudices.

But it was Lowther's attitude, after the deplorable failure of his great jape, that caused Julian to be specially noted. For Lowther had disagreed with his chums over the matter, and the disagreement seemed likely to become serious and lasting.

The Terrible Three were the leaders of the Shell, and quite important personages. For a mere new kid in the Fourth Form to cause disagreement among them was absurd, as Tom Merry declared. Any number of new kids might have come and gone without disturbing their lofty serenity, if only Lowther hadn't been such an obstinate ass.

There had been little rows in Tom Merry's study before, and they had always blown over. Tom Merry was determined that there should not be another on the subject of Dick Julian. Manners agreed with him; and they determined to give Monty Lowther his head.

Manners opined that when Lowther was tired of being sulky he would come round. Tom Merry had great faith in the efficacy of the soft answer that turneth away wrath.

So, though Lowther seemed determined to keep up the rift, his two chums simply refused to be in disagreement with him.

They treated him exactly the same as before, making cheery remarks and apparently failing to notice his grumpy replies, and they joined him after lessons in the customary way, and walked with him whether he liked it or not.

Lowther's good-humour would soon have gained the upper hand, and he would certainly have come round, but for the existence of the bone of contention close at hand. For Lowther was determined to go out of his way to be unpleasant to Julian; and Tom Merry and Manners, naturally, did not intend to be "down" on a fellow who had given them no cause of offence.

The curious circumstance was that if any other fellow had been acting as Lowther was acting, Monty himself would have been one of the first to be down on him, and to point out to the delinquent the error of his ways.

But it is not so easy to see one's own faults as to see those of others. Human nature is made that way. What appears to one's own eyes the firmness of a rock, only too often appears in the eyes of others as the obstinacy of a mule.

Whether Monty Lowther was only as firm as a rock, or whether he was as obstinate as a mule, he kept on his own way.

Indeed, he seemed to take a sort of Satanic dislike in making himself all the more disagreeable to the new junior, because he knew that his chums disapproved of it. It really looked as if he were trying to provoke them into a serious quarrel—to such length had Lowther's wrongheadedness gone.

When the Junior Dramatic Society discussed a new play, Lowther suggested the "Merchant of Venice," and proposed the part of Shylock for Julian of the Fourth. When the caricature of a gentleman with an immense nose was found on the wall of the common-room, it was safe to attribute that artistic effort to Lowther. And when Tom Merry remonstrated with his chum, Lowther was deaf to reasoning.

"I don't like the fellow," he said.

"That's no reason why you should insult him," said Tom.

"Oh, rats!"

"It's jolly bad manners, if you ask me."

"Well, I don't ask you," said Lowther.

"Why can't you leave him alone?"

"Because I don't choose to. I don't like him, and don't approve of him," said Lowther. "It's a prejudice if you like. Why shouldn't I have a prejudice?"

"You used not to have this special one," said Tom. "It's only come to life since you tried to jape Julian, and mucked it up."

"B-r-r-r-r!"

"For goodness' sake, let the matter drop!" said Manners. "We've had nothing but snaps and yaps in the study since Julian came. Blessed if I don't wish he'd have stayed at home."

"The chap might be a Hun by the way Lowther treats him," said Tom. "I believe in being civil to a civil chap."

"If my manners don't suit your high standards, you'd better give me the go-by," said Lowther, shrugging his shoulders. "There's that blessed sheeney you can chum up with instead, you know."

"Don't be an ass, Monty!"

"Well, let me go my own way, then," said Lowther. "Leave me alone. I'm not going to be civil to him, and that's flat. I don't like him."

"You don't like Crooke, but you're civil to him," said Tom.

"That's different."

"I don't see it."

"Oh, you don't see anything!"

And Lowther walked away to end the discussion.

Two or three days having passed like that, relations were growing strained in Tom Merry's study. But there was no quarrel, simply because Tom and Manners were determined that there should be none.

This development in Lowther's character surprised them and hurt them. They had never supposed that old Monty could be a persecutor, but certainly he was persecuting Julian. The new boy affected not to notice, but he must have observed it, and it was likely there would be trouble with him before long if Lowther did not change his tactics. But Lowther made no secret of his belief that the new Fourth-Former was a funk.

There was a matter which worried Lowther, and that was the feed which Julian had stood to the japers on the day they met him in Rylcombe. Lowther had intended that equal "whacks" should be paid afterwards. He writhed at the idea of being under any obligation to the boy to whom he had taken so intense a dislike.

But the money was not forthcoming. Mrs. Murphy had been paid four pounds four shillings and ninepence for that feed. Lowther had written home for money the same night, but after his late remittance the horn of plenty had ceased to flow. And when he had succeeded in obtaining a guinea to pay his share, he found that neither Crooke nor Mellish was willing to "square."

"It was understood that I was a passenger," said Mellish coolly. "Besides, why should you square Julian? He stood the feed."

"I meant to pay him afterwards."

"Well, I didn't mean to," said Mellish, "and I'm jolly well not going to! And I couldn't, even if I wanted to."

That settled it, so far as Mellish was concerned. Lowther tackled Crooke next, and found Crooke decidedly "edge-wise."

"What utter rot!" said Crooke. "The fellow stood the feed. He hasn't asked us to pay anything; in fact, he would be offended if we offered it."

"I don't care if he's offended," growled Lowther.

"Well, I'm not going to shell out a guinea specially to offend a chap I don't care tuppence about," grinned Crooke. "After all, we were japing him, and if he pulled our leg, we needn't grouse over it for ever and ever."

"It isn't that."

"Well, what is it, then?"

"I don't like him.'

"Don't pay him anything, then," said Crooke. "If you don't like him, you can pay him out by not squaring up, better than by handing him over four quid. Besides, if he's the kind of fellow you made out, it will give him a pain."

"I'm not going to remain under any obligation to him!" said Lowther savagely.

Crooke yawned.

"Well, you can leave me under one," he said. "It doesn't bother me—not so much as parting with a quid, anyway."

"Look here!" roared Lowther, losing his temper. "The fellow's got to be paid. We were japing him, not sponging on him."

"Oh, rats!"

"And if you don't square up, I'll jolly well punch your head, you mean rotter!"

"More rats!" said Crooke. "I'm not paying anything, that's a cert. Pay him yourself if you're so jolly sensitive about it. Keep off, you rotter—yow-ow!"

Monty Lowther left Crooke's study with a heightened colour and a thick nose. He left Crooke on the floor, gasping for breath. Such was the end of the new friendship between Monty Lowther and the cad of the Shell. It had not lasted long.

Monty Lowther thought it over in a savage mood. He simply could not raise over four pounds to pay Julian the whole amount. And it was true that it had been agreed that Mellish was to be paid for. So Lowther's just "whack," if he paid at all, came to about twenty-eight shillings. That Julian did not want him to pay, and, indeed, probably would not allow him to pay, did not matter to Lowther in his present unreasonable mood. The fact that the new junior would be hurt by the offer of the money was probably an inducement to him to offer it.

"You fellows got any tin?" Lowther propounded that query suddenly, coming into the study when Tom and Manners were there.

"How much, my infant?" asked Tom quite brightly. He was glad to see Lowther on the old terms again.

"I've squeezed a guinea together," said Lowther. "I

simply must have another seven bob to put to it, to settle with Julian."

"Been borrowing more money of him?" asked Manners, in astonishment.

"Of course not, fathead! It's for the feed he stood us the day he came. Crooke won't stand his whack, but I've got to pay mine. I was japing the cad, but not sponging on him; see?"

"I've heard about that feed from Mellish," said Tom. "Julian stood it. He doesn't expect you to pay."

"I'm going to pay."

Tom Merry knitted his brows.

"Look here, Lowther, you know it's jolly insulting to offer to pay a chap when he's stood you a feed on the understanding that he foots the bill," he said.

"Oh, he won't be insulted very easily," said Lowther, with a sneer. "His hide's thick enough. More likely to feel sore about it if I don't pay him. It's up to me, anyway."

"Well, if you intend to explain to him that you meant to pay all along——"

"I sha'n't explain anything; only get out of his debt," said Lowther angrily. "Can you stand me seven bob between you, or won't you?"

"Well, I can't, as a matter of fact. I've only got one," said Tom. "But Julian——"

"What about you, Manners?"

"Tanner!" said Manners, with Spartan brevity.

Lowther paused, frowning, and then a gleam came into his eyes. It was not the old humorous gleam.

"I've got it," he said.

"What are you going to do?" asked Tom, uneasy at the expression on his face. He did not quite understand Lowther lately.

"You'll see if you drop into the common-room," said Lowther, and, without any further explanation, he walked away.

CHAPTER 11.

Julian's Answer.

"JULIAN!"

The new boy in the Fourth glanced round. He nodded to Monty Lowther with calm civility.

There were a good many fellows in the common-room, and some of them looked on with interest. Many of the fellows had opined that Lowther and Julian would come to blows before long. The new junior had been very peaceable—too peaceable, some of the fellows thought. Certainly, Lowther had placed himself in the wrong in the most reckless manner, and did not care how much offence he gave.

"I want to settle with you," said Lowther.

Julian raised his eyebrows.

"You don't owe me anything," he said.

"I owe you twenty-eight shillings."

"What on earth for?"

"You paid in the tuckshop the day you came here. In Rylcombe, you remember. I stand a third of the bill."

Julian shook his head.

"But that was my treat," he said. "It was understood that I was standing it."

"I don't choose to be treated by you," said Lowther. "I owe you twenty-eight shillings."

"I will not take it!" exclaimed Julian, for the first time showing some signs of anger. "You have no right to offer it to me."

"You have no right to pay my exes if I don't choose," said Lowther, "and you've got to take it."

"Yaas; you must take it, deah boy!" chimed in Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "Lowthah was only pullin' your leg, you know, and he ought to pay up."

Julian hesitated, and then nodded shortly.

"Oh, very well!" he said. "You can pay me if you like, Lowther. I shall put the money into the school poor-box."

Lowther shrugged his shoulders.

"You can do as you like with your own money," he said. "The trouble is, I haven't the whole sum at present. I'm not a Jew, you know, and I don't roll in money."

"All Jews do not roll in money," said Julian, with a slight smile. "There are very many more poor Jews than rich ones. But, if you have not the money, why mention it? You know I do not want it."

"I mean, I'm not going to put you to a loss," said Lowther. "I'm going to deal with you the same as I should with Mr. Moses, of Wayland."

Julian started.

"I owe you some money, and I can't pay it. Therefore, you have a right to charge me interest."

"Interest!" exclaimed Julian.

"Yes; cent per cent, you know."

"Shent per shent, shentlemens!" cackled Mellish, in great enjoyment.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Crooke.

"He, he, he!" howled Levison of the Fourth.

But Crooke and Mellish and Levison were the only ones who laughed. There was a grunt of disgust from several fellows.

"That's a caddish thing to say, Lowther," said Blake.

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Dash it all, Lowther, what's come over you?" said Kangaroo of the Shell. "You might leave that kind of meanness to Crooke."

"'Tain't mean; it's generous," grinned Crooke. "Isn't he offering the sheeney cent per cent? What more can he offer?"

Julian was stonily silent. The insult was bitter, and the Jewish junior had become quite pale. There were curious looks cast on him from all sides. If Julian stood that he would stand anything, was the general opinion. If he stood it, indeed, he deserved to have it to stand, Gore remarked to another fellow.

"Name your own interest," went on Lowther, disregarding the disapproval round him. "You can make it twenty or fifty per cent. if you like, and I'll pay it. I don't want to argue about it."

"You are offering me interest on the money you pretend that you owe me," said Julian, in a low voice.

"Certainly! Shall we say fifty per cent.?" said Lowther. "But cent per cent if you like. I dare say that's more in your line."

"You know that I will not take it," said Julian. "You know very well that you have made the offer only to insult me."

"Insult you!" said Lowther. "Not at all, my dear fellow. Of course, it would be an insult to anybody else here."

"But not to me?" exclaimed Julian, his voice quivering with indignation.

"Not to you!" said Lowther deliberately.

"Shame!" growled several voices.

"Lowthah, I wegard you as an uttah wottah!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus D'Arcy hotly. "I am surpwised at you!"

"For goodness' sake, shut up, Lowther!" exclaimed Talbot of the Shell. "What's come over you?"

"My dear chaps, you're quite mistaken," said Lowther, with the same deliberation. "You don't know young Solomons—I mean, Julian. He has his racial traditions to keep up. Before he's been here long he will be lending money to all the fellows, and getting interest on it. You can bet on that!"

"Have I done so?" exclaimed Julian, looking round him. "I appeal to every fellow present."

"Sure, you've lent me half-a-quid, Julian darling," said Reilly of the Fourth, "and sure you've got to wait till next term for it! And it's a broth av a boy ye are to do it!"

"Moneylending already, you see!" jeered Lowther.

"Sure, I asked him for a loan, because he's got plenty of quids," said Reilly, "and it was dacent of him to lind it to a fellow he hardly knew! And if you call it moneylending again, Monty Lowther, you'll step into the gym with me and back it up with your fists!"

Monty Lowther shrugged his shoulders. The general disapproval of his action only seemed to make him more wilful and determined.

"You haven't answered me, Julian!" he said. "What's the figure?"

Julian clenched his hands.

"You want an answer from me?" he asked.

"Of course!"

"There's my answer, then!"

Smack!

Monty Lowther started back as Julian's palm struck him on the cheek. Then the new boy faced him with flashing eyes.

"That's my answer! You are an insulting rotter, and I have no other answer to give you!"

CHAPTER 12.
The Fight!

"BWAVO!" chirruped Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

Monty Lowther stood very quiet. His eyes were burning, however. The bitter look intensified on his face.

"Very well," he said, between his teeth; "you'll come into the gym, Julian. I can't deal with you here."

"I will come where you like," said Julian disdainfully.

Lowther turned on his heel and walked away. Julian followed him, and Arthur Augustus joined him at once.

"I'm your second, deah boy."

"Thank you," said Julian.

Tom Merry and Manners had come downstairs, and they met the crowd pouring out of the common-room.

"What's the trouble?" asked Tom quickly.

"That wottah Lowthah——"

"Cheese that, D'Arcy!" snapped Tom.

"I wepeat, Tom Mewwy, that Lowthah has acted like a wottah! He has offahed Julian intewest on the money he owes him, as if Julian were a wotten moneylendah!"

Tom flushed.

"Lowther, you didn't—you couldn't——"

"Why not?" said Lowther flippantly. "Nothing surprising in that, is there? The surprising thing is that he hasn't accepted the offer. I can't make that out!"

"Monty!"

"Are you going to be my second?" asked Lowther. "Our Israelitish friend appears to feel insulted, and we are going to the gym."

Tom nodded shortly. He would not desert his chum, sadly in the wrong as he was. He walked in silence to the gymnasium with Lowther in the midst of the crowd. Fellows were gathering from far and near to see the fight. It was Julian's first fistical encounter at St. Jim's, and the juniors were curious to see how he would shape. He had been so patient under Lowther's incessant provocations that he had given an impression of being anything but a fighting-man.

But several of the fellows who were connoisseurs in the manly art of self-defence, noted that the new junior was well-knit, athletic, and full of activity. Certainly he was able to put up a good fight if he had the pluck. They were going to see now whether the pluck was there.

In a corner of the gym the juniors formed a crowded ring. Jackets came off, and boxing-gloves were put on. Talbot of the Shell took out his watch to keep time. At St. Jim's these little affairs were generally conducted according to rule.

Julian certainly showed no sign of the white feather as he stood facing Monty Lowther. He was perfectly cool and self-possessed, though his face was flushed.

Lowther was not quite his usual self.

As a matter of fact, deep down in his heart Lowther was not satisfied with himself. His better nature was wholly against the attitude he had taken up, and secretly he half repented it. But obstinacy had the upper hand, and not for worlds would he have admitted his doubts.

"Time!" said Talbot.

"Play up, ye cripples!" said Kangaroo.

Lowther started the attack, but his attack was half-hearted. He did not really want to hurt his opponent.

But before the first round was half through Lowther discovered that, even if he had wanted to hurt him, he would not have found it an easy task. For, to his surprise, and to that of most of the onlookers, Julian of the Fourth showed himself a consummate boxer. Julian had never made any reference to his powers in that direction, but they were exhibited now.

The round finished with Lowther being knocked back into the arms of his second. Julian had not been touched.

"Time!"

"Bwavo, Julian!" chirruped Arthur Augustus. "The boundah's a boxah, bai Jove! You will weally have to have the gloves on with me, Julian, after you have licked Lowthah."

"Lowther's not licked yet, you ass!" growled Manners. "One swallow doesn't make a summer, you burbling duffer!"

"Weally, Mannahs——"

"Time!"

Monty Lowther's eyes were glittering as he came up for the second round. He was in deadly earnest now. The bare idea of being licked by a Jew junior filled him with rage and bitterness.

The two antagonists were soon going it hammer and tongs. The ring of juniors looked on with intense interest. It was a much more determined and entertaining "mill" than most of the junior "scraps."

Tom Merry and Manners watched in grim silence. They were backing up their chum, as in duty bound; but they could not, for once, feel proud of him. To sit in judgment upon their best pal was not pleasant; but they could not help acknowledging that he was hopelessly in the wrong, and had acted in a way that was unworthy of his better self.

They hoped he would be victorious; yet they felt that it was not quite right to hope for the victory of the aggressor, who had forced a quarrel upon a patient and unoffending fellow. Monty Lowther had, in fact, placed his chums in a decidedly uncomfortable position.

Second, third, and fourth rounds were fought out, with growing determination on both sides. In spite of the gloves, damage was done to both the combatants, and the strain on both of them was severe. But neither flinched, and neither was in a mood to yield.

Some of the onlookers kept a wary eye on the door for prefects. If Kildare or Darrel had dropped into the gym just then, they would certainly have stopped the fight at that stage. But, fortunately—from the junior point of view—no prefects happened in.

The fifth round started, amid great excitement. Lowther was growing furious and reckless. Had he been at his best, the opponents would have been well-matched, and it would have been difficult to predict upon which side victory would incline.

But Lowther was not at his best. The secret half-acknowledged sense of wrong had its effect upon him, and he was in a bad temper, too, and that was not a state of mind to assure victory. And as he felt himself getting the worst of it, his temper grew worse and his hitting wilder.

"My only hat!" said Crooke, at the end of the fifth round. "The Jew is going to be a winner! Samson beating the Philistines again!"

"Two to one on Judas Maccabeus!" grinned Lumley-Lumley.

And, indeed, Julian seemed to be fighting like that Hebrew warrior of olden time. His nose was swollen, one of his eyes was closed; but he was standing up to the mill with cool and steady determination. The sixth round ended with Lowther gasping on the floor.

"Better chuck it, Monty, old chap," murmured Tom Merry, as he made a knee for his principal.

Lowther gave him a fierce look—with one eye. He could not look at anything with the other.

"So you think I'm licked?" he snapped.

"No disgrace in being licked after a tough fight," said Tom diplomatically.

"Well, I'm not licked!"

Talbot of the Shell, watch in hand, glanced rather doubtfully at Lowther. He was gasping on Tom Merry's knee.

"Time!"

Lowther staggered up. His head was swimming as he toed the line, and his breath came in gasps; but at that moment he would have been killed rather than have acknowledged defeat. Julian, calm and steady, came up to time, and the seventh round was fought through. Lowther stood it out, with herculean efforts, taking his punishment with grim endurance.

Eighth round and last! Lowther made a fierce attack, but his blows were wild, and a right-hand drive laid him down on the floor. Talbot began to count.

"One, two, three, four, five, six——"

"You young rascals!" Kildare of the Sixth strode upon the scene. "Put that watch away, Talbot! You young sweeps!"

"Only a little mill with the gloves on, Kildare," said Blake.

"A pretty state they're both in," said Kildare angrily. "Lowther and Julian, you will take two hundred lines each, and if I catch you fighting again, I'll warm you. Now put on your jackets and get out!"

The fight was over.

Both of them feeling decidedly seedy and groggy, the combatants put on their jackets and left the gym. In the doorway Julian paused, and glanced at Lowther. The latter was leaning heavily on Tom Merry's arm. His strength was spent, and he could barely walk.

"Lowther"—Julian spoke hesitatingly—"I—I'm sorry for this! I didn't want to quarrel with you. There's my fist, if you choose to take it."

He held out his hand.

"Take his fist, Monty, old man," whispered Tom Merry anxiously.

Monty Lowther turned his back.

CHAPTER 13.

Strained Relations!

MANNERS came out of the School House on Saturday afternoon, with his camera under his arm. Tom Merry and Lowther followed him out.

The Terrible Three did not look so sunny as of old.

Monty Lowther's persistent ill-humour was quite spoiling the harmony of the Co. Since the fight in the gym Lowther had been more ill-humoured than ever. He felt very sore about the result of that fight. He knew that only the intervention of Kildare had saved him from acknowledged defeat.

It was a bitter reflection.

He was not satisfied with his action in refusing to take Julian's hand after the tussle, either. He knew he ought to have taken that hand, so frankly offered. The disapproval of his own conscience worried him a little, while the disapproval of the other fellows only made him more obstinate.

If Julian had shown some of the unpleasant traits of character that Lowther attributed to him, Lowther would probably not have disliked him so much. There was something exasperating in the good qualities of the new boy, considering that Lowther had determined to attribute bad qualities to him.

It was impossible to say that he was mean or stingy. Everybody knew that he was nothing of the kind. It was equally impossible to attribute "swank" to him, for he was modest and unassuming. A fellow who could box as Julian could, might have been excused for talking about it a little. But Julian had never talked about it. He had let it come as a surprise to the School House fellows.

It was true that he lent money; he had plenty of it, and he never refused a loan to a fellow who asked him for one, though in some cases the date of payment was very vague and unfixed.

But as for lending money at interest, Lowther's unworthy insinuation was quite unfounded, and he had to admit it. So far from getting any interest on his money, it was extremely problematical whether Julian would see the principal again in several cases—such as loans to Mellish of the Fourth. He was, in fact, good-natured to a fault, and he erred on the side of carelessness with money. Which was extremely exasperating to a fellow who was determined, by hook or by crook, to make out that he was a young Shylock.

That Saturday afternoon the Terrible Three were going up the river. They were coming back to cricket practice later. The nets were crowded now. Julian was at the nets, among the rest, and he was showing very good form at cricket—another point in his disfavour in Lowther's eyes, for Lowther had held that the Jew at least wouldn't be a sportsman. But, as it happened, Julian played a very good game of cricket, and Talbot, and Mayne, and several other of the great players of the Lower School had complimented him.

Lowther's face was moody as he sauntered across the quadrangle with his chums. His moodiness naturally affected his companions.

Tom and Manners, to tell the truth, were getting a little fed-up with it. They did not see why Lowther couldn't be a bit more reasonable. Julian of the Fourth seemed to be his "bete noir," and he couldn't get him out of his mind. A fellow could dislike another fellow without making all this fuss, Tom Merry thought. But he did not argue any longer with Lowther; Lowther's temper was growing very uncertain, and Tom did not want a quarrel.

The Terrible Three sauntered down to the river in silence, and pushed out a boat and embarked. Tom and Lowther pulled, while Manners took the lines. Manners made remarks on the subject of the photographs he intended to take, but not in his usual enthusiastic tones. Lowther's moodiness was getting on his nerves.

"Here we are!" said Tom Merry at last, as the boat came abreast of the old mill. The mill-wheel was grinding on its round. The old mill made a charming picture, backed by the green, thick woods and the smiling fields, and it was well worthy of a photographer's best efforts.

"Good idea to have a bathe," said Lowther.

"Rather dangerous so near the mill," said Tom. "It wouldn't be a joke to get sucked into the mill-stream."

"I've brought my bathing-things," said Lowther irritably. "But if you don't want a swim, all right."

The boat was made fast, and the three juniors landed. Manners proceeded to take his photographs—always a leisurely process with Manners. Manners never wasted a film, and he took time over his work.

Lowther threw stones aimlessly into the river while Manners was at work, assisted by expert advice from Tom Merry. Lowther gave a sudden start as an athletic figure came swinging along the towing-path on the other side of the river. It was Julian of the Fourth.

He had finished his cricket practice, evidently, and was taking a stroll up the river with a book under his arm. Lowther's brow darkened as he looked across the shining waters at him.

Julian did not observe the three juniors on the opposite bank. He selected a shady spot under a tree, sat down, and opened his book and began to read. Lowther's glance dwelt upon him unamiably. His first thought had been that Julian had come to that quiet spot for a bathe; but the sneering reflection came at once—of course, that outsider couldn't swim! Lowther found a curious comfort in that reflection. At least, there was one thing the fellow he disliked couldn't do.

He wondered what Julian was reading—a book on finance, of course. Then, as the Fourth-Former turned his page, Lowther spotted the title on the cover of the book. It was in large letters, and he could make it out even at the distance. It was "The Boy Without a Name." Lowther was very fond of that book himself, and again he felt a sense of defeat. Evidently Julian's taste as a reader didn't run in the direction of books on finance!

Lowther looked irritably at his chums. They had gone round to the other side of the mill, and Manners was still busy.

"Look here, you fellows, I'm going into the water," called out Lowther. "I'm fed up with hanging about here doing nothing!"

"Sha'n't be long now," called back Manners.

"Well, I'm going to have a swim, anyway."

"Look out for the weir, old chap," called Tom Merry.

"Oh, all right! I'm not a fool!"

Lowther walked away to a clump of willows and stripped. He changed into his bathing-things, and plunged into the water. Lowther was a good swimmer, and a swim on that sunny afternoon was enjoyable. He felt his ill-humour leaving him as he glided through the shining waters.

In the distance the mill-wheel was grinding, and down to the wheel the current ran a race. Lowther did not heed it—he was at a safe distance. But as he went on he forgot the mill-wheel. He swam farther out into the broad stream from under the shadows of the foliage.

In that healthy exercise, and amid such beautiful surroundings, Lowther forgot all bitter feelings, and he thoroughly enjoyed himself. He swam till he was growing tired; but the amateur photographer was still busy on the other side of the mill, and Lowther was loth to leave the water. He breasted the current and headed for the opposite bank.

Julian saw him as he came near the rushes. The new boy rose to his feet in the grass and stood watching him. Lowther trampled through the reeds and came up the bank, breathing hard. He felt that he had overdone it a little, and that the swim back across the river would tell on him. But his clothes were on the other side, and he had no choice about swimming back.

Julian did not speak, but Lowther did. He seemed never able to come near Julian without giving utterance to a gibe.

"You don't bathe?" he asked.

Julian nodded.

"Yes; I like bathing."

"Swim—eh?" said Lowther.

"Yes, I can swim."

"Is there anything you can't do?" asked Lowther, with a sneer.

The fellow could swim after all, it seemed.

"I used to live by the seaside, and I learned to swim when I was a nipper," said Julian. "There's nothing in that—any fellow can be a good swimmer if he tries."

"Why don't you go in, then, instead of slacking about?" said Lowther.

"Is it slacking to read a good book on a half-holiday?" said Julian, with a smile. "I've been playing cricket, and I didn't come out for a swim. It's rather dangerous swimming here, too, so close to the mill."

Lowther's eyes gleamed; he felt that he had the fellow at last.

"Oh, you're funky of that, are you?"

"Not funky," said Julian. "But I don't see any sense in going into danger for no reason!"

"I call that funky," said Lowther deliberately.

Julian looked at him steadily.

"We've had one fight," he said. "What's the good of having another? You don't like me—why do you speak to me?"

Lowther turned away without replying and walked down to the water. Julian looked after him, hesitated, and called out:

"Lowther!"

"Hallo!" said Lowther.

"You're going to swim back?"

"Yes," said Lowther. "I don't funk it, you know!"

"Hadn't you better walk up the river a bit before you cross?" said Julian. "You started from well above the mill, I suppose. The current has brought you down a good way."

"I suppose it has," said Lowther. "What about it?"

"It would be safer to walk up the river a bit to cross. If you start from here you will be carried lower down when you get into the current, and then——"

"Thanks! I'm not a funk!"

"It's not a question of that," said Julian quietly. "If you start from here, you will be in danger."

"Bow-wow!"

Lowther knew very well that it would have been only prudent to take Julian's advice; but nothing would have induced him to take it. He plunged into the river and swam out.

Julian did not return to his book. He shaded his eyes with his hand and watched the progress of the swimmer with an anxious wrinkle in his brow.

"The ass!" Julian muttered. "He's tired already—I can see that! Now he's in the current, and—and—oh, the reckless fathead!"

The anxiety grew in Julian's face as he watched the obstinate fellow. Then, as he continued to watch, the Jew junior threw off his jacket—and then kicked off his boots.

CHAPTER 14.

Julian's Pluck!

MONTY LOWTHER was already repenting not having taken Julian's advice.

In swimming across the river the current had carried him downstream more than he had quite realised. As he started swimming back, the current carried him further, and the grinding of the mill-wheel sounded louder in his ears.

A dozen feet from the bank Lowther knew that he would have a hard struggle to get across, for he was already tired with his long swim. He thought of turning back—and he would have done so but for the knowledge that Julian was watching him from the bank.

He had sneered at Julian's supposed want of courage. To turn back himself from a chance of danger, under Julian's eyes, was impossible. He turned hot at the thought. After what he had said, he could not for very shame's sake turn back.

He set his teeth and swam on.

The current was faster than he had thought—and he was more spent than he had believed. He fought his way on—with the roar of the mill-race growing louder in his ears.

The water seemed to be sucking him away. He raised his head to take a swift survey of the river and the distance he had to go.

The mill seemed to be towering almost above him. The bank he was aiming at was still distant. In his ears the roar of the wheel sounded like thunder.

He felt a sudden chill.

For at that moment it was borne in upon his mind that he would never reach the opposite bank. His strength was not equal to the effort.

He must turn back.

Turn back to meet the mockery in Julian's eyes! For he did not doubt for a moment that the Jew would mock him. Yes, even that—that was better than being sucked under the mill-wheel to a fearful death!

With bitter rage in his breast Lowther started to swim back—and then he made the discovery that he had left it too late. The current was too strong for him. It was dragging him away—it seemed as if invisible demons under the water were pulling at him—pulling—pulling——

The bank he strove to reach was receding from him.

There was a chill at his heart.

Grind and clank, clank and grind, from the heavy, cumbrous wheel now terribly near at hand!

Monty Lowther realised then what his obstinacy and recklessness had cost him. He was fighting for his life.

For his life!

He knew it, and he put every ounce of strength he possessed into the struggle. Fighting for his life—and a losing fight! For his efforts were in vain, and the current, ever faster and faster, was sucking him away as if with unseen hands.

Where were his chums? The mill hid him from their sight—they had no suspicion of his danger. Lowther shouted, but his voice was husky and broken, and the roar of the water drowned it. He knew that his cries would never reach their ears.

Suddenly his head went under. He came up again, gasping, fighting hard. He knew that it was the beginning of the end. Was there no help? Must he go to his death, and to a death so terrible? Desperately he fought on, his strength failing faster and faster.

Splash!

He heard the splash, he guessed that it was made by someone diving. Was it Tom Merry or Manners coming to his aid at last? It would only be in time.

His brain was reeling now.

A dark head appeared on the shining waters; a swimmer was coming on with the current, and with swift and steady strokes.

"Help!" panted Lowther.

Fast strokes and steady, and the dark head was close to him. Lowther's struggle was feeble now; he was at the end of his tether. His dimming eyes fell upon the

face that rose from the water beside him, and gleamed for a moment.

For it was not Tom Merry or Manners. The face that looked at him was the dark, handsome face of Dick Julian of the Fourth.

Julian!

"You—you!" panted Lowther. "Let me alone! Let me alone, hang you!"

Julian's grasp was upon him.

"Hold to me!" he said.

"Let me alone!" It was the last word of the old obstinacy, the unreasonable dislike; it was bitter to be helped by the boy he had persecuted. It was too bitter. Lowther would have preferred death itself.

But that black and bitter mood passed. The grinding of the mill-wheel was in his ears, and Julian was holding him. Julian's grasp was keeping him back from death.

"Lowther, are you mad? Let me help you! Do you want us both to go under the wheel?" panted Julian.

"You!" muttered Lowther dazedly. "You! Oh!"

He made no further resistance. His strength was utterly spent. He was lost—unless the Jew could save him. Could he save him? It did not look like it; it was more likely that both of them would be swept away. Lowther's mind was growing dizzy, but he was conscious of one thing at that moment—of repentance.

"Julian! You're a brick! I'm sorry!" he panted.

And he held on to Julian.

Julian did not speak again. All his breath was wanted for the fight before him. Well he knew that his life was in the balance, as well as Monty Lowther's.

It seemed now like a horrible dream to Lowther. He was conscious of a dull, steady roar in his ears—of shining waters that mocked him, of a deadly, invisible force that dragged and dragged. And of a strong hand that held—held him back from the valley of the shadow of death.

How long had it lasted—an eternity? Lowther's mind cleared suddenly, strangely. The bank was still far away. Julian was swimming strongly, powerfully, with Lowther holding to him. But he was not gaining. Lowther's weight was too heavy a burden, even for the strong swimmer.

"You can't do it!" Lowther's voice was a husky whisper. "You can't! No good both going. Good-bye, Julian!"

"Hold on!"

But Lowther had let go. But as he was swept away Julian grasped him again, and he was held. There was a shout from the bank.

"Lowther! Good heavens!"

Tom Merry and Manners were racing down to the river. Manners dropped his camera. The photographs were finished; they were returning for their chum, and they found him—thus!

Tom Merry was springing for the water, when Manners caught him by the arm.

"The boat!" he said.

They rushed to unmoor the boat.

Lowther was almost unconscious now. Julian was calm, quiet, steady as a rock, holding to Lowther, and swimming, with failing strength but unfailing courage. He was not gaining a yard against the fierce current; he was holding back from death, and that was all. But he never thought of releasing his burden. It was both or neither.

But the boat was coming now.

The dash of oars sounded like glad music in the ears of the struggling swimmer. The boat loomed over him; he was grasped from above.

Lowther, sinking into insensibility, was dragged into the boat. Julian held on to the gunwale, panting with great throbs.

Tom Merry helped him in, and Julian sank into the bottom of the boat in a pool of water, utterly exhausted.

Tom Merry and Manners pulled for the bank. The boat was in the mill-stream, and it was a hard pull back to the shore. But they pulled hard, and the bow crashed into the rushes.

Monty Lowther was lifted ashore. He blinked round him dazedly, with staring eyes.

Julian followed him without aid. He was already recovering.

"My hat!" mumbled Lowther. "That was a go! You—you silly asses, taking rotten photographs while I——"

"We didn't see you," muttered Tom, "and if Julian hadn't gone in for you—— Oh, Monty!" Tom's voice broke.

Lowther sat up in the wet grass, and blinked at Julian. The Fourth-Former looked down on him, with a faint smile.

"It was a narrow shave," he said, "but a miss is as good as a mile. The boat came in time, or we should be under the wheel before this. Lucky you fellows saw us in time."

"You jolly nearly went under with me," said Lowther. "If you'd had any sense, you'd have let me go."

Julian laughed.

"I haven't that kind of sense," he replied.

"You ought to have let me go," said Lowther. "A silly, fatheaded, unreasonable idiot might as well be drowned as not. Still, as you've fished me out, would you mind kicking me?"

"No, I won't kick you," said Julian, laughing. "I'll shake hands with you if you like."

"After the caddish way I've treated you?" said Lowther.

"Oh, let bygones be bygones! If you don't like Jews you can't help it," said Julian. "It's a bit unreasonable, but nothing to worry about."

"It isn't that," said Lowther. "I'm not such an ass as that. It was just sheer cussedness. Just because I had made up my mind that you were an outsider, and you weren't. I called you a funk, and then you came in for me. You can call me anything you like."

"I'd like to call you my friend," said Julian.

"Done!" said Lowther instantly.

And he held out his hand.

. . . . . .

"Gweat Scott!"

It was about an hour later that Arthur Augustus D'Arcy of the Fourth uttered that astonished exclamation.

But there were other fellows who were astonished as well as Arthur Augustus.

There was a general stare as the Terrible Three and Dick Julian came across the quadrangle, chatting together, and evidently on the best of terms.

"Well, my hat!" said Blake. "The lion and the lamb have made it up, it seems."

"I am vewy glad to see that Lowthah is not persistin' in his wotten line of conduct," said Arthur Augustus. "I have told him sevewal times that I disappwoved of it. I am glad to see that my wemarks have had their effect at last!"

"Dick pulled me out of the river this afternoon, when I was just going under the mill-wheel," said Lowther. "We jolly nearly went together."

"Bai Jove!"

"My hat!" said Blake, with a whistle. "So that's the reason——"

"Exactly. I'm going to write a thrilling description of it for the next number of the 'Weekly.'"

"Oh, draw it mild!" said Julian.

"Meanwhile, there is going to be a little celebration in the study, and Richard Julian—my friend Dick—is the guest of honour. All gentlemen present are invited."

"Hear, hear!"

"Bai Jove! Thwee cheeahs for Julian of the Fourth!" said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

And the three cheers were given, and they rang very pleasantly in the ears of the Jew of St. Jim's.

THE END.

(Your Editor makes his appearance in the magnificent, long, complete school tale of TOM MERRY & CO. on sale next Wednesday. A huge demand is certain, so order your copy of "THE GEM" LIBRARY to-day!)

Our Weekly Prize Page.

LOOK OUT FOR YOUR WINNING STORYETTE.

A TOO-GOOD SAMARITAN.

A good-natured man, going home late at night, noticed a man leaning limply against a doorway.

"What's the matter?" he asked. "Drunk?"

"Yes."

"Want me to help you in?"

"Yes."

With difficulty he carried the man up to the second floor.

"Is this it? Do you live here?"

"Yes."

Rather than face an angry wife, the good-natured man opened the first door, pushed the limp figure in, and closed the door. Then he groped his way downstairs.

As he came out he saw another man, apparently in a worse condition than the first.

"What's the matter? You drunk, too?"

"Yes," came the feeble reply.

"Shall I help you upstairs?"

"Yes."

The Good Samaritan carried him to the second floor, where this man also said he lived, opened the door, and pushed him in.

As he reached the street he saw a third man, evidently worse off than any of the others. As the Good Samaritan approached, however, the man staggered up the street, and threw himself into the arms of a policeman.

"Off'sher," he gasped, "I demand p'tection from thish man! He's carried me upsthairs twice an' thrown me down the lift-shaft!"—Sent in by S. Gregory, jun., Bolton.

A FATAL SLIP.

"Ah, sir," he said sadly, "I've seen better times, I have! I was a doctor once with a large practice, but owing to one little slip my patients began to leave me, and now I am living from hand to mouth."

"What was the slip?" was the natural question.

"Well, sir," the sad one replied, "in filling in a death certificate for one of my deceased patients I absent-mindedly signed my name in the space headed 'Cause of death.'"—Sent in by W. L. Thompson, Darlington, Durham.

STRATEGY.

Tommy (home from the front): "When Bill saw the enemy he turned and ran."

Farmer: "I'm very sorry to hear that. He must be a coward."

"Tommy: "Oh, no, I don't think it was cowardice! He remembered the earth was round, and he intended to run round it to attack the enemy in the rear."—Sent in by F. Haworth, Little Harwood, Blackburn.

INFALLIBLE.

"But are you sure that I shall recover, doctor?" the patient asked anxiously. "I have heard that sometimes you have given the wrong diagnosis, and treated a patient for pneumonia who afterwards died of typhoid fever."

"You have been scandalously misinformed!" said the doctor angrily. "If I treat a man for pneumonia, he dies of pneumonia!"

Then the patient fainted, and the doctor wondered why.—Sent in by W. H. Baker, West Hampstead, N.W.

RETORTS COURTEOUS.

"Muvver's compliments," piped a dirty-checked urchin to the busy butcher, "and she wants me to show you the big bone you sent with the last joint of meat."

"My compliments," said the butcher, "and tell your mother that the next time I kill a bullock without a bone in it I'll make her a present of a joint."

"Muvver's compliments," retorted the urchin, "and she says that the next time you find a bullock with a shoulder-of-mutton bone in it she'd like to buy the whole bloomin' carcase as a curiosity.—Sent in by D. Whitton, Ilford.

SHE IS STILL USING THE OLD ONE.

A draper's assistant was showing a lady some parasols. The assistant had a good command of language, and knew how to expatiate on the good qualities and show off the best points of his master's goods. As he picked up a parasol from the lot on the counter and opened it, he struck an attitude of admiration, then, holding it up to the best light that could be had, he said:

"Now, there, isn't it lovely? Look at that silk! Particularly observe the quality, the finish, the general effect. Feel it. Pass your hand over it. No nonsense about that parasol, is there?" And as he handed it to the lady, he concluded: "Isn't it a beauty?"

"Yes," said the lady; "it's my old one. I just laid it down there."—Sent in by H. Stroud, Tottenham.

TERMS OF EQUALITY.

Grocer: "I ordered a pound of beef-steak, and you have only sent me twelve ounces. How do you account for that?"

Butcher: "Oh, I don't know! But I will tell you what happened. I lost my pound weight, so I used one of your pound packets of tea instead."—Sent in by E. J. Day, Ipswich.

SARCASTIC.

It was a local train. The ancient engine wheezed laboriously over equally ancient rails, and jolted to a restful spot at no place in particular.

Time passed tediously. Some of the passengers looked anxiously out of the windows, while others drew their hats down over their eyes and tried to appear unconcerned.

Half an hour elapsed, and then the guard came leisurely down the corridor. He was accosted by one of the passengers, who demanded impatiently:

"What in the name of goodness is the matter?"

"We are taking in water," replied the guard smoothly.

"Then why on earth don't you use another spoon?" asked the impatient passenger.—Sent in by S. H. P. Johnson, Newcastle-on-Tyne.

A CUTTING REPLY.

A lady had in her employ an excellent maid, who had but one fault—her face was always smudged.

Wishing to tell the maid of this fault without causing offence, the mistress said:

"Do you know, Jane, that if you wash your face each day in hot soapy water it will make you beautiful?"

"Shure, it's a wonder you never tried it yourself, ma'am!" was the startling reply.—Sent in by Boy F. Burns, R.F.C., S. Farnboro'.

As the "GEM" Storyette Competition has proved so popular, it has been decided to run this novel feature in conjunction with our new Companion Paper,

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The First Chapters of Our Grand New Adventure Serial.

UNDER THE DRAGON.

The opening chapters of a great new story of thrilling adventure in the Far East.

BY

PETER BAYNE.

The previous instalments told how:—

NORRIS BRENT, a young Englishman, agrees to accompany his unworthy cousin, GUY MELVILLE, on an exploration tour in China for a rare plant only to be found in that part of the world. Misfortune dogs their footsteps, and a crisis is reached when the Chinese pack-carriers, who are with them, mutiny. Stranded in a wild, inhospitable land, there is nothing for it but to return to civilisation, and the cousins, together with YEN HOW, Norris Brent's faithful servant, set out on the weary journey.

The little band is overcome by thirst, and Melville, refusing to share his water with the others, pushes onward through the desert, leaving his companions to their fate. Fortunately, however, Yen How lights upon an oasis, and the danger is averted.

After a week's tramping the couple come upon the residence of a wealthy mandarin, and a fight ensues with the servants in the courtyard. Norris Brent is only saved from death by the timely intervention of Silver Pearl. An attachment springs up between Norris Brent and the beautiful Chinese maiden, who is the ward of Ming Yung, the mandarin. Whilst the young Englishman is holding a conversation with Silver Pearl, Ming Yung appears on the scene, and Brent is urged to flee for his life.

Ming Yung learns from his agents that a plan to murder Brent has succeeded, and informs his ward that her lover has been sent to his doom. Later, therefore, Silver Pearl is both surprised and delighted at meeting Brent in Hong Kong, and she then informs him that she is going to England with her guardian.

Norris Brent returns to England, and is walking through the grounds of the old family mansion, Eagle's Nest, when he comes face to face with his cousin, Guy Melville.

(Now go on with the story.)

Hidden Hatred—Deceived—The Lonely Hollow—The Mysterious Eyes.

Seeing his young cousin before him, Guy Melville recoiled as from some dreaded apparition. His face turned livid, his eyes opened wide in a glassy stare of terrified fascination, and he shook and trembled in every limb of his body.

A veritable panic of guilty fear seized hold of him. The lad whom he had forsaken in the burning desert, to whom he had refused the drink of water that meant life and salvation, had come back like one from the grave.

Close behind Norris Brent stood Yen How, an inscrutable look in his face. The appearance of the Chinaman added to the intensity of terror that possessed Melville, who was now convinced that his cousin had come to denounce him for his heartless treachery.

"Hold up, Guy!" said Brent anxiously, wrongly attributing the strange demeanour of the other to an access of glad and powerful emotion at seeing him again. "I ought to have known better than to have sprung in on you like this, and you believing that I had died out there in China, but I never gave the matter a thought."

Melville, with a quick sigh of relief, drew his hand across his fevered brow. His dark secret, then, was still unknown to his cousin. Brent's words and looks had told him that in a moment.

"My dear Norris," he said, "I should be an unnatural sort of chap to take your return coolly, considering the circumstances. You've overwhelmed me. My mind's in a whirl. I'm amazed, bewildered, delighted beyond words. But what miracle saved you?"

"No miracle," Brent answered, with a ready smile, "but Yen How. I owe my life to him. He struck the trail of a camel caravan, and found a supply of fresh water stored away in a hole concealed by the rocks. As things turned out, it was a pity that you didn't stay with us."

"It was," Melville agreed; "for had I done so I should have been spared a great deal of mental suffering and distress on your account. I believed that both you and Yen How, who was in a delirious condition and lost all knowledge of my identity, were at your last gasp. Water was the only thing to save you. I made desperate efforts to find it. Alas! My own strength soon failed me. I lost consciousness, and was picked up by some Chinese, who took me to their village, where I remained, too ill to move, for nearly a week. Then, with a small party of natives, I set out to look for you. It was a hopeless search, and, despairing of your fate, I went to Hong Kong, and booked my passage by the first boat leaving for home."

Brent glanced at Yen How with smiling eyes.

"Now you know why Mr. Melville left us," he remarked. "You seemed to be puzzled at the time, although you said scarcely anything about it."

Yen How and Guy Melville looked straight into each other's eyes.

"My know," said Yen How serenely, "and my never forget it."

The veiled meaning of the utterance was not lost on Melville, who interpreted it as both a challenge and a warning, but he showed no sign of the anger and poisonous hatred that he felt.

Time was on his side, he reflected, and the plot that had failed once should succeed in the end. Until then he must be wary, for one false move might not only lose him all that he was playing for, but lead to his exposure, ruin, and disgrace.

"We'll go on to the house," he said. "Come along. By the way, Norris, how did you find out that I was here?"

"They gave me the address at your club in town," Brent replied, "and I came straight down at once, for I was eager to see you again. We only landed at Southampton last night. How is Uncle Mark keeping these days?"

Melville looked at the other, with an expression of well-simulated surprise in his face.

"Is it possible that you've not heard?" he exclaimed. "Why, the poor old fellow died suddenly over five months ago, while we were in China."

"You don't say so!" said Brent, who was genuinely shocked and grieved by the information, although he had never seen a great deal of Mark Paignton. "That is bad news. When I was last down here, a week or two before going abroad, he was in the best of health."

"And he enjoyed it right up to the last," Melville rejoined. "It was a stroke of some kind that took him at the finish. Well, he had a long innings, and it was about time he pegged out."

The heartless flippancy of the remark jarred on Brent's feelings. He was silent for a few moments, then he gave voice to a sudden thought that occurred to him.

"You are the master here now, I suppose?" he inquired.

"Yes," answered Guy Melville carelessly; "everything was left to me. You see, I was Paignton's nearest relative, and he always favoured me a lot. It's a bit rough on you and the few others who could claim relationship to him, but that's generally how things go in this world."

"It's a splendid inheritance you've come into," said Brent, "and I congratulate you, Guy. But you deserve it, especially after the fine work you did in China; and everyone who knows you must think the same."

Melville winced, and a feeling of shame stung him to the quick, only to be followed by savage scorn for what he deemed to be his own weakness.

"I've no fault to find with the place," he remarked, "except that it's lonely, and miles away from anywhere. But now you've come home it will be different. You must live here with me. After all we've gone through together it would be absurd of us to part now, especially when I'm in a position to help you on in the world. Besides, you can give me invaluable assistance in the work of reorganising the estate. Everything was left in a fearful muddle, for Paignton never would allow himself to be worried over anything, with the result that he was taken advantage of right and left by the people he trusted the management of his affairs to."

The proposal made to him took Norris Brent completely by surprise. Well supplied with money as he had been on going to China, he had only a few pounds in his possession now, and his plans for the future had not yet taken any definite shape.

"It's a tempting offer," he said frankly; "but I scarcely know how I can accept it."

"Why not?" Melville rejoined. "Perhaps you think that in making Eagle's Nest your home you would be placing yourself under an embarrassing obligation to me? You're mistaken if you do, for I must have someone to help me, and far better you than anybody else. Try it for a time. Then, in case you don't like it, you can leave. As for Yen How, he can make himself generally useful, so you needn't trouble about his welfare. Is it a bargain?"

He held out his hand, and his cousin took it.

"You make it impossible for me to refuse," said Brent, with a gay little laugh. "I've certainly fallen on my feet far sooner than I expected to. Many thanks, Guy. You can rely upon me doing my best in whatever work you care to give me."

A smile of evil triumph flitted across Melville's lips. The noble and generous disposition of his young cousin made no appeal to him. Rather did he hate the lad all the more for possessing qualities of mind and heart that were foreign to his own nature.

To Norris Brent the new life that he now entered upon was full of interest. He had always loved the rambling old mansion of Eagle's Nest, with its long corridors, quaint, oak-panelled rooms and galleries, and the mementoes of past centuries that took one in imagination far away from the present age.

But what he revelled in most was the sense of mystery that brooded over the wooded heights and dales that surrounded the house in every direction except that of the sea.

Nowhere else were such groves of mighty trees to be seen as on the land that the Paigntons had handed down from father to son for centuries. The axe of the woodman was never heard here. It seemed to have been an article of faith with the former owners of Eagle's Nest to preserve intact every original feature of their property.

The result was that in places a traveller might well have fancied that, instead of being amongst the hills and cliffs of the English coast, he was in some South American forest.

Miles of almost impenetrable undergrowth barred the way of the curious stranger, and the over-arching foliage, twisted and festooned into an inextricable canopy, cast a shadowy gloom far and near that was never broken.

Often in the past Brent had thought longingly of the delight that would be his could he explore these woods that, so far as he was aware, were unknown territory to most of the people living in the neighbourhood.

The opportunity he had desired now came to him, for, at his own suggestion, he was given the work of making a survey of the place.

"You've set yourself a pretty task!" said Guy Melville. "No proper survey, to my knowledge, has ever been made. You'll never do it."

"That remains to be seen," Brent answered. "At any rate, I'll have a good try, and my experience in China will help me a lot."

During the next few days, as a kind of preliminary to the undertaking, he and Yen How took many long walks in the locality. Out at daybreak, they did not return home until late in the evening, taking a supply of food with them, and in various ways living over again their former life in the Chinese forests and wildernesses.

One afternoon, after a hard tramp, they halted in a deep hollow between towering walls of rock that were coated inches deep with a mossy carpet of greenish-yellow fungus exuding a faint, musty odour that permeated the whole atmosphere.

"Hallo!" said Brent, with a little sniff. "I've seen this kind of rock-growth somewhere before, and it had the same smell, too."

"It was in China," Yen How remarked, "on that day when we go between the big hills."

Then Brent remembered where he had seen the strange fungus. It was when the expeditionary party of which he was a member were passing through a mountain gorge far in the wild and lonely uplands of the Chinese frontier.

The fact was such an amazing one that he could scarcely credit it. Tearing off a lump of the moss, he closely examined it, and the inspection brought conviction to his mind. There was no doubt about it. The stuff was of the same species as that which he had seen in the gorge twelve thousand miles away several months before.

Yet, he reflected, there might be nothing extraordinary in the discovery. It was a perfectly well-known fact that very many different specimens of European plant life could be matched in the Asiatic continent.

"Still," he said thoughtfully, "I've only seen it that once before. It's extremely curious. I'll take some of it home and show it to Guy. It will be interesting to hear his opinion of it."

After a rest, Brent and his companion pushed on down the hollow. Their way was impeded by thick bush growth, beneath which they frequently had to crawl, or beat a way through with the steel-crooked poles that they had brought with them.

The farther they went the higher became the wall of rock rising on each side of them. Except for an occasional ray flickering down between the leaves of the trees far overhead they saw nothing of the sun.

The gloom was profound. From what they perceived it was apparent that until then the hollow had been a closed passage to all. It went on and on to a seemingly endless extent. Almost before they were aware of it night was closing down on the comrades.

"We must go back," said Brent reluctantly. "The light's too bad to see anything more clearly, and it'll be black as a coal-mine down here soon. What was that?"

The question followed sharply on a dulled, tearing sound, like that made by the rapping of damp brown paper, that came from somewhere ahead in the hollow.

There was dead silence for several moments. The hollow was still as a tomb. Over it there seemed to brood the secrecy and mystery of all the ages of the past.

The sound was repeated a second time. To Brent it conveyed a queer yet subtle suggestion of some elemental power at work in the darkness. He and Yen How moved onward with soft and noiseless footsteps to a clump of high bushes.

Pushing the leaves apart they looked through into a wide, open space. It was lighter here, although not wide enough to see anything clearly, and a huge, black shadow lay across the ground that Brent supposed was cast by the far wall of the ravine.

As his eye carelessly glanced at it, the shadow moved!

What was at the back of the shadow? Again the curious fancy that an elemental force was at work entered his mind. He felt his companion trembling at his side.

"My no likee!" whispered Yen How. "More better go. This no ploper place to stop in!"

Brent gave no response. He had ascertained that the tearing sound, constantly repeated, came from somewhere high up on the face of the rock.

He stared hard in that direction, and, unable to distinguish anything, impatiently moved his position. The bushes crackled, the noise breaking the silence with startling loudness. Then Brent, thrilling to the knowledge of it, saw that he was under sudden observation. Two globes of pale light looked down on him from the obscurity that veiled the shelving wall of the hollow from his sight.

He realised with a chilling instinctiveness that the two globes were the eyes of some creature of the forest depths. They were like the eyes of a great octopus he had once seen, but rounder and larger, and almost white in colour.

This passing impression was scarcely imprinted on his mind when Brent heard what sounded like a rush of wind.

With a queer sort of thrill Yen How saw that the chauffeur was a Chinaman, who sprang down from his seat, and flung open the door of the car. There stepped out a man and a girl, and Yen How saw Melville, after being apparently introduced to the girl, lean forward and stare with undisguised admiration into her face. (*See page 27.*)

Then he and Yen How were swept off their feet and flung to the far side of the hollow.

Bruised and breathless, they staggered upright again. Not a sound was audible in the stillness. The mysterious eyes had disappeared as swiftly as they had looked out of the darkness surrounding them.

In silence, Brent and Yen How made their way out of the hollow. Not until they were close to Eagle's Nest was any reference made to what was in their minds.

"Say nothing to anyone of what you have seen," Brent then enjoined on his comrade. "At some other time we'll get to the bottom of the mystery."

Yen How signified his obedient assent to this proposal by maintaining a solemn silence. The prospect of venturing again into the forest ravine and searching out the secrets of its hidden recesses did not appeal to him in the least.

A Midnight Visitor—Ming Young Makes a Proposal.

In the library at Eagle's Nest, a wide and lofty chamber whose windows opened out on to a terrace above the drive, Guy Melville sat smoking and thinking at a late hour of the night. There was a dark and sullen look in his face as he stared into the dying embers of the fire, that would have surprised those who envied him his good fortune and success in life had they seen it.

He had won fame as an explorer, youthful manhood and splendid health were his, and he had returned home from abroad to find himself the owner of wealth and a fine estate. Yet there was a canker at work in his soul that kept him back from the enjoyment of all these advantages that he possessed over other men.

His embittered hatred of his cousin grew stronger every day. The memory of the hour when he had callously abandoned Norris Brent to a fearful fate was ever in his mind. No pang of remorse assailed him because of his crime; only a cold yet furious anger that his plotting had come to nought.

The lad stood in his path. Therefore he must be swept away. Thus Guy Melville reasoned, and his cold, selfish heart knew no pulsing beat caused by the remembrance of close kinship and of dangers faced together on land and sea.

His one regret was that he had not seen to it that his ruthless plot against his cousin did not miscarry. Had there been no Yen How to interfere all would have gone well.

Therefore he hated Yen How with a hatred not much less than that he felt for the lad whom the devoted Chinaman had saved from death.

"Curse all yellow men!" he muttered venomously. "Why was such a race ever brought into existence? They are a pest and a menace to the rest of mankind."

The click of a window-latch caught his ear, and a gust of chill night air swept into the room, causing some loose papers on a table near him to rustle and flutter to the floor.

An angry exclamation rising to his lips, Melville swung round, and then, with a swift intake of his breath, he was suddenly motionless.

The intruder on his privacy had entered from the terrace by one of the high door windows. He was a tall, spare man, well dressed and distinguished-looking, but though his clothes were those of an English gentleman, one glance at him was sufficient for an observer to denote his nationality.

He was a Chinaman, a son of that mysterious, myriad-numbered yellow race upon whom Guy Melville had just breathed a splenetic curse.

He had the head of a man great in intellectual power, and his face, once seen, could never be forgotten, for the eyes shining out from it looked through and through one.

That face Melville had seen once before. The sight of it conjured up a vivid picture in his mind. He saw himself riding across the desert in the fading light of the spent day, to be suddenly confronted by a camel caravan and summoned to appear before its leader.

The name of that caravan leader was Ming Yung, and it was Ming Yung who was before him now.

No! He would not believe it. Striding forward he glared up into the face of his visitor. Then, as a conviction came to him, he desperately swallowed the lump rising in his throat and vainly endeavoured to hide all sign of his agitation.

"Ah!" said Ming Yung, his eyes smiling for a moment. "I perceive that you recognise me, Mr. Melville. That will save me the necessity of introducing myself."

Melville assumed an attitude of outraged dignity.

"You have no right here, sir!" he exclaimed, spluttering a little. "How dare you steal into my house in such a manner? I should be perfectly justified in throwing you out."

"You will not do it!" said Ming Yung, speaking with cold deliberation. "Sit down! You must not waste my time. When it pleases me to do so I will leave you. I have come from London to see you. My car is waiting for me at the foot of the drive. I walked up the hill, and, seeing you in here by the light, entered by the quickest and shortest way. Is there a risk of anyone disturbing us?"

Melville shook his head.

"No," he answered sullenly. "I'm the only one sitting up. The servants are in bed. What is it that you have to say to me?"

"Nothing to the purpose until you have shown me over the at present unoccupied part of your mansion," was the surprising response of Ming Yung. "From what I heard in London I gathered that the rooms in the left wing of the building have been closed to use for some years. You must let me see them now."

Uttering a furious curse, Melville sprang to his feet, his face white with rage. Before he could give further vent to his wrath a long, sinewy hand fell lightly on his shoulder.

"When we return," said Ming Yung, "we will speak of the letter that you received from Mark Paignton when you were in China."

A moment of tense silence followed these words. The anger went out of Guy Melville, and was replaced by a sickening fear. His tongue, when he attempted to speak, clove to the roof of his mouth.

"I will now inspect the rooms in the left wing," said Ming Yung, in a commanding tone of voice. "Lead me to them."

The master of Eagle's Nest crossed the room with the movements of an automaton. Fear drove him onward, and something more than fear, a compelling force of personality that his will, strong and stubborn though it was, could not fight against.

That part of the old mansion that he and Ming Yung visited was the wing nearest to the brink of the great cliff that at this point of the coast rose sheer from the sea beating at its base.

The rooms in this wing had long since been shut up because there was no use for them. They branched off on each side of a wide hall that had once upon a time been a picture and music gallery.

Most of the pictures were removed, but suits of armour, crossed swords, and other implements of warfare and the chase dating back to the Elizabethan age still hung from the thick, oak panelling of the immensely strong walls that were the wonder of all who beheld them.

Through the glass skylights the moon shone down into the gallery. Never had the silvery beams of the queen of night fallen upon a stranger visitor to this ancient pile than the Chinese mandarin who was now there.

Room after room was opened and inspected. The one that Ming Yung gave the most attention to was a chamber of circular shape on the upper floor.

It had a convex roof with a central opening that was now closed by a trapdoor. A flight of steps, fashioned of thick oak that age had turned black as jet, led up to the trapdoor.

"We will ascend that ladder," said Ming Yung. "The view from the top ought to be magnificent. Do you know what use this room was ever put to?"

"Astrologers, so tradition has it, carried on their work here," answered Melville, whose curiosity as to the motive that the other had in being there was now predominant over every other feeling. "That is why it was called the Magicians' Room, the name that it is known by to this day."

They went up on to the roof, around which was a stone balcony with a heavily-balustraded parapet. Leaning on the parapet, Ming Yung stared down at the sea that tore and fretted at the base of the cliff hundreds of feet below.

As he gazed, with the night winds rustling round him, the impassive calm of his face seemed to vanish and give way to an expression of some strong emotion.

"That will do," he said at last, turning away from the balcony. "I have seen enough."

In silence he and Melville returned to the library. Then Ming Yung revealed the reason for his presence there.

"The rooms in the left wing will suit me admirably," he said, "and I shall be ready to take them over from you a week from now. For their use I will pay you three hundred pounds a month. Also, for any damage that may be caused to them by me when carrying out certain scientific experiments I shall make here you will receive full and adequate compensation. I hope I have made myself plain?"

"Too plain!" exclaimed Melville, his voice hoarse with sudden passion. "But before hearing anything more of your impertinent proposal I would like you to tell me of the letter you declared was sent to me by a certain person while I was in China."

"You shall hear all about it," said Ming Yung, leaning back in his chair and looking fixedly at the other between half-closed eyelids. "The letter was from Mark Paignton, the owner, before you, of Eagle's Nest, and in it he informed you of a certain alteration that he was going to make in his will."

Melville started, and his lips twitched nervously.

"He announced his decision," continued Ming Yung, "to have a part of his property set aside for the benefit of your cousin, Norris Brent, in whose career he had always taken a much deeper interest than his friends ever knew. By that bequest, if the provision of it were carried out, your cousin would, on his coming of age, receive an income of three thousand pounds a year."

"Paignton never altered his will," exclaimed Melville. "You forget that fact."

Ming Yung shook his head.

"I do not forget it," he rejoined. "The law, of course, is on your side, for Mark Paignton's will leaves everything to you. But what would the world think of you if it knew that Mark Paignton had written you a letter a day or two before his death announcing his intention of altering that will to benefit your young cousin, and that you had destroyed the letter, and kept silent as to its contents? You know even better than I do what the result would be for you."

Melville uttered a mocking laugh.

"You're not so smart as I had begun to think you were, Mr. Chinaman!" he said sneeringly. "The letter is destroyed. That's the whole point of the matter so far as I am concerned. Go and tell your wonderful tale to whoever you can get to listen to it. Without written proof to back your statements, no one will believe you."

Ming Yung smiled.

"Poor fool!" he said. "Think you to measure your feeble wits against mine? Written proof! I have in my possession an exact copy of the letter that Paignton sent to you. That letter was opened and its contents transcribed by an agent of mine while it was in transit through the Chinese carrier post!"

Rendered speechless by overmastering amazement, Guy Melville fell back in his chair and stared wildly into Ming Yung's yellow, Sphinx-like face.

"So you see," the Chinaman proceeded, "that it would be unwise of you to set yourself in opposition to me. With the knowledge that I possess concerning you, it would be a simple matter for me to ruin your whole future career. The only sensible plan for you to follow is to fall in with my wishes."

"Curse you!" cried Melville, his stubborn will utterly broken at last. "You've won your game. Come here when you like, and may you find your grave here!"

His sullen gaze was bent downward, and when he looked up it was to find that he was alone. Ming Yung had gone.

Running to the window, Melville pulled it open and stepped out on to the terrace. There was no sign of his late visitor. But a few minutes later he heard a motor-car swing out from the foot of the hill on to the high-road.

The car was taking Ming Yung back to London.

What Yen How Saw in the Night—Next Morning.

Yen How, whose slumbers were usually deep and profound, was suffering from a rare wakefulness. Tossing, restlessly from side to side of his couch, he thought longingly of the time when, at such moments as these, he was able to woo sleep to his weary eyes by the simple method of smoking a pipeful of opium.

He had given up opium-smoking at the behest of Norris Brent, and had vastly benefited in health by doing so, but upon such an occasion as this it seemed to him that the extract of the poppy was a soothing balm that no one should be without.

Throwing aside his blanket, he went to the window and looked out. An outhouse standing to the left of Eagle's Cliff, a short distance away from the mansion, had been furnished for him, and here he had succeeded in making himself more comfortable than he ever was before.

It was a fine night, and Yen How, knowing that he could not rest, decided that a plunge and a swim in the sea would do him a world of good.

So slipping on a loose Chinese gown, he left the house and descended a steep pathway to the narrow strip of sandy beach below the cliff.

The water was warm and calm, and Yen How disported himself in it for the best part of an hour.

Coming out, he went back up the cliff path, and, selecting a spot where the grass was short and velvety, lay down and smoked some cigarettes—Woodbines—his favourite brand.

From this engaging pastime his thoughts were diverted by the sound of a motor-car ascending the steep drive from the public road. He knew that it must be a fine and highly-powered car, for though the incline was one of the steepest in England, the vehicle climbing it made but little noise.

Curious to know who it might be that was coming to Eagle's Nest at such an unusual hour, Yen How sprang to his bare feet and hurried towards a thick belt of trees from which he would be able to see all that he wanted to.

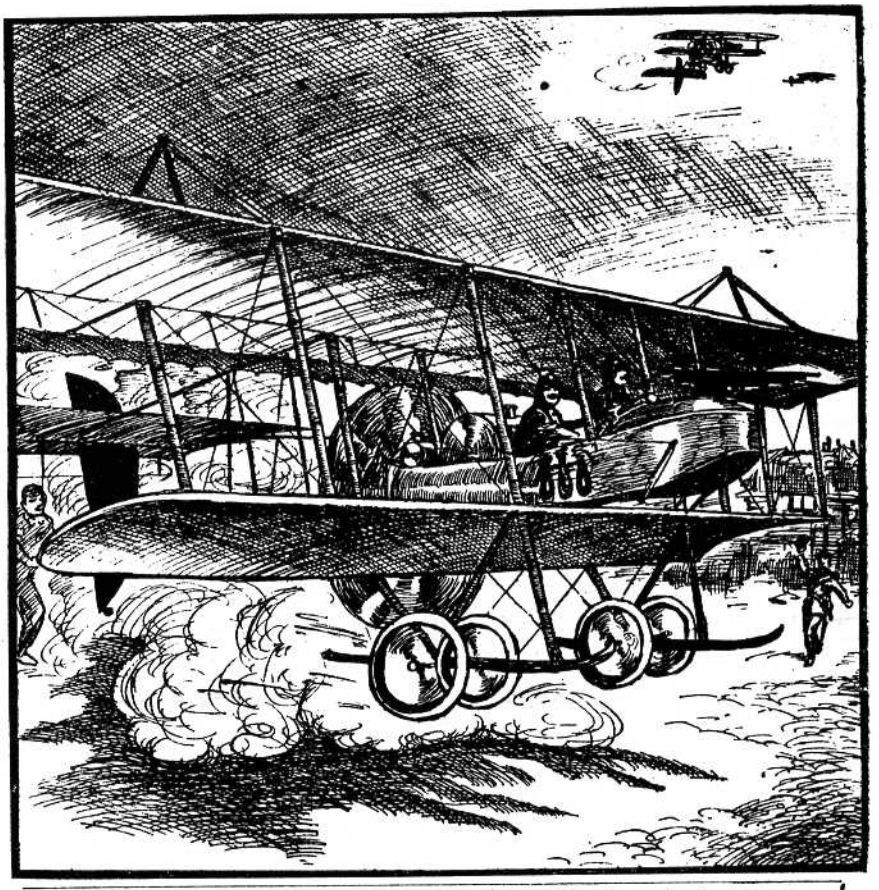
No sooner had he taken up an excellent position for his purpose than the motor-car drew up outside the hall entrance. There was no footman waiting to receive the guests, but Guy Melville was there.

With a queer sort of thrill, Yen How saw that the chauffeur was a Chinaman, who sprang down from his seat and flung open the door of the car.

There stepped out a man and a girl, and Yen How saw Melville, after being apparently introduced to the girl, lean forward and stare with undisguised admiration into her face.

Then all three ascended the steps. Before they entered the doorway one of them looked round and gave an order to the chauffeur, who turned his car and drove away down the drive.

The man who had given the order was Ming Yung, as Yen How knew the instant he recognised the other's face. The discovery he had made was startling enough to shake Yen How out of his customary stoical calm.



Our special war artist has hit on a rousing subject this time. He depicts some of our gallant airmen in the north of France setting out early in the morning on their adventures. That those adventures are fraught with peril and excitement such as rarely falls to the lot of man is well known.

Had he been able he would immediately have hastened to Norris Brent and told him the news. But Brent was not to be approached at such a time, for Yen How could not enter the place without someone or other whom he had no wish to meet seeing him, and most probably getting him into trouble with Melville, whom he regarded with the profoundest dislike, suspicion, and mistrust.

"The girlee must be Silver Pearl," he told himself. "Whatever side Ming Yung go he take her to. But what for he come here? This thing look velly puzzling to me."

After cogitating the matter over in his mind for some time, Yen How, coming to the conclusion that he could find out no more than he had done already, went home to his place of abode, and was able at last to enjoy the sleep of the just.

"Mr. Melville have got visitors, then?" he remarked to Norris Brent, when he met him the next morning. "You see them yet?"

Brent stared in amazement at the speaker.

"Visitors!" he said. "What in the world are you talking about? No one has come here to my knowledge."

"They have," Yen How answered. "Ming Yung and that pletty girlee Silver Pearl. My see them last night."

He informed the other of what he had seen from his vantage point amongst the trees, and Brent, quivering with excitement, but incredulous, darted back in the direction of the house to ascertain the truth or otherwise of the surprising report.

On his way he encountered his cousin.

"I say, Guy," he said eagerly. "Yen How has just told me that two people whom I met in China are here. Is it a fact?"

"Yes," Melville replied, with studied coldness, "it is, and now that you know I think it as well to inform you at once that both the young lady and her guardian, Ming Yung, have expressed to me a desire not to meet you. From what Ming Yung has told me I am led to believe that your treatment of him at his Chinese home was disgraceful!"

Brent, who had listened to these words with a slow flush burning up into his cheeks, now uttered a laugh of impatient but good-humoured protest.

"What a rigmarole!" he exclaimed. "Ming Yung has evidently told you only his side of the story. As for what you say about Silver Pearl expressing a wish not to see me again, I can't believe it, Guy, and that's a fact!"

"Think what you like!" Melville retorted, his eyes flashing venom. "But do not forget what I have said to you. While these people are guests of mine I shall most assuredly see to it that they are protected against any unwelcome attention you may attempt to force on either of them, and should you make yourself troublesome I shall know how to deal with you."

It cost Brent a mighty effort to check the angry indignation that he felt on being spoken to in such a manner. But he could not trust himself to speak, and so, biting his lip and pulling himself together, he turned on his heel and walked away.

"So Silver Pearl is here," he murmured. "Silver Pearl is here, is she?"

(The forthcoming instalments of this great story are exciting in the extreme. If your chum wants an adventure yarn of the very best, recommend to him "UNDER THE DRAGON!")

For Next Wednesday:

"YOUR EDITOR AT ST. JIM'S!"

By Martin Clifford.

The altogether novel and unusual story which Martin Clifford gives my chums next week will create a considerable stir throughout the country. The fact is, I persuaded the famous "Gem" author to write a story in defence of the popular boys' paper.

That there are still many well-meaning but narrow-minded pastors and masters in our midst who object to the type of boys' story-books such as are under my control, I am well aware; and my main object in having next week's story written was to sweep away all prejudice that prevails against the boys' paper, simply because it happens to be popular and to find favour with the youth of Britain.

Mr. Clifford has written a very amusing and entertaining story, with the serious side of the subject underlying it, and I hope every Gemite will show a copy of

"YOUR EDITOR AT ST. JIM'S!"

to his master, or to any who may at present disapprove of the companion papers.

"COUSIN ETHEL'S SCHOOLDAYS."

"Four Folkestone Friends," who wrote to me a short time ago suggesting that "Cousin Ethel's Schooldays" should be republished in one of the companion papers, will be glad to know that their suggestion has been backed up unanimously by Gemites all the world over. The following readers are but a few of the vast host who have been good enough to send me letters of approval:

"Two Girl Tomboys" (Wellingborough), "The Three Famous Chums" (Wolverhampton), Amy Turner (Worcester), Nancy S. (Tipperary), L. H. (near Droxford), Henry Levy (Woolwich), W. H. Lampard (Leatherhead), J. McKee (Ireland), "An Italian Girl Reader" (Glasgow), Phyllis Hughes (Swansea), Private T. Hewitt (3rd Suffolk Regt.), H. Green (Brighton), John Fraser (Inverness), "Tommy" and Chums (Newport, Mon.), Alfred Ford (High Wycombe), L. F. (Leytonstone), E. H. C. (near Bournemouth), Harry Edwards (Manor Park), E. F. C. and H. E. C. (Bournemouth), Phyllis Eales (Northampton), A. Dean (Leatherhead), "A Constant Girl Reader" (Woolwich), Marguerite N. Bull (Dudley), William Youlter (Tottenham), "A Girl Reader" (Seven Kings), R. Collin (Bermondsey), C. R. O. (Newquay), H. L. G. (Palmer's Green), Freda Ballantyne (Falkirk), E. Bramall (Leicester), "A Loyal Reader" (Liverpool), "A Loyal Reader" (Willesden), "A Loyal Irish Reader," A. P. (Newcastle-on-Tyne), "A Loyal Leyton Gemite," "A Cornish 'Gem' Reader," "A Loyal Reader" (London, W.C.), and "Another Lonely Girl Reader" (Murgavenny).

Thank you, chums all! I have much pleasure in announcing

"COUSIN ETHEL'S SCHOOLDAYS"

as the next "Gem" serial, and that it will make a big hit is proved by the number of letters clamouring for it. When Martin Clifford's great story first appeared it was in the "Empire" Library, so there must be thousands of my friends who have not yet read it, and who are eagerly awaiting the first instalment, which will appear as soon as "Under the Dragon" has run its course.

In the meantime, I should like all my chums to tell *their* chums of this important innovation, which has been brought about solely at the request of my readers.

ASK FOR WHAT YOU WANT.

This is a fitting opportunity to remind my chums that they have a large say in the welfare of the "Gem" Library; and if they will always ask for what they want, as my "Four Folkestone Friends" did in this instance, their Editor will be better enabled to provide for them

THE BEST—AND NOTHING BUT THE BEST!

REPLIES IN BRIEF.

Miss L. Horner (Yorks).—Thank you very much for your interesting letter, and for the kind support you have extended to my papers.

W. Medwin (Walworth).—Marie Rivers is seventeen years of age.

"A Heatonian."—The character you mention is still at St. Jim's. Tom Merry is the best all-round athlete in the Lower School. His vice-captain in junior cricket is Jack Blake. More will be heard of Wally D'Arcy in the near future.

"A Worksop Reader."—The colour you mention is green.

A. W. M. M. L. (Birkenhead).—What an imposing array of initials! What do they mean—Always Wanting More Monty Lowther? No; that can't be so, for I see you want more Fatty Wynn. Well, you shall have your wish, A. W. M. M. L. Some stirring tales of the Welsh junior are coming along shortly.

"A Chum in Bradford."—Thank you for your letter. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy is fifteen, and Wally twelve years of age. The two numbers you inquire about are, I am sorry to say, out of print.

To the following chums, who have written me nice letters of appreciation recently, I tender my cordial thanks and best wishes:

"A Faithful Reader" (London, W.), "A Friend" (Essex), "A Well-wisher," Jeannie Alldridge (Dartford), George Collins (Horsham), Lance-corporal A. Drew (Liphook), F. E. W. B. (Plymouth), G. L. (Kent), H. J. S. (Belfast), L. Holman (Bournemouth), T. Jelley (Dartford), H. Lawford, Q. A. Z., "Scottish Chum," and E. S. Thomas.

P. Bevan (Abbey Wood).—Ventriloquism is an art for the few. However, don't let me influence you if you wish to take it up. A good book on the subject can be obtained from Messrs. W. & G. Foyle, Charing Cross Road, London, W.C. And let me here remark that readers who write to the firms I mention should in all cases enclose stamped addressed envelopes.

A. E. B. (New Zealand).—The individual who had charge of your inquiry is now fighting in Flanders, and your letter has been mislaid. Is it asking too much of you to suggest that you wrote it again?

T. R. P. (Chester).—I am never "annoyed" because people write to me, except in the case of the income-tax collector. Bulstrode's Christian name is George.

Ben Dent (Hartlepool).—Your suggestions have been duly deposited in our "idea-box."

Kathleen Foster (Birmingham).—The school arms of Greyfriars will be reproduced shortly on the cover of the "Gem." Look out for it!

THE EDITOR.

Printed and published weekly by the Proprietors, The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, England. Agents for Australasia: Gordon & Gotch, Melbourne, Sydney, Adelaide, Brisbane, and Wellington, N.Z. South Africa: The Central News Agency, Ltd., Cape Town and Johannesburg. Subscription, 7s. per annum. Saturday, August 28th, 1915.

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