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The BOYS' FRIEND 1st

(WITH WHICH IS AMALGAMATED "THE DREADNOUGHT.")

No. 751, Vol. XV, New Series.]

ONE PENNY.

[Week Ending October 30th, 1915.

STUPENDOUS NEW FEATURE!

(By Special Arrangement with the Essanay Film Company, London.)

OUR MAGNIFICENT CHARLIE CHAPLIN FILM-PHOTO STORY.

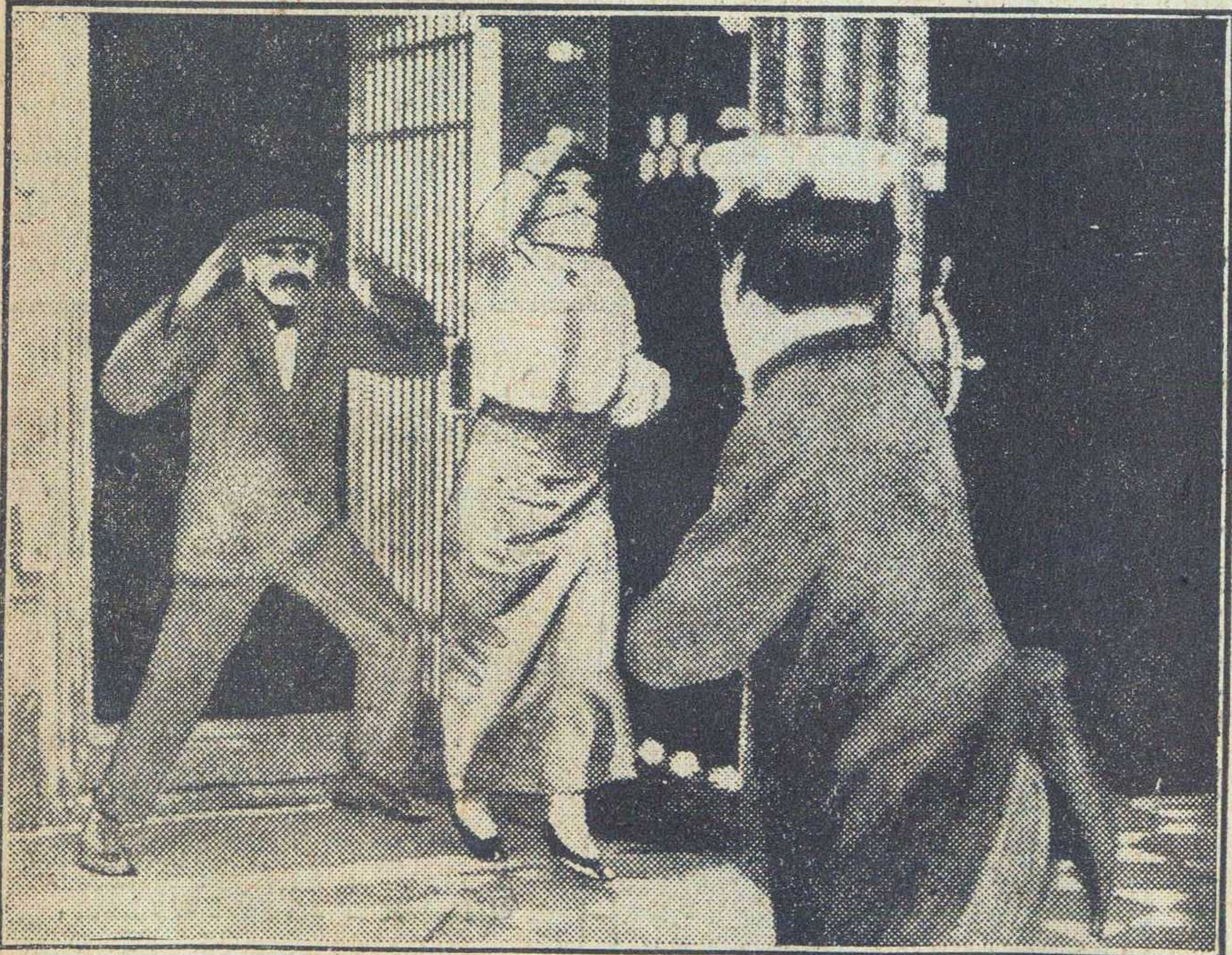
This Week: CHARLIE AT THE BANK!



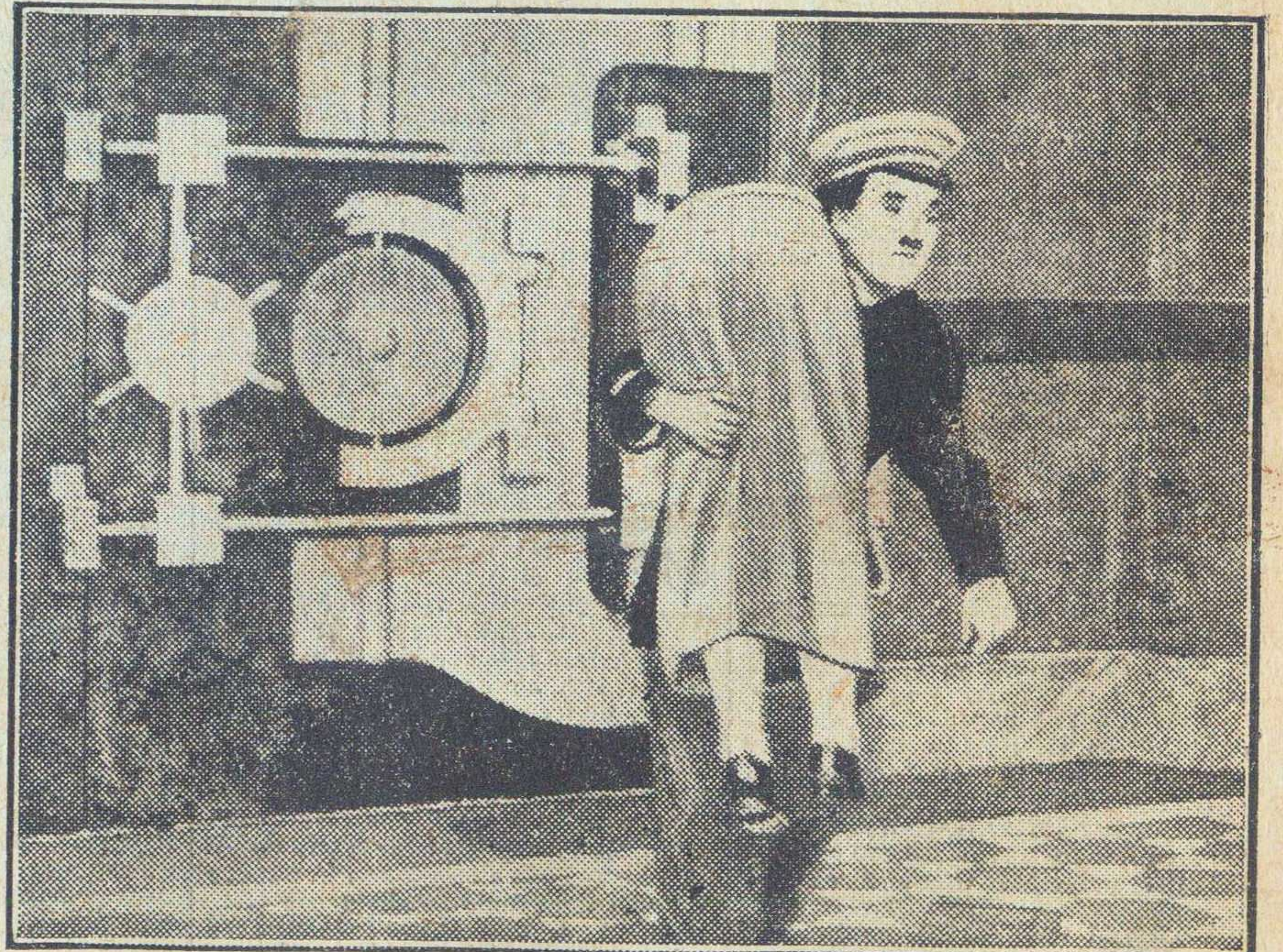
CHARLIE, promoter of many a prank,
Managed to collar a job at the bank.
Cleaning the office where worked the fair maid,
He discovered a box with a necktie inlaid.
"To Charlie, with love," ran the handwriting clear,
For such was the name of the youthful cashier.



O'erjoyed at the compliment coming his way,
Charlie left on her desk a delightful bouquet;
But he hardly felt pleased, when, from outside the door,
He heard the lass raving, which grieved him full sore.
Then, to add to his chagrin, our hero could see
His flowers consigned to the W.P.B.



With a moan of despair, Charlie sauntered below.
"She scorns me!" he muttered. "Methinks it's no go!"
Then he heard screams for help from the terrified girl,
And dashed up the stairs with his heart in a whirl.
A bank robber stood there—the cashier had scooted—
And into the safe the marauder was booted!



The damsel had swooned right away in her fright,
But her rescuer bore her upstairs quite all right.
And tended her gently with consummate care,
Saying: "Now I have captured this maiden so rare!
For she'll have no more truck with that cowardly chap
Who deserted her, funking a possible scrap!"

THE FINISH OF THIS PICTURE STORY WILL BE FOUND ON PAGE 368 OF THIS ISSUE!

THE FIGHT FOR THE CAPTAINCY!

A Magnificent New Long Complete School Story, dealing with the Adventures of
JIMMY SILVER & Co. - - - **By OWEN CONQUEST.**

The 1st Chapter.

Jimmy Silver Puts His Foot In It.

Most of the Classical fellows declared that it was Jimmy Silver's fault.

Jimmy himself could not quite see, that.

But, whether it was Jimmy's fault or not, it had happened. And the question was, what was going to be done? Lovell of the Fourth gave it as his opinion that the Classical side was going to be "done."

It had come about in the most natural way in the world, really. That afternoon was to take place the great junior match, Classicals against Moderns, which was to decide the vexed question of the junior captaincy. Naturally, it was very much in the thoughts of the juniors during morning lessons. Classical fellows could not forbear whispering to their rivals that they were booked for a tremendous licking, and Modern fellows could not help whispering back that the Classicals were going to be wiped off the face of the earth.

Mr. Bootles, the master of the Fourth, was not very observant, but the buzz of whispers in the class, all on the subject of the forthcoming football match, had a worrying effect upon him at last. He gave Tommy Dodd, the Modern leader, fifty lines for talking, and then, perhaps for the sake of being impartial, bestowed fifty lines upon Jimmy Silver, the Classical. That checked the conversation a little, but it broke out again, and Mr. Bootles threatened to detain the whole Form for the afternoon.

That threat brought about a silence as of the grave. Detention that afternoon would have been a crushing blow.

The Fourth Form, Classical and Modern, hardly breathed after that.

It was then that Jimmy Silver's evil genius led him into drawing a caricature of Mr. Bootles upon his exercise-book. Mr. Bootles had a way of peering forward over his glasses which gave him a curious resemblance to a tortoise putting out its head.

Jimmy Silver had a happy touch with the pencil, and he drew quite a striking picture of Mr. Bootles as a tortoise peering out of his shell through a big pair of glasses.

Lovell and Raby and Newcome grinned over the picture, and fellows leaned across the desk to look at it and grin, and a chuckle passed along the desks.

Mr. Bootles turned a severe glance in that direction.

"I will have order in this class," he said, "Leggett, you were laughing."

Leggett was a Modern junior, and not a popular fellow. He was more than suspected of sneaking to such of the prefects as encouraged that kind of practice.

Jimmy Silver suppressed a groan. He had little doubt that Leggett would give him away if he had to explain what he was laughing at.

"Leggett, stand up!"

The Modern junior stood up. Tommy Dodd & Co. made him furious signs. They meant to convey what they would do to him later if he sneaked. Tommy Dodd & Co. were very much ashamed of having a sneak on the Modern side.

But Leggett's eyes were fixed upon Mr. Bootles, and upon the pointer the Fourth-Form master had taken up.

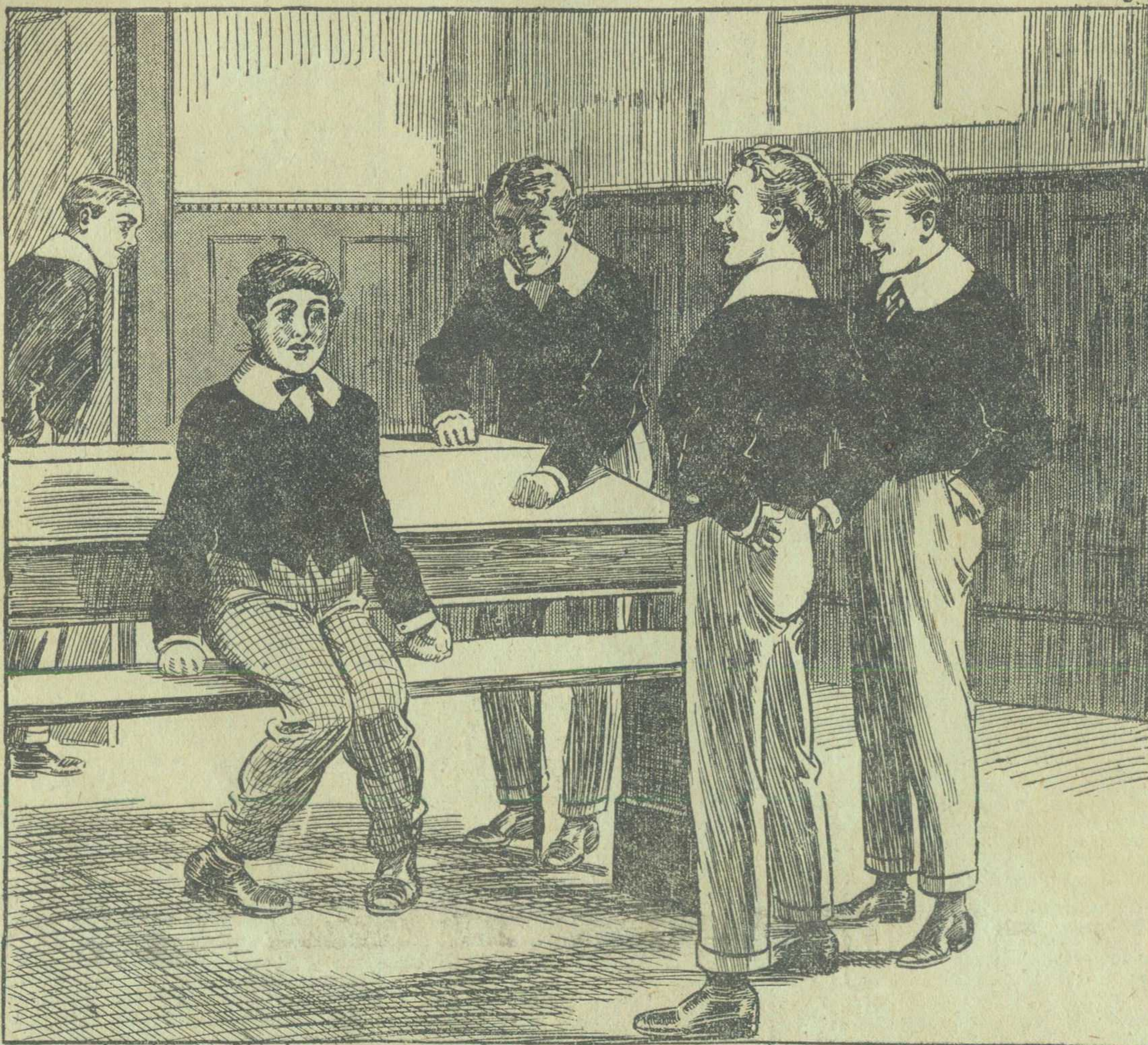
"The class has been unusually disorderly this morning," said Mr. Bootles. "I repeat that I will not have it. Leggett, you were laughing, and I think I observed some others laughing too. What were you laughing at?"

"N-n-nothing, sir!"

"Indeed! Then I shall cane you, Leggett, for being so absurd as to laugh for nothing during lessons."

"If you please, sir, it was a picture," stammered Leggett. He had no intention of being caned if he could help it. "It was—was funny, sir!"

"To what picture are you alluding, Leggett?"



The Classical juniors looked at the dummy in great admiration when it was completed. It had taken them less than half an hour, and it was remarkably lifelike. Certainly it did not bear a close resemblance to Jimmy Silver, but it looked remarkably like a junior in Etons of Jimmy Silver's size.

"Silver's drawn it, sir."
"Oh, you sneaking cad!" breathed Tommy Dodd. "I'll scalp you presently!"

Leggett looked dogged. The possibility of being scalped presently seemed to him better than the certainty of being caned on the spot.

"Silver, you have been drawing a picture instead of attending to your lessons!" said Mr. Bootles severely. "I am surprised at you, Silver! Kindly bring that picture to me at once!"

Jimmy Silver sat frozen with horror.

The caricature of Mr. Bootles, representing him as a tortoise, was decidedly funny. But Jimmy knew that it would be utterly useless to rely upon Mr. Bootles' sense of humour. He could not be expected to appreciate a joke like that.

He was a good-tempered master as a rule. But he was "ratty" already, and the sight of that caricature would put the lid on, so to speak.

Leggett's sneaking had completely floored Jimmy Silver. He sat tight, at a loss, in utter dismay.

Mr. Bootles stared at him. "Do you hear me, Silver? Bring me that picture at once!"

Then, as Jimmy Silver did not move, being too horrified to move, the Form-master strode through the desks and reached his side and caught up the exercise-book.

There was a pause of horror in the class.

What Mr. Bootles would say when he saw that caricature of himself could only be conjectured.

Jimmy Silver hardly breathed. Mr. Bootles opened the book at the picture, and blinked at it through his glasses, and peered at it with his head jerking forward in a way that showed off to great advantage his likeness to the caricature.

"Ah! Hum! You have drawn a tortoise, Silver," said the Form-master, a little mollified. "I am—er—glad to see that you display some skill in drawing, and that you have a taste for study in—hem—natural

history. Dear me! You have drawn your tortoise with a human face and—bless my soul!—spectacles. Is it possible, Silver, that this picture is intended as a caricature?"

Jimmy sat dumb. "I recognise something familiar in the features you have depicted, though they are grossly and foolishly exaggerated," said Mr. Bootles. "Silver, is it possible—is it credible that you have been drawing a caricature of myself?"

The word "myself" came in a rumble like distant thunder. The dreadful truth had dawned upon Mr. Bootles at last. Jimmy sat silent. He would never have drawn that caricature if he had dreamed that Mr. Bootles would see it—not only from regard for the consequences, but because he would never willingly have wounded Mr. Bootles' feelings. He both liked and respected his Form-master. But the damage was done now owing to Leggett's sneaking.

"Silver, you have been guilty of gross impertinence."

"I am sorry, sir," faltered Jimmy. "Probably. You have shown great skill in drawing, Silver. Your tastes are evidently artistic. How long did that picture take you?"

"About—about ten minutes, sir."

"Very good. This afternoon, Silver, you will remain in the Form-room and reproduce that picture twelve times. If the copies are not equal to the original I shall request you to do them over again. When they are completed you will bring them to my study. We will now," added Mr. Bootles, with crushing dignity, "resume."

The 2nd Chapter.

Leggett Catches It!

"All your own fault, you giddy ass!" said Lovell, as they came out of the Form-room after morning lessons.

"You really did act like a born idiot, Jimmy," said Raby.

"Like a thumping chump!" said Newcome.

Jimmy Silver snorted. "It was all through that Modern cad Leggett. All right if he hadn't sneaked."

"Yah! Modern cads!" roared Lovell, as Tommy Dodd & Co. came along the passage. "Yah! Sneaks! Br-r-r!"

Tommy Dodd turned red. "Cheese it, you Classical ass!" he said. "We're going to boil Leggett in oil for sneaking. We couldn't help it, could we?"

"Sure," said Tommy Doyle, "the trouble is about the match this afternoon. Are you Classical gossoms goin' to play it without Silver?"

"Can't be did."

"But it can't very well be put off," said Tommy Dodd. "The fixtures begin on Saturday, and somebody's got to skipper the team."

"Oh, it's rotten!" said Jimmy Silver. "We shall have to work it somehow. Perhaps Bootles will let me off if I explain to him. I'll leave it till after dinner. He may be in a better temper then. Feed the brute, you know."

"Come along and lend us a hand with Leggett, then," said Tommy Dodd.

"Right-ho!"

The Classical chums willingly joined the three Moderns to look for the sneak of the Fourth. Leggett was not easily found, however. He knew that prudence was the better part of valour, and he had disappeared immediately the Fourth were dismissed. The sneak of the Fourth evidently wanted the matter to blow over before he showed up in public again.

The seven juniors hunted him high and low, and Oswald and Jones minor and Hooker and Towle joined in the search; but Leggett was not seen till dinner-time, when he came into the dining-room a minute after the other fellows. Tommy Dodd & Co. watched him during dinner, with looks of suppressed ferocity. They felt keenly the disgrace the sneak had brought

on their side. It gave the Classical fellows a "handle" against them.

After dinner, the three Tommies were very careful to keep close to Leggett as he left the dining-room with the Modern Fourth. There was no chance for Leggett to scuttle back to his hiding-place, wherever it was. He fled into the quadrangle with the three Tommies and half a dozen other juniors in hot pursuit. Round the quad they went as if it were a race on the cinder-path, round Little Quad, and back by the archway, round the clock-tower and the gym, Leggett dodging desperately. Vengeance was on his track, and he was getting spent. He dodged into the School House at last, into the Classical quarters, as the only chance of escape.

There was a yell from Flynn of the Fourth as he came in.

"Hurroo! Here's the sneak!"

Leggett dashed up the stairs as three or four Classical juniors made a dash at him. He had barely escaped from the frying-pan, and he was fairly in the fire. For at the head of the stairs he fell right into the arms of the Fistical Four. Jimmy Silver & Co. were discussing a projected appeal to their Form-master, when the sneak of the Fourth rushed into their arms. Their arms closed upon him at once, naturally. Leggett struggled in terror.

"Leggo!" he roared. "Yaroo! Help! Leggo! Yow!"

"Yank him into the study!" grinned Lovell. "We'll teach the Modern cad to sneak and get a chap detained."

Leggett was rushed along the passage, and dumped down in the end study. He sat on the carpet quaking, with the Classical chums glaring at him.

"You sneaking worm!" said Jimmy Silver. "You've mucked up the footer match this afternoon with your rotten sneaking. Now you're going to be boiled in oil."

"Yow! Help!"

"Funky cad, yelling before he's hurt," said Lovell, in disgust. "Still, we'll soon make that all right; we'll give him plenty to yell for."

And Lovell twisted Leggett over, face to the rug, and started operations with a cricket-stump.

Leggett's yells rang through the study, and brought a crowd of Classical juniors along the passage.

"You'll have a prefect here soon," grinned Townsend.

Jimmy Silver jerked the stump away from Lovell.

"Ring off, old chap!"

"He hasn't had half enough!" roared Lovell.

"Bow-wow! Leave him to me!" said Jimmy Silver. "Tie his paws behind his back, first thing!"

"Yow-ow-ow!" yelled Leggett.

"Oh, shut up!" said Jimmy Silver. "Do you want some more stump?"

Leggett took the hint, and squirmed in silence. His hands were looped together and tied behind him. Then Jimmy Silver daubed in large letters upon a sheet of cardboard "SNEAK!" and pinned it to Leggett's waistcoat.

"Now, take him back to where he belongs!" he remarked.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Let me loose!" shrieked Leggett.

"Take that card off, you beast, Silver! I'll pay you out for this! Lemme go—yow-ow-ow!"

Lovell's heavy boot helped Leggett out of the study, and he departed in the midst of a grinning crowd of Classical juniors. They marched him down the stairs and out of the House, amid yells of derision. Leggett's face was crimson with rage and shame.

"Yah! Sneak!"

"Rotter!"

"Sneak, sneak, sneak!"

"Hallo!" shouted Tommy Dodd, catching sight of the procession.

"What the thunder—Oh, my hat! Cheeky Classical rotters!"

The Moderns rushed to recapture Leggett, and they bore him off to their own side, followed by mocking Classical yells. But Leggett's rescue did not benefit him, for the exasperated Moderns proceeded to rag him without mercy. When Leggett finally escaped from the hands of the avengers he was sore in mind and body and thirsting for vengeance—chiefly upon Jimmy Silver, whom he somewhat unreasonably regarded as the cause of all his troubles.

But for the present, the sneak of the Fourth could do nothing but sit in his study and gasp and groan.

Meanwhile, Jimmy Silver & Co. were busy. The Fistical Four had held a "pow-wow" on the subject, and decided that the only recourse was an appeal to Mr. Bootles. And



THE FIGHT FOR THE

(Continued
from the
previous
page.)

CAPTAINCY!

they made their way to the Form-master's study, in a very dubious frame of mind.

The 3rd Chapter, N.G.

Mr. Bootles frowned at the sight of Jimmy Silver. Lovell and Raby and Newcome exchanged rather hopeless glances, and hung back a little. The Form-master's expression was more than discouraging.

"It is time that you went in to your detention, Silver!" said Mr. Bootles before Jimmy could speak.

"Yes, sir," said Jimmy meekly. "If you please, sir, I—I should like to speak to you about it—"

Mr. Bootles made a gesture. "It is useless, Silver. You deserved to be caned as well as detained, as you know very well. Kindly go!"

Lovell put in an effort. "It's a special case this afternoon, sir," he said. "If Silver can't play—"

"Play!" said Mr. Bootles, raising his eyebrows.

"Footer, sir."

"Oh, football! I am not likely to excuse Silver, Lovell, in order that he may play a game of football!" said Mr. Bootles, with crushing sarcasm.

"Tain't an ordinary game, sir," said Raby, in his turn. "You see, sir, we've lately had an election for junior captain, and—"

"I am aware of that, as I presided at the election," said Mr. Bootles. "Silver was elected, I remember. What has that to do with the matter in hand?"

"Lots, sir!" said Raby eagerly. "The Moderns weren't quite satisfied, and we weren't, owing to certain circumstances in the election, and we agreed to let it go by, and decide the junior captaincy another way. The Moderns and us have agreed that the winning skipper in a footer match shall be junior captain, instead of sticking to the election result."

"And the match is fixed for this afternoon, sir," said Newcome.

"And we're making up our best team on the Classical side, sir, and Jimmy Silver is the very best forward in the Lower School," said Lovell.

"Without Jimmy we shall be licked, sir."

"And then a Modern bouncer will be junior captain, sir," said Newcome. "I mean, a modern chap—Tommy Dodd again, just as it was through the cricket season."

"So if you would let Silver off, sir—"

"He's very sorry!"

"We're all sorry!"

"And it's so awfully important, sir—"

"So awfully important—"

Mr. Bootles raised his hand. He was being bombarded on all sides by the Fistical Four.

"Silence!" he exclaimed. "If the matter is really serious so far as your junior games are concerned, it was extremely injudicious of Silver to choose this especial morning for playing an impertinent trick. Having done so, he must take his punishment. I should recommend you to postpone this extremely important match to another date," said Mr. Bootles, a little sarcastically. "Now kindly leave my study."

"But it can't be postponed, sir."

"Nonsense! That is enough, Lovell!"

"But, sir—"

"Unless you leave my study this instant, I shall order all of you to be detained as well as Silver!"

"Oh!"

"You will go to the Form-room at once, Silver, and proceed to carry out the task I have set you—no doubt a congenial task. As you may be tempted to break detention I may mention that I shall glance into the Form-room occasionally during the afternoon. Now, not another word."

The Fistical Four left Mr. Bootles' study in the lowest of spirits. In the passage they paused to look at one another glumly.

"Rotten!" groaned Jimmy. "We can't postpone the match. We're playing Bagshot on Saturday, and we've got to settle who's skipper before that. It's simply got to be settled."

"And as we made the Modern cads the offer, we're bound to stick to it," mumbled Lovell. "On the election, the captaincy was ours."

"It wasn't satisfactory, we had to bottle up Smythe of the Shell, who was going to split the vote. It was fair all round to put the result on to a footer match, as it's for football captain; a real sporting way of settling it. But who could have foreseen this?" groaned Jimmy Silver.

"You thumping ass, Jimmy—"

"The burbling duffer—"

"Pile it on!" said Jimmy Silver resignedly.

"Well, it's no good ragging," said Lovell, with a sigh. "It can't be helped now. I suppose we shall have to play without you."

"You might pull it off without me," said Jimmy. "Only the Moderns are at the top of their form, of course. They've got some Shell fellows, too; and the Shell on our side are all slacking duffers. We need to be at the top of our strength. I—I wonder—"

"Thinking of breaking detention?"

grunted Lovell.

"Well, yes. I wonder—"

"No good."

"Bootles never comes near the footer-ground," said Raby. "He hardly ever gives a squint even at the First Eleven matches; and Bulkeley's lot haven't a match on to-day, either. Bootles wouldn't dream of coming near Little Side this afternoon."

"N.G., I tell you!" growled Lovell. "Didn't you hear what Bootles said? He suspects Jimmy might bunk, and he's going to trot down the passage every now and then and see that he's still in detention. Won't hurt him, slacking about indoors all the afternoon over his rotten books," added Lovell, with a snort. "We've only made matters worse by going to Bootles. Otherwise, he mightn't have thought about Jimmy bolting, but now—"

"It's a rotten bizney all along the line!" said Jimmy Silver. "The match can't be put off, anyway, even if the Moderns would agree. You'll have to skipper the team, Lovell, and, for goodness' sake, do your best! I'd better get into the Form-room, or I shall have Bootles down on me again. Tell Tommy Dodd I'm out of it!"

And, with a lugubrious face, Jimmy Silver went into the Fourth-Form room, where he sat down to the weary and dreary task of making copies of his caricature of the morning. If Mr. Bootles had specially desired to follow the example of the celebrated Mikado, and make the punishment fit the crime, he could not really have devised a better method. All the humour in that funny caricature had vanished for Jimmy Silver now, and he grunted dismally as he went on grinding away at copy after copy.

The 4th Chapter, The Only Way.

"Hallo! Have the Germans landed?"

Tommy Dodd of the Fourth asked that question, as Lovell and Raby and Newcome looked into his study on the Modern side. The lugubrious expression on the three Classical faces caused Tommy's remark.

"Blow the Germans!" growled Lovell. "It's worse than that!"

"Looking forward to a licking this afternoon?" asked Tommy Cook sympathetically. "No good being so down in the mouth about it; it's bound to come!"

And the three Tommies chuckled.

"Fathead!" said Lovell. "You couldn't lick the Classical side in a thousand years, if—if we had a full team! But Silver's detained, and Bootles won't let him off at any price. That's what we've looked in to tell you. You've got just a ghost of a chance if Jimmy's left out on our side."

"Looks to me like a dead cert, if you leave out your best forward," said Tommy Dodd, becoming serious. "Blessed if I like this! I don't want to beat you on a fluke. I want the licking to be fair and square."

Lovell snorted.

"Can't Silver bunk?" demanded Tommy Doyle. "Sure, Bootles will forget all about him!"

Lovell shook his head. "We've asked Bootles to let him off, and that's made him suspicious. He says he's going to look into the Form-room every now and then, to make sure that Silver's there."

"Oh, tare and 'ouns," said Doyle, "that settles it! Sure, Silver was a silly gossoon to pull Bootles' leg this mornin'!"

"It's hard cheese!" said Tommy Dodd, wrinkling his brows. "Rotten hard cheese! I'd agree to postpone the match if it were possible, but it ain't. We've got to select a skipper before we meet Bagshot on Saturday. But if you play without Jimmy Silver you won't have an earthly! Of course, you won't have an earthly, anyway—"

"Silly ass!"

"Look here, Silver's got to be in your team!" said Tommy Dodd. "We've got to think of a way!"

"We can't think of one," said Raby.

"Well, you wouldn't, with your Classical brains!" said Tommy Dodd disparagingly. "That's only to be expected!"

"Why, you Modern fathead—"

"Shush! Let's go over and see Jimmy, and have a pow-wow," said Tommy Dodd.

"It's up to us, as it was a Modern chap sneaked and caused the trouble. You should see Leggett now—nursin' his nose and swearin' vengeance!"

The Modern chums left the study with Lovell and Raby and Newcome, and they made their way to the

Form-room. Jimmy Silver was grinding away drearily at the eternal copies of that unfortunate caricature. He left off gladly enough as the juniors came in, and nodded to them.

"Mind Bootles don't spot you here," he said. "Might detain the lot of you."

"Cook's on the watch round the corner, and he's going to whistle if the Bootles bird leaves its nest," said Tommy Dodd. "Look here, Silver, you've got to get out of this! It's jolly near time for the kick-off!"

"Can't be did! Bootles would miss me at once, and come to the footer-ground for me!" groaned Jimmy Silver. "I'm fairly in for it! What a life!"

"Faith, we couldn't fasten Bootles up in his study somehow?" murmured Tommy Doyle thoughtfully.

"Ass!" was the comment of the rest.

Fastening up the Form-master in his study was rather too heroic a method.

"And he's going to keep an eye on the Form-room," said Tommy Dodd, wrinkling his brows; "that's the unfortunate bit. Hallo! There's Cooky!"

A low whistle sounded in the passage. The juniors started round in alarm. The whistle meant that the Form-master was coming along.

"The alcove—quick!" breathed Jimmy Silver.

The juniors hurriedly, but on tiptoe, whipped into the deep alcove in the corner of the Form-room, where the easel and blackboard were kept. They could only hope that Mr. Bootles would not glance in that direction.

Half a minute later the Form-master entered the doorway.

Jimmy Silver was leaning over his exercise-book on the desk, pencil in hand, grinding away industriously, and did not look up. He did not appear to be aware of the presence of the master of the Fourth.

Mr. Bootles glanced at him, and then, satisfied that he was there, he did not trouble to come in, but turned away from the doorway, and disappeared down the passage.

Tommy Cook came in a couple of minutes later.

"All serene," he said. "He's gone back into his study."

"Good egg!" gasped Lovell, as the juniors came out of the alcove. "Narrow escape for the lot of us, talking to a chap under detention! Better not hang about here too long; he mayn't miss us next time."

"Better get off," said Jimmy Silver dismally. "I never thought Bootles was such a beast. He might have said a word. Just spotted that I was here, and cleared. I don't see why this caricature should make him so awfully ratty."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I suppose we'd better get down to the footer," said Raby doubtfully. "No chance of Jimmy getting off."

Tommy Dodd shook his head. "I should advise Jimmy to get off," he said.

"But Bootles will be back along the passage in half an hour at least, perhaps sooner," said Lovell. "It's N.G."

"I've been thinking," said Tommy, with a twinkle in his eyes.

"Oh, bow-wow! Some of your blessed Modern wheezes, I suppose!" grunted Lovell.

Jimmy Silver raised his hand.

"Shut up, Lovell! If you've got any idea for getting me out of this rotten scrape, Duddy, go ahead!"

"What price bolting—"

"Don't I keep on telling you—"

began Lovell.

"Shush! Bootles will come along and look in," said Tommy Dodd.

"Well, let him. You're in a rather shady corner. Suppose—"

"Well?"

"You've got another suit of clothes?"

"Eh?"

"And you could get some stuffing from somewhere—"

"Stuffing!"

"And I've got a lifelike Guy Fawkes mask all ready for the Fifth of November—not unlike you! A regular horror, you know!"

"You silly ass!"

"And you could use an old footer for the head, and jam this mask on the front of it for a face, fix it on a suit of Etons stuffed with rags, and—and there you are! Stick it in that shady corner with a pencil and exercise-book, and when Bootles looks in—you know how short-sighted he is—he'll think it's you!"

"Great Christopher Columbus!"

"My only hat!" said Lovell. "And suppose Bootles spoke to him?"

"The other dummy, you mean?" grinned Tommy Dodd. "Well, he didn't speak last time he looked in. He just looks in to see that Jimmy hasn't bolted, not for the delights of his conversation."

Jimmy Silver's face had lighted up.

"It's jolly risky!" he said. "But we'll take all the risk. You lend me that mask you spoke of, and we'll fix up the rest. You can get my oldest Etons from the box in the dorm, Lovell, and stuffing from anywhere. Bring 'em here, and needles and threads, and a pair of boots, and collar and tie, and so on! We'll fix it up, and chance it!"

"But—but if Bootles spots it?" gasped Raby. "There'd be simply a frightful row for taking him in like that."

Jimmy Silver shrugged his shoulders.

"Can't be helped," he said. "We've got to chance it—we've got to win that footer match!"

"Of course, you won't do that," remarked Tommy Dodd.

"Bow-wow! Cut off and get the things, you chaps," said Jimmy Silver eagerly. "I'll get as much of this rot done as I can, to have something to show for the giddy afternoon."

It was risky—wildly risky—but Jimmy Silver was determined upon it. Without his guiding hand the Classics would lose the match, and a Modern junior skipper would be installed at Rookwood. That was not to be thought of.

Tommy Dodd was almost equally keen for Jimmy to play, for Tommy was a sportsman to the finger-tips. It had been Jimmy Silver's suggestion that the junior captaincy should be decided by that match, and Tommy did not want him to lose his chance through his own generous offer to his rival.

The juniors cut off cautiously, and in about ten minutes they were stealing one by one into the Form-room, each of them bearing a burden. Then the three Moderns departed, leaving the business in the hands of the Fistical Four.

Newcome kept watch at the door for Mr. Bootles, and Lovell and Raby and Jimmy Silver set to work upon manufacturing the dummy, ready at an instant's warning to dodge it out of sight if the Form-master appeared in the offing.

The 5th Chapter, His Other Self!

Jimmy Silver chuckled softly as the dummy grew under his hands.

The old suit of Etons was stuffed out with old clothes, handkerchiefs, and odds and ends, and carefully sewn together, so that it represented a very lifelike junior. A pair of boots were sewn on the trousers-legs with big stitches. An ancient and disused football formed the head, squeezed a little out of shape, and a soft, curly brown wig, belonging to the Fourth Form Stage Society, was affixed to it.

The Guy Fawkes mask provided by Tommy Dodd was not really a "horror," as he had greatly improved it. It was quite a good-looking face, and a few touches of grease-paint greatly improved it. The curly hair shaded the top of it, and the broad collar fastened round the dummy's neck was stitched to it underneath.

The Classical juniors looked at the dummy in great admiration when it was completed.

It had taken them less than half an hour, and it was remarkably lifelike. Certainly it did not bear a close resemblance to Jimmy Silver, but it looked remarkably like a junior in Etons of Jimmy Silver's size.

The dusky corner of the Form-room, aided by the well-known short-sightedness of the Form-master, made it quite probable that the dummy would pass muster.

"My hat! It's ripping!" murmured Lovell. "A bit better-looking than you, Jimmy, but otherwise topping!"

Newcome, at the doorway, waved his hand frantically. Mr. Bootles' study door had opened at the end of the passage.

Lovell and Raby caught up the dummy, and rushed it into the alcove, and Newcome scuttled in after them, behind the blackboard. Jimmy Silver hastily picked up a dropped handkerchief, and sat down at his desk, and shifted his exercise-book along to the darkest corner. A few moments later Mr. Bootles' tread was heard outside, and the Form-master peered in over his glasses,



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THE FIGHT FOR THE

(Continued
from the
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page.)

CAPTAINCY!

Jimmy Silver was leaning over his work, apparently in contemplation of his artistic efforts.

He affected not to notice that Mr. Bootles was looking in; but as he felt the Form-master's glance upon him, he began to draw slowly, scarcely moving. He wished to give an impression of stillness, which would help the deception when, at the next visit, the dummy was under Mr. Bootles' eyes.

The Form-master had a book in his hand, and had evidently interrupted his own study to visit the Form-room. He merely glanced in, noted that Silver was there, as before, and departed.

The three juniors in the alcove had scarcely breathed.

Not till they heard Mr. Bootles' study door shut in the distance did they venture forth, bringing the dummy with them.

"Coast's clear!" grinned Lovell. "Awfully keen old bird, isn't he? He hasn't forgotten you, Jimmy. Stick this beast there, and come on. He won't be back for half an hour, anyway, and that's time to get going, even if it comes out!"

Jimmy Silver jumped up. The dummy was placed in his seat, leaning over the desk, with an elbow resting upon it. At a short distance the figure looked exactly like that of a junior pausing in his work, and looking at what he had done.

"Topping!" murmured Raby. "Now we've got to chance it!" murmured Jimmy Silver. "Come on!"

The Fistical Four quitted the Form-room.

They stole away by a back passage, and by the back stairs reached the dormitory, where Jimmy changed into his footer rig.

His chums hurried away to Little Side.

Jimmy was to join them there as soon as all was ready. From the dormitory window he could see the playing-fields. He watched the two junior elevens gather there, and a crowd of fellows gather round the field.

"Good luck!" murmured Jimmy. "Even if Bootles spots the dummy, we may get the first half played through, anyway!"

The trouble that would follow if Mr. Bootles "spotted the dummy" was left over for future consideration. Sufficient for the day was the evil thereof, and Jimmy Silver's motto was "Keep smiling."

He was smiling broadly as he made his way out of the back of the house in overcoat and muffler, and scuttled down to Little Side.

"By gad!" said Smythe of the Shell, who was lounging on the field to see the game, with a select company of nuts. "Weren't you detained, Silver?"

Perhaps Smythe, the defeated rival for the captaincy, had hoped that Jimmy Silver's expectations would be disappointed, owing to his detention. He looked at Jimmy very suspiciously.

"Mum's the word," said Lovell. "Jimmy's hooked it for the match!"

"By gad! What an awful cheek!"

"Shockin' nerve!" remarked Howard.

"I hope that sneak Leggett ain't around," said Raby, looking round anxiously. "That Modern worm is mean enough to tell Bootles!"

"He's nursin' his injuries," said Tommy Dodd. "And not so much of your Modern worm, you Classical fathead, or you'll start this match with a thick ear!"

Jimmy Silver was relieved to see that Leggett of the Fourth was not on the field.

He was about the only junior at Rookwood who might possibly have revealed the little plot to Mr. Bootles. Even Smythe of the Shell drew a line at that, and Jimmy was not uneasy with regard to the great Adolphus.

"Well, here we are," said Tommy Dodd, "and the sooner we get going the better. Mind you fellows don't

shout Silver's name when he's off-side or anything—"

"When I get a goal, you mean, you ass!" said Jimmy warmly.

"Bow-wow! Mind, it's got to be kept awfully dark that he's here, or we shall have a wild and ragin' Bootles coming down to scalp him in the middle of the match!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The two skippers tossed for choice of goal, and the kick-off fell to the Classical side.

The ball rolled from Jimmy Silver's foot, and in a few moments the game was going hot and strong.

Round the field were almost all the juniors of both sides of Rookwood, in an excited crowd.

Upon that match depended whether Rookwood had a junior skipper from the Modern or Classical side.

The Classics were quite convinced that the old school would go to the dogs if a Modern bouncer became skipper; but they professed to be assured that, if it depended on footer, the Moderns hadn't an earthly. The convictions of the Moderns were exactly the reverse.

The fact that the Classical skipper was under detention, and playing without leave, added to the excitement. If Jimmy Silver should be spotted by the master of the Fourth, and dragged off the field, the game would be all up for the Classics with a vengeance.

Some of Jimmy Silver's backers felt decidedly uneasy when Bulkeley of the Sixth, the captain of Rookwood, came down to the field to look on for a few minutes. Did Bulkeley know that Silver was under detention?

Evidently not, for he did not call to Jimmy. He watched a fine combined attack by the Classical forwards, which materialised in a goal from the foot of Jimmy Silver, and he shouted approval in the heartiest manner.

"Well kicked, Silver!"

"Goal! Goal!" roared the Classical juniors, but without mentioning Jimmy Silver's name.

Shouts from the playing-fields could be heard in the House, and they did not want to enlighten Mr. Bootles.

It was first blood to the Classics. Even with the haunting doubt on his mind that perhaps his Form-master might descend upon him and march him off in the middle of the match, Jimmy Silver was playing the game of his life.

Tommy Dodd looked grim as the teams lined up for the restart. Twenty minutes had been played, and Jimmy Silver's was the only goal.

"Play up!" said Tommy. "We've got to beat them!"

The Moderns played their hardest. Tommy Cook in goal was hard to beat, though Jimmy had beaten him once, and he saved several shots that looked like materialising.

Tommy Dodd was a tower of strength in the front line. But the Classics were on their mettle, too, and it was right on the call of time when the Moderns equalised, Tommy Doyle putting in the ball and beating Raby.

Then the whistle went for half-time.

"One all," said Lovell breathlessly.

"But we're going to beat them, if only you can stay to the finish, Jimmy!"

"All serene, so far," remarked Jimmy Silver, with a glance in the direction of the house. "Bootles must have looked in on the dummy before this!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Let's hope he won't try talking to it," chuckled Flynn.

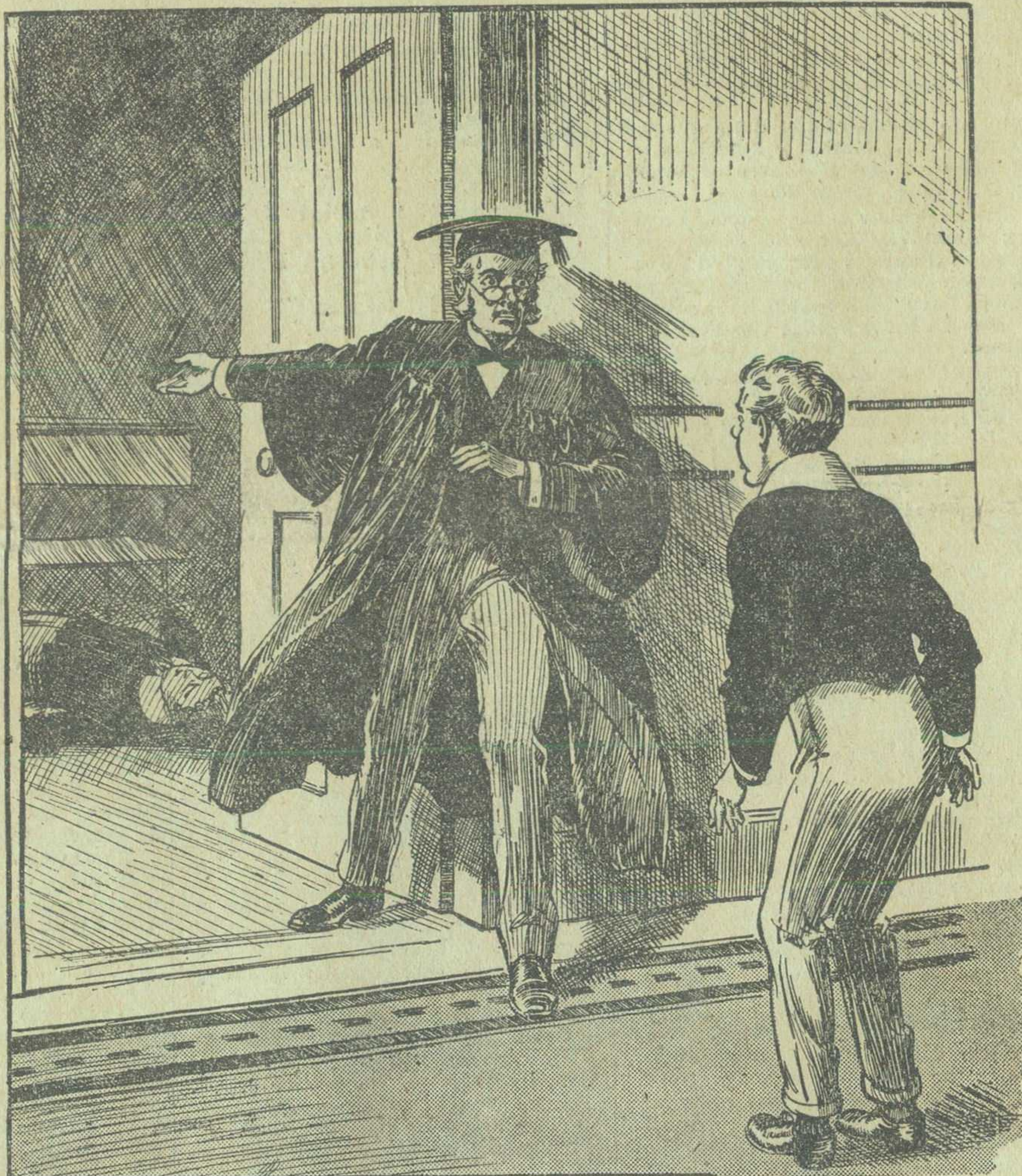
During the next five minutes the Classical chums felt anxious; but the whistle went for the resumption of the game, and there was no alarm. It really looked as if Jimmy Silver's luck was to hold good to the finish.

The 6th Chapter. Murder Most Foul!

"Jolly glad you're detained, you rotter!"

Thus Leggett. Leggett of the Fourth had stalked Mr. Bootles in the passage. He had seen the Form-master walk down as far as the Fourth Form-room, glance in at the open door, and walk back.

Leggett knew that he was keeping an eye on Jimmy Silver, who was under detention. Leggett's tastes did not lead him in the direction of the football field, and he had not the slightest doubt that Jimmy Silver was still in the Form-room.



"Leggett, please call the Head here at once," said Mr. Bootles. "I have made a terrible discovery! Will you tell Dr. Chisholm that something has happened to Silver of the Fourth, and that Mr. Bootles requests him to step here at once."

Having watched Mr. Bootles safe back to his study, Leggett looked into the Form-room with one eye. The other was half-closed—an unfortunate result of the talking to the Modern juniors had given him.

Leggett blinked at the figure leaning on the desk in the dusky corner, with the half-covered paper before him, the head leaning, as it appeared, on the hand. It was the same object that had met Mr. Bootles' view in his last careless glance into the room, and it had satisfied him. That the Classical juniors could have the astounding nerve to play such a trick as actually they were playing, naturally never occurred to Mr. Bootles' mind. He had not the slightest doubt that his momentary glance had fallen upon the detained junior.

Leggett had no doubt, either. Hence his cheery remark. He was glad that Jimmy Silver was detained, and he had come there to tell him so, feeling quite secure in taunting the detained Classical, because Jimmy would not be able to leave the Form-room in pursuit of him.

"Deaf?" jeered Leggett, keeping one hand on the door, ready to dodge

if a book came flying towards him, or to bolt if Jimmy Silver jumped up. "I wish Bootles had licked you, too, you rotter! I've a jolly good mind to come in and lick you myself!"

There was no reply from the figure in Etons in the dusky corner. He maintained an utterly contemptuous silence.

"They're getting on with the footer match without you!" jeered Leggett. "They've been at it over an hour. The Classics are getting beaten."

No answer. Not a movement. Leggett began to grow exasperated. "Can't you speak, you dummy?" he shouted.

Apparently the Classical couldn't, for he didn't. He did not make the slightest motion, or give the slightest sign of having observed Leggett's presence. Such contemptuous treatment naturally put Leggett's back up.

"Your side are getting beaten!" he resumed. "Put that in your pipe and smoke it, Jimmy Silver! Classical cad! Yah!"

Not a word!

"My hat! I believe he's fallen asleep!" muttered Leggett, in amazement. "Enough to make a fellow go to sleep, grinding away in this den for a couple of hours! I'll jolly soon wake him up!"

Leggett took a couple of steps into

Leggett's upraised arm jerked forward, and the wooden peg spun through the air, straight for Jimmy Silver's shoulder. Still no movement from the still figure.

Crash! Leggett, following the flight of his missile with his eye, jumped a little as he saw it crash upon the broad white collar. It had struck above the shoulder.

The figure at the desk swayed. Leggett burst into a chuckle.

"Got you, you Classical cad! He, he, he!"

Crash!

Leggett's eyes almost started from his head at what happened next. The seated junior, after swaying to and fro drunkenly, reeled off the seat, and crashed to the floor between the desks.

There he lay still, without a sound, without a motion, face downwards, twisted into an awkward position among the iron supports of the desks.

"My hat!" muttered Leggett, his face going white.

He stared blankly at the recumbent form half hidden under the desks.

That could not be shamming, he knew. No fellow would willingly have hit the hard floor with such a crash.

But why did not Jimmy Silver move? Why did he not speak? How strange his head was turned from his shoulders—and the peg had hit him on the neck! Leggett trembled.

"G-g-g-good heavens!" he panted. "He—he's hurt! Jimmy Silver! Why don't you move, you beast? Oh, dear! I say, Silver, old man!"

Dead silence.

Leggett's face was ghastly now. Bitterly enough he repented that cowardly attack. But how could he have foreseen this? The junior must have twisted his neck in that way in falling. The missile hadn't done that. One thing was clear—there was heavy trouble in store for Leggett unless he cleared off at once. He stood for some moments gazing in horror at the still form under the desks, the fearful conviction forcing itself into his mind that Jimmy Silver was dead. Terror of the consequences to himself banished all consideration of his victim. He stepped shakily out of the Form-room, and ran.

But in the passage he paused. The blackboard peg—that must not be found lying close to Jimmy Silver, or they would guess—they would know

With trembling steps, the wretched junior made his way back to that room of horror and fear.

He peered in.

The still figure under the desks had not moved. Leggett knew that no living being could breathe with the head in such a position. He shuddered as he crept into the room.

Through the open window of the Form-room came a roar from the distant playing-fields.

"Goal! Goal! Hurray!"

The football match was nearing its close—perhaps had already reached it. In a few minutes perhaps the friends of Jimmy Silver would come swarming in to tell him the result. How would they find him? Leggett shuddered at the thought. But they must not see Leggett there.

With dragging, unwilling feet, he stole across the Form-room, and bent within a few feet of the silent form, and picked up the blackboard peg. He gazed apprehensively at the stretched, still form, as if expecting an accusing hand to be lifted against him. But there was no movement.

Leggett did not dare approach nearer, but he listened feverishly for a sound of breathing. There was no sound. He knew that there was no breath of life in the form that lay so silently within a few feet of him. He shivered as he saw that the head was turned almost at right angles from the body. Evidently the neck was broken.

Shuddering, he stole from the room again, after replacing the peg in the easel. On the floor of the Form-room the still figure lay without breath or motion.

The 7th Chapter. The Winning Goal.

"Goal! Goal!" The Classics were roaring on Little Side.

Early in the second half Tommy Dodd had bagged a goal, and the Moderns were one up. It was within ten minutes of time when Newcome cut the ball into the Modern citadel from the wing, and equalised once more.

The shadow of defeat was dissipated. The Classics breathed again. Two goals all, and eight minutes to go!

The match had been hard and fast, with first-class play on both sides.



THE FIGHT FOR THE

(Continued
from
the
previous
page.)

CAPTAINCY!

To which side victory would incline was still a secret.

Each side was bucking up tremendously for the final tussle.

There was a buzz, growing to a roar, from the Modern crowd as Tommy Dodd & Co. came down the field, passing like clockwork, and converged in a fine attack upon goal. The ball went in—Was it in? The Moderns hardly breathed. Raby's fist drove the bounding leather out again; but Tommy Dodd's head met it, and it came in, only to be fisted out once more; and then Flynn cleared, and the rush of the game went away to mid-field. It had been a fine attack, but it had not come off. In mid-field there was a tussle, while the last minutes ticked away.

Was it to be a draw after all, and the vexed question of the junior captaincy left undecided?

It looked like it. But from the Classical crowd rose a sudden roar:

"On the ball! Go it, Jimmy!" In their excitement they forgot caution, and the possibility of Mr. Bootles hearing them from the School House. "Go it! Put her through! Jimmy! Jimmy!"

Jimmy Silver and Lovell were speeding down the wing. The Modern forwards had been left stranded, the halves beaten. Both the backs closed in to stop the sudden rush of the two Classicals, and Lovell went over; but Jimmy had the ball the next second, and he was round the backs and shooting for goal. It had been a desperate break, with about ten chances to one against it; but it was almost on the stroke of time, and it was a time for taking chances.

Jimmy sent in a long shot, and Tommy Cook, in goal, sprang at it a moment too late, and the leather bumped into the net.

Cook stood and stared at it. From the whole Classical crowd rose one wild, triumphant yell:

"Goal! Goal! Goal! Hurrah!" "Our goal! Hurrah!" Jimmy stood panting.

It had been touch-and-go, but that goal had come off, and the Classical team had won. Jimmy had kicked the winning goal, and he deserved his victory. Jimmy was junior captain of Rookwood! That question had been decided by the goal scored on the point of time.

Phip! went the whistle. The test match was over.

Tommy Dodd's face was a study for a minute. He had almost made up his mind to a draw. But that sudden victory for his rival was a hard blow. But Tommy was a sportsman to the finger-tips.

He came towards Jimmy Silver as the players walked off the field.

"Congrats!" he said, forcing a grin. "It was a near thing, but you did it."

Jimmy Silver smiled.

"Touch-and-go," he said cheerily. "But I'd have congratulated you if you'd pulled it off, Duddy."

"I know you would. Well, you're skipper, and I don't grudge it," said Tommy Dodd frankly.

"Thanks, old scout!"

Jimmy cast a glance over the cheering, excited crowd. There was no sign of Mr. Bootles. Evidently the dummy in the Form-room had answered its purpose, and Jimmy Silver chuckled at the thought. He hurried to put on his coat and muffler.

"Better get back to the dorm and change, and then to the Form-room," grinned Lovell. "Mind Bootles don't spot you going in."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"What ripping luck!" said Dick Oswald. "We've pulled it off, and we'd never have done it without you, Jimmy. And it was really Duddy's idea getting you out of detention."

"Good old Duddy!"

Jimmy Silver quitted the cheering crowd, and hurried away to the back of the schoolhouse, and was soon in the Fourth-Form dormitory, where he changed into his Etons.

It was necessary to get back to the Form-room to finish his detention before his absence was discovered.

To get the dummy out of sight and to take the dummy's place was his only idea now.

After the eminent success of the scheme and the glorious victory on the footer field, it would be too bad to finish up the day with a flogging.

Jimmy Silver soon changed, and he proceeded cautiously downstairs, and made his way to the Form-room passage.

He whipped into the room at once.

Mr. Bootles was coming along the passage with his slow and stately tread. Jimmy bolted into the alcove behind the blackboard at once. There was no time to replace the dummy yet.

From that dusky recess he peered out, and his heart gave a throb as he observed that the dummy was no longer in the place at the desk.

"My hat!" muttered Jimmy.

He stared blankly across at the desks. Under them he could make out the outlines of the dummy lying on the floor. Had it collapsed, after all the care that had been expended on it? What the dickens—

Jimmy hadn't much time for thinking about it. Mr. Bootles rustled into the doorway. He glanced in the direction where the detained junior should have been seated, and started a little as he saw that the desk was vacant.

"Aha!" exclaimed Mr. Bootles, striding into the room. "So Master Silver has broken detention after all—aha! Why—what—Bless my soul! Silver—James Silver—get up at once! What is the matter with you?"

Mr. Bootles leaned over the desk, and stared in surprise and dismay at the motionless figure crumpled up on the floor.

"Silver," he gasped, "what is the matter? Are you ill? Are you subject to fits, Silver? Do you hear me, boy?"

In the dusky alcove Jimmy Silver scarcely breathed. It was a curious experience to remain in cover there while Mr. Bootles was addressing the dummy.

The Form-master was evidently alarmed. The rigid stillness of the figure on the floor was enough to alarm anybody.

The 8th Chapter.

Lovell Renders First Aid.

"Silver, cannot you hear me, boy?"

Silver did, but the dummy didn't, and so there was no answer.

"Good heavens! I was not aware that the boy was subject to fits!"

Mr. Bootles exclaimed in agitated tones. "He seemed healthy—very healthy indeed; quite in boisterous health, in fact. Silver!"

Mr. Bootles rustled round the desk, and stooped over the recumbent form.

Jimmy Silver suppressed a groan.

Now the discovery was coming, was his idea.

But it did not come. The idea that the object before him was a "spoof" figure was so utterly foreign to Mr.

Bootles' mind that he was not in the least likely to suspect it. He shuddered as he saw how awkwardly the fallen figure's head was placed. He slid his hand under the figure to feel for the beat of the heart. His hand was pressed on the waistcoat, but there came no beat from under that waistcoat. No heart was beating there.

Mr. Bootles rose quite suddenly to his feet.

"Good heavens!" he muttered. His face was very white.

With unsteady steps he strode to the door.

Jimmy Silver would gladly have stepped forward and relieved his Form-master of the tragic impression he was labouring under, but as doing so would be simply asking for a flogging, Jimmy had to refrain.

Mr. Bootles paused in the doorway, breathing very hard.

"It is terrible!" Jimmy heard him mutter. "The unfortunate boy—a sudden seizure undoubtedly. How fortunate that I did not allow him to play football! How very terrible if this had happened on the playing-fields amid a crowd! I must get the doctor at once. Oh dear—oh dear!"

He caught sight of a white face peering round the corner of the passage. "Leggett!"

The wretched Leggett had been on the watch, morbidly anxious for the discovery to be made. He had not intended Mr. Bootles to spot him, but he had to come forward.

"Leggett, please call the Head here at once," said Mr. Bootles. "I have made a terrible discovery. Will you tell Dr. Chisholm that something has happened to Silver of the Fourth, and that Mr. Bootles requests him to step here at once?"

"Yes, sir," mumbled Leggett.

"Wha-a-at's the matter, sir?"

"A sudden seizure, I think, Leggett."

"Is he—he d-d-dead, sir?"

"I fear so. Go at once."

"Ow!" gasped Leggett. And he cut off.

Mr. Bootles returned towards the body, and gazed down at it in deep commiseration. The kind-hearted gentleman was really touched by Jimmy Silver's untimely fate.

Jimmy, hidden in the alcove, was on tenterhooks.

The Head was coming!

Then a doctor would be telephoned for at once, and the medical gentleman, certainly, would not be long in discovering the real nature of the "body."

If only Mr. Bootles would get out for a few minutes—

He showed no sign of doing so.

There was a step in the passage, and Lovell looked in.

"All serene—" he began, and then he stopped suddenly as he caught sight of Mr. Bootles. "Oh, I beg your pardon, sir! I—I looked in to—speak to Silver—"

"You should not have come to speak to a boy under detention, Lovell; but I shall pass that over now. Something serious has happened."

Lovell stared under the desks.

"Oh!" he gasped.

"Silver has had a seizure," said Mr. Bootles, in a hushed voice.

"Lovell, you unfeeling boy, do I see you laughing?"

"Nunno, sir!" gasped Lovell.

"Oh, no, sir! Not at all, sir! It—it's awful, sir!"

"Please do not be hysterical, Lovell. You may go."

"Oh!" gasped Lovell.

He wondered where Jimmy Silver was, and he managed to cast a glance into the alcove, and spotted a pair of boots there under the easel. Lovell's brain worked quickly. If only Mr. Bootles could be induced to go just

for one minute while Jimmy Silver changed places with the dummy!

"If—if you please, sir," said Lovell meekly, "I—I've learned first-aid, sir, as a Boy Scout. P-p-perhaps I can do something for Jimmy, sir."

"I fear it is too late, Lovell. The end has been terribly sudden. Pray do not touch him."

But Lovell was already among the desks and on his knees beside the "body."

"I—I think there's a—a—a chance, sir," he ejaculated. "If—if you could get some water, sir—"

Mr. Bootles jumped.

"Do you mean to say that he is not—not dead, Lovell?"

"Water, sir—quick!"

"Bless my soul! In an instant—

one instant!"

Mr. Bootles rushed from the room.

He had said that he would be "an instant," but Lovell knew that he could not get back with water under a minute at the least.

The juniors had barely a minute for action.

Lovell sprang to his feet, dragging up the dummy in a way that Mr. Bootles would have thought terribly heartless if he had been there to see it.

"Jimmy! Quick!" panted Lovell.

But Jimmy Silver had heard, and understood.

The moment Mr. Bootles was out of the Form-room Jimmy Silver was out of the alcove, and he reached Lovell as the latter raised the dummy.

"Into the alcove!" breathed Jimmy.

"What-ho!"

"What larks!" chuckled Jimmy Silver.

"Fathead! Buck up!"

The dummy was rushed across the room to the alcove, and jammed down into the darkest corner behind the blackboard.

Then Jimmy Silver ran back to the place among the desks, and Lovell knelt beside him, in a dramatic attitude—all ready for the return of Mr. Bootles.

The 9th Chapter.

"All Serene!"

"Here is the water—here! How is he?" gasped Mr. Bootles, as he rushed into the Form-room with a jug.

"Coming to himself, sir," said Lovell coolly.

There was a faint moan from Jimmy Silver on the floor.

Mr. Bootles could scarcely believe his ears.

That the figure was now the real Jimmy Silver, and that the lifeless dummy had been hidden in the alcove, of course, he had not the slightest suspicion.

The return of the dead to life was a surprise, and a very agreeable one. Mr. Bootles' face lighted up as he heard that moan.

"He lives!" cried Mr. Bootles.

"He lives!" repeated Lovell.

Groan!

"Yes—yet I felt his heart, and there was no beat!" the Form-master exclaimed. "It must have been a severe fainting fit!"

"He's coming to, sir."

Lovell bathed Jimmy Silver's face with the water so kindly brought by Mr. Bootles.

Jimmy Silver sat up.

"Where am I?" he asked dramatically.

"My dear Silver!" gasped Mr. Bootles.

"What has happened? Oh, where—oh, where am I?" pursued Jimmy Silver, in the best manner of the Fourth Form Stage Society.

"You're all right," said Lovell—

"right as rain, old chap! Let me help you up."

Jimmy Silver staggered to his feet, leaning heavily on Lovell's arm. As Jimmy was in the best of health and spirits, that stagger was really artistic. He sank upon a form.

"What is it? What is all this, Mr. Bootles?" The Head swept into the Form-room. "Leggett gave me a most astounding message! Surely—"

"I am glad that my fears have not been realised, sir," gasped Mr. Bootles. "Silver has most providentially recovered. I found him in a faint, and I feared that he was dead."

"Bless my soul!"

"I could not detect any beating of the heart," said Mr. Bootles.

"Fortunately, Lovell was able to render first aid, and it seems to have been efficacious."

Lovell suppressed a chuckle. It was time to chuckle.

"Very good!" said the Head. "I am glad it is no worse. How do you feel now, Silver?"

"Very well, sir, thank you!" said Jimmy, in a rather faint voice. "I have never fainted before to-day, sir."

Which was strictly true; but Jimmy did not think it necessary to add that he had not fainted that day either.

"You had better see the doctor," said the Head. "Take Silver to the dormitory as soon as he can walk, Lovell. He must be careful."

And the Head swept away.

"I am very glad it has ended so well, Silver," said Mr. Bootles.

"So am I, sir," said Jimmy demurely.

"You may go to your dormitory. As for your detention, of course that is rescinded under the circumstances."

"Thank you, sir!"

Mr. Bootles, greatly relieved, returned to his study. Jimmy Silver left the Form-room leaning heavily on Lovell's arm—till Mr. Bootles' door closed in the distance, and then he found that he was quite able to stand alone.

"All's well that ends well!" grinned Jimmy Silver.

"Hallo! Leggett! What the thunder—" ejaculated Lovell.

Leggett of the Fourth staggered back as they came upon him. His eyes almost started from his head.

"Silver!" he shrieked.

"Hallo!" said Jimmy.

"You—you—you're not d-d-dead!" stammered Leggett.

"Not quite!" grinned Jimmy.

"If you've heard that I'm dead, I can only say that the news was exaggerated."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You rotter!" yelled Leggett.

"You were spoofing, then! The peg didn't knock you over at all! I—I thought your neck was broken, you beast! I wish it had been now!"

"The peg—broken neck!" said Jimmy Silver. "What do you mean? I think I savvy, you rotten sneak! Ha, ha, ha!" Jimmy Silver burst into a roar as it dawned upon his mind that Leggett had been responsible for the collapse of the dummy in the Form-room, and the state of terror Leggett must have been in ever since. "Ha, ha, ha! So you shied a peg at it—I mean, at me—and killed me! Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Lovell.

"You spoofing rotter!" howled Leggett. "I—I— Let go, you beast!"

"That's for committing wilful murder in the Form-room!" grinned Jimmy Silver, as Leggett was bumped down heavily in the passage.

"Next time you feel these homicidal tendencies coming on, keep 'em for the Modern side."

And the Classical chums walked off chuckling.

After dark the dummy was safely extracted from the Form-room, and disposed of. In the end study there was a huge celebration of the Classical victory, and the story of the dummy was howled over with exuberant delight. But the juniors agreed to keep it very dark.

Certainly, Mr. Bootles would not have been amused in the least by that funny story.

Mr. Bootles several times asked Jimmy Silver whether he felt any ill effects from that extraordinary fainting fit; but he remained in blissful ignorance of the true story of the Fight for the Captaincy.

THE END.

("A Shattered Friendship!" is the title of next Monday's grand long complete tale of Jimmy Silver & Co. Don't miss it!)

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