

**FRANK RALEIGH OF  
WATERCOMBE. A TALE OF  
SPORT, LOVE, AND ADVENTURE;  
IN THREE VOLUMES. VOL. I**

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E. W. L. Davies

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**E. W. L. DAVIES**

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John Edgell

Lyons

FRANK RALEIGH  
OF WATERCOMBE.

*A TALE OF SPORT, LOVE, AND ADVENTURE.*

BY THE AUTHOR OF  
"WOLF-HUNTING IN BRITTANY," ETC.

\*  
"Condēt equis, canibusque, et aprici gramine campi,  
Cereus in vitium steti, monitoribus asper.  
Utilium tardus provisor, prodigus aris,  
Sublimis, cupidusque, et amata relinquere pernix."

Hoa.

*IN THREE VOLUMES.*

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1877.



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FRANK RALEIGH OF WATERCOMBE.

CHAPTER I.

"A man severe he was, and stern to view,  
I knew him well, and every truant knew;  
Well had the boding tremblers learned to trace  
The day's disasters in his morning face."

GOLDSMITH.

"If old Twigg should catch you at that work again, Frank, I wouldn't be in your skin for all the trout in the Dart river," said Harry Somers, anxious to alarm a bright, fair-haired boy, not yet seventeen, his school-fellow and chum, who, instead of getting up his Georgics, was tying a fly under cover of his desk, intent only on the work of his creation and the exact shade of mohair and dubbing suitable to its sooty wings.

"Catch me or not, I'll finish the blue dun



now I'm about it; and if ever that old brute strikes me again with his Hederich, I'll make him remember it to the last day of his life—mind that, Harry.”

“Bravo! my little bantam; but don't crow before you fight; for, let me tell you, Frank, you'd have as much chance in that giant's hands as a leveret has in a kite's claws. Why don't you ease away your head when the blow comes, as Pearson does, instead of standing up stiff as a target, and getting your skull half cracked by the collision?”

“Simply because I don't choose to let the tyrant think he can cow me by such brutal punishment; but see if I don't make him quake down to his boots the very next time he tries the folio dodge on my brains.”

Now, Dr. Theophilus Twigg, head-master of King Edward's Grammar-school at Buckbury-in-the-West, enjoyed, outside and beyond the limits of his little dominion, the reputation of being a generous, good-natured, and painstaking pedagogue. The manners of the man, if a little stiff, were always courteous; the extras on his bills at Christ-

mas rarely excessive; and, periodically, the University Class-lists gave ample testimony to the success of his scholastic labours. At the weekly market, too, no matter how keen or inclement the morning, he was always the first to attend and secure, at top price, the finest and fattest meat in the stalls (for as is, or was, the case at Oxford, no butchers' shops were allowed to offend the public eye in the streets of that refined town). No wonder, then, if the tradespeople of Buckbury re-echoed the praise bestowed on him by the parents of his pupils, and with one voice pronounced him to be the most liberal of customers, and a pattern schoolmaster.

This out-of-door view of the man, however, was not quite in accordance with that taken by closer observers within his own walls, where, as we shall presently see, the honour in which he was held was about equivalent to that bestowed on a prophet in his own country; still the large amount of formal respect paid him by his pupils might have flattered even a greater man, although, in reality, it was the product of fear, not of love—a base coin of no value.

While the hum of the school was going on, and the doctor, engaged with a pupil, was sighing aloud over the sorrows of poor Dido, Frank Raleigh had brought his handiwork to a close, and, holding it up between his forefinger and thumb, he expatiated with artistic pride, but in an undertone, on its correct colour and captivating appearance. "There, Harry," said he, "that's what I call a blue dun! sooty legs, squirrel's under-fur mixed with mohair for its body, and starling's wings; and don't they stand up as natural as life? With that for an end-fly, and a coch-a-bonddu for a bob, it will be a dainty fish that won't rise at the one or the other."

"Hang the blue dun! you'll look blue enough yourself by-and-by, if you can't construe those hundred lines in the third Georgic; it's all about horses, too—chestnuts, greys, and duns—every word of which I've had to look out in the dictionary."

"All right, old fellow; my 'crib' will do all that for me in two minutes," said Frank, as he stuck the barb of his fly into a flannel rag, and proceeded to unearth a greasy,