

How the Freshmen Raised their Flag

AT one o'clock tomorrow morning; back of the old Gym. Mum's the word."

This mystic message was passed around among the Freshmen of '09 on a certain wild and wintry night in the chilly month of December. At the appointed hour the Man in the Moon, had not dark clouds intervened, might have seen a score of eager Freshmen stealthily wending their way toward the old Gym. Some carried an air of expectancy, some carried scared looks, but more carried rope and other implements of warfare. The mystery was only deepened when one, the Earl of Taurus, announced the purpose of this strange gathering.

It seems he had in times past gazed with covetous eyes at the top of a certain smokestack which rises from the ground just back of the East Dormitory to a height of eighty feet. And since it would not come to him, he would go to it. "But how?" exclaimed the mystified assembly when this startling declaration was made. For there were no ladders long enough. Was there a scaffolding waiting to be climbed? "We'll see," was the calm reply. Whereupon they straightway proceeded to the aforementioned smokestack.

Upon their arrival some of them were detailed to guard the entrances of the Dormitory, and were given strict orders to allow no belligerent Sophomore to pass them. Little did the innocent Sophomores, snugly tucked in the arms of Morpheus, dream of what was going on all about them. Another group of Freshmen was detailed to file the lock on the manhole leading to the tunnel which conducts the smoke to the chimney. "How's she coming?" Robert the garment-maker would ask. "Slow, but sure," would reply the illustrious son of William. Just about one hour was consumed in filing the lock, and then—hurrah for the top of the smokestack.

But not so fast. Who would risk his life in going thirty feet through that rushing, roaring, furnace-like tunnel? The Earl of Taurus would. So he descends with a rope tied safely about his waist. What if the air-tube should break, and he should be suffocated by the deadly gas fumes just as a deep-sea diver is overcome by the failure of his air supply! What if he should be burned by the fiery blast! But he braves the dangers, and with the umbrella, ropes and other paraphernalia, crawls to the base of the smokestack. Now—! Would the draught be strong enough to carry up the open umbrella? One attempt — failure. Two attempts — failure. Three attempts — again a failure. So, cautiously, the Earl of Taurus fights his way back against the fierce onslaught of smoke and heat and announces, dolefully, when once more he has reached open air, that he has been unsuccessful. And forthwith the Freshmen proceed dismally to their rooms.

But they were not thus easily to be deterred from their purpose.