

NAME:

COURSE:

The Verger

They were elderly men, both of them, and they had been churchwardens almost as long as Albert Edward had been verger. They were sitting now at a handsome refectory table that the old vicar had brought many years before from Italy and the vicar sat down in the vacant chair between them. Albert Edward faced them, the table between him and them, and wondered with slight uneasiness what was the matter. He remembered still the occasion on which the organist had got into trouble and the bother they had all had to hush things up. In a church like St Peter's, Neville Square, they couldn't afford a scandal. On the vicar's red face was a look of resolute benignity, but the others bore an expression that was slightly troubled.

'He's been naggin' them, he 'as,' said the verger to himself. 'He's jockeyed them into doin' something, but they don't 'alf like it. That's what it is, you mark my words.'

But his thoughts did not appear on Albert Edward's clean-cut and distinguished features. He stood in a respectful but not obsequious attitude. He had been in service before he was appointed to his ecclesiastical office, but only in very good houses, and his deportment was irreproachable. Starting as a page-boy in the household of a merchant-prince, he had risen by due degrees from the position of fourth to first footman, for a year he had been single-handed butler to a widowed peeress, and, till the vacancy occurred at St Peter's, butler with two men under him in the house of a retired ambassador. He was tall, spare, grave, and dignified. He looked, if not like a duke, at least like an actor of the old school who specialized in dukes' parts. He had tact, firmness, and self-assurance. His character was unimpeachable.

QUESTIONS

1. Vocabulary. Find words in the text that mean: (1 point)

Thin with no extra fat on the body.	
To try to prevent people from discovering.	
Small in amount or degree.	
A male servant whose job includes opening doors and serving food, and who often wears a uniform.	
To criticize or complain repeatedly and annoyingly, often as a way of trying to persuade (someone) to do something.	

2. Answer the following questions according to the text. (5 points)

1. What other jobs had Foreman had before becoming a verger?

2. Why was Foreman dismissed?

3. Why did he become a tobacconist?

4. How many shops did he eventually own?
