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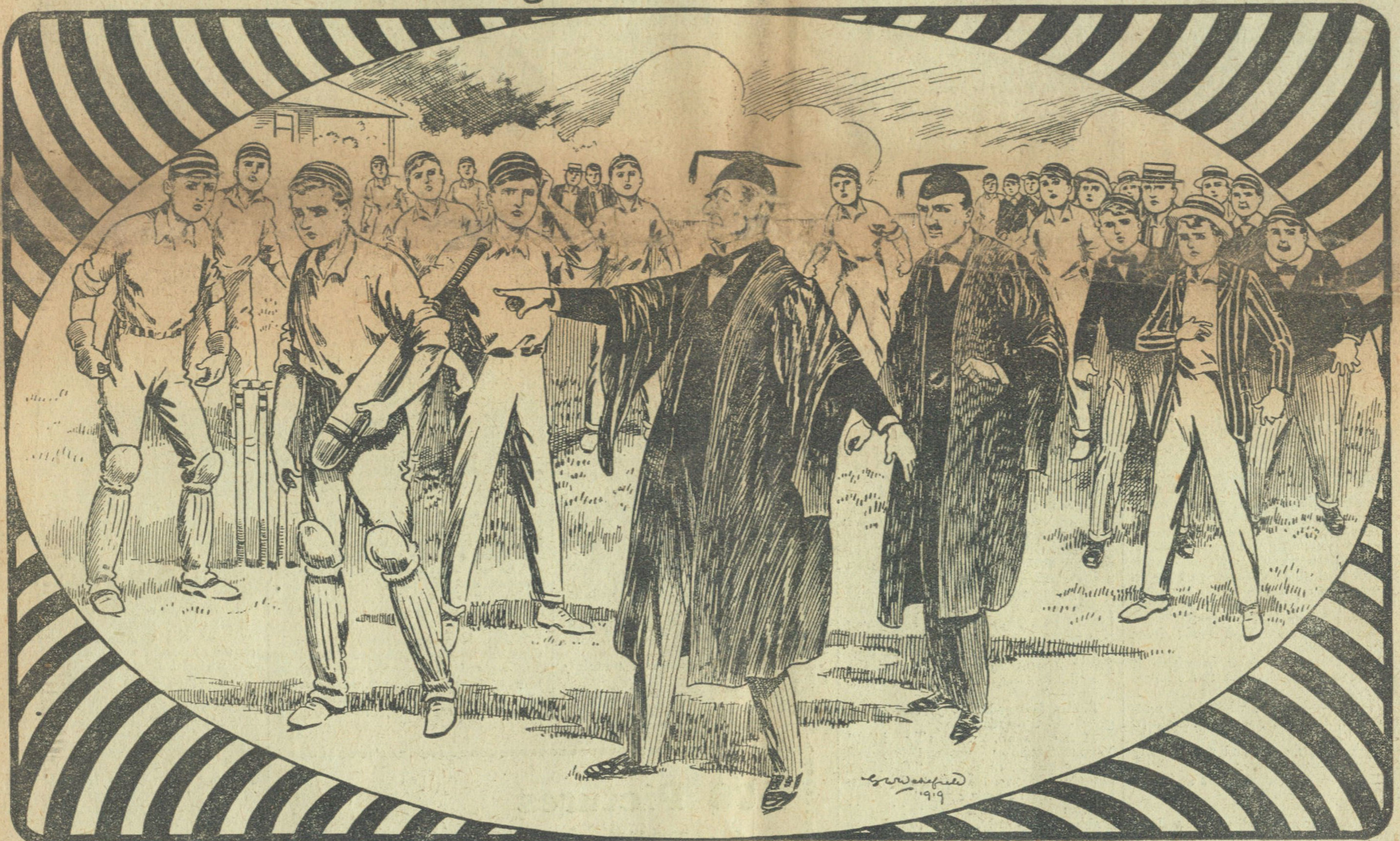
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THREE HALFPENCE.

[Week Ending July 5th, 1919.

The Tyrant of Rookwood!

By Owen Conquest



Dr. Snazlem Intervenes!

The new Head stalked grimly on to the field of play, his hand raised aloft. "Stop, I command you!" he thundered. "I forbid this game to continue! Bulkeley, leave the field! Go to your room at once!"

The 1st Chapter.

Tubby Brings News!

"It's up to us," said Jimmy Silver firmly.
"Eh?"
"It'll be doing those Modern asses one in the eye, too."
"What?"
"The old Head's not such a bad sort, you know."
"What the—"
"Of course he whacks us now and again, but even then he's hurting

himself more—he tells us so himself, you know, and that's very consoling."
"Ha, ha! Yes, but what—"
"And now the old chap's going away, and won't be back for a month. Therefore—"
"What delightfully fresh news!" murmured Lovell, with heavy sarcasm.
"Therefore," pursued Jimmy Silver, ignoring Lovell's remark, "it's up to the leaders of the Classical Fourth at Rookwood—that's little us

—to give the old Head a good send-off."
Jimmy Silver paused and nodded thoughtfully.
In point of fact, Jimmy Silver had been silent and thoughtful ever since tea had begun.
It was such an unusual thing for the cheerful skipper of the Fourth at Rookwood to be silent and thoughtful for long, that the other three members of the Fistical Four were beginning to be quite concerned.

And then he had suddenly startled them with the above remarks.
But now the secret of his thoughtful frown and silence was out, the suspense was ended.
Arthur Edward Lovell picked up his cup again. Newcome cut himself a slice of cake, and Raby tackled his chunk of war bread anew.
"You see," proceeded Jimmy Silver, "as you fellows know, the Head's been seedy for some time, and—"

"He knows we know, and yet he's telling us," murmured Lovell.
"And," went on Jimmy, with a Hunnish glare at Lovell, "now the doctor's ordered him a rest, and the Board of Governors has granted him a month's leave, and he goes tomorrow. Now, as I say, it's up to us, as the flower of Rookwood, so to speak, to give him a good send-off. It'll buck him up no end."
"Jolly good idea!" said Arthur Edward Lovell heartily.



Continued
from
the
previous
page.

THE TYRANT OF ROOKWOOD!

"Wha-what on earth—" began Lovell.

"But don't get the wind up," went on Tubby, with a fat wink. "Trust me. I'm a bit of a sporty boy myself, you know. I like a quid on the jolly old gee-gees myself, now and again."

"M-my hat!" exclaimed Raby. "A quid on a gee-gee!" murmured Newcome faintly.

Jimmy Silver & Co. fairly blinked at the "sporty boy."

Tubby felt he had made a tremendous impression.

"That's me!" he said. "I'm hot stuff at spotting form, frinstance. It wants a chap with brains for spotting form. That's me, you know. All the same," went on Tubby loftily, "I'm not above taking a wrinkle from anyone. Look here, Jimmy, old nut, can you put me on a good thing? What's your fancy?"

"Wha-what?"

"Be a sport!" urged Tubby. "A good thing, you know—something safe. What's your fancy for—Here! Wha—Yarroogh!"

Rising as one man, the Fistical Four had dropped Tubby with a heavy bump on the hard, unsympathetic floor.

Though the mystified juniors hadn't the faintest idea what the egregious Falstaff of Rookwood was driving at, they had, nevertheless, agreed without discussion to oblige Tubby.

"Wow! Oh dear! What did you do that for, you beasts?" wailed Tubby.

"Why, you asked us!" remarked Jimmy Silver, in surprise. "You requested us to put you on a good thing—something safe. Blessed if I can see what's bad about the floor—unless it's the hole in the carpet. And it's certainly safe enough."

Tubby arose, dusty and wrathful. "Yah! Rotters!" he spluttered angrily. "I'm jolly sure I won't keep it dark now. Blessed if I do!"

"Bow-wow!" said Jimmy Silver.

"I'll expose you, Jimmy Silver! I'll tell everybody! Backing horses, eh? Fancy that! It's disgraceful! But I've bowled you out."

"Why, you burbling jabberwock, I—"

"It's no use, Jimmy Silver!" said Tubby sternly. "The innocent dodge won't work with me. Now, own up. Tell the truth. Didn't I hear you say when I came in that you'd put two pounds on a gee-gee called Ann-average, or some other blessed horse? Didn't I, now?"

Jimmy Silver & Co. roared. It was obvious that the fat youth had made a little mistake.

"That's settled it, then!" said Tubby darkly. "I've done my best to save you, Jimmy Silver, I've given you every chance, but I'm blessed if I'll hide your guilty secret after this. Fancy Jimmy Silver, captain of the Fourth, betting, eh? When Bootles hears—"

Tubby frowned darkly, and rolled grimly to the door.

"Come back, you silly idiot! Y-you burbling chump!" yelled Jimmy Silver, in alarm. "Bootles'll scalp you if you take that silly yarn to him. Don't be a duffer!"

"I'm jolly well going!" said Tubby stubbornly. "I heard you say—"

Jimmy Silver breathed hard.

"Why, you—you crass ass," he stammered. "I never mentioned horse-racing! You heard me say I'd put on an average of two pounds since the blessed grub-rationing started. I didn't mention racing, you—you potty—"

"Oh!"

The Fistical Four roared at the look of blank astonishment on the fat youth's face.

But Tubby Muffin quickly recovered.

"He, he, he!" he cackled feebly. "Did you chaps really think I was serious?"

"Wha-what?"

"I was only pulling your legs, of course!" explained Tubby.

"My—my hat!"

"That's it. You chaps are slow—really you are, you know. But, I say,

Jimmy, old pal, what about tea? I don't mind if I do stay now. You see—"

"Why, you—you— Well, my hat!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver.

"Here, you fat fraud, clear out! I'm fed up with you!"

"Well, I like that!" said Tubby warmly. "After missing my tea to tell you the news, too! Mean, I call it. I came rushing here to tell you that the Head's decided to go to-night, after all. But I'm blessed if I do now—no, not if you go on your benched—"

"Eh? What's that? The Head is—?" gasped Jimmy eagerly. "So the Head's going to-night, is he? What time, you thumping—"

"I—I say, who told you?" gasped Tubby Muffin.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Some silly, jabbering idiot's told you!" said Tubby, in disgust. "Never mind; you'll miss seeing the Head off, and serve you jolly well right. Wouldn't you just squirm if you knew that Tommy Dodd and his crowd of Modern rotters were standing waiting for the Head's car when I came away? But I'm hanged if I— Here—what—wow!"

Tubby Muffin smote the floor with a terrific thump, as, only stooping to snatch their caps, the Fistical Four swept like an avalanche over his podgy person, and vanished through the doorway.

Tubby Muffin's "important" news had turned out important, after all.

In fact, there wasn't much doubt that to Jimmy Silver & Co. the news was most important.

The 2nd Chapter.

The New Head.

"Buck up!" urged Jimmy Silver, dashing down the passage. "My hat! Fancy those Modern worms thinking of the wheeze, too! I'll bust Tubby for this!"

At top speed the Fistical Four dashed out into the quad and across to the gates.

Then Jimmy Silver gave a shout.

Grouped around the entrance-gates to the drive leading to the Head's private house was a swarm of juniors.

"Modern worms!" growled Lovell. "Never mind, we're in time."

"Hallo! My hat! Classical bouncers!" came Tommy Dodd's voice, as the Fistical Four dashed up. "Here, what do you Classical rotters want? Hop it!"

"Same to you, old nut!" said Jimmy Silver cheerfully.

Then, as the Modern juniors crowded round the Classical Four, looking war-like, Jimmy held up his hand.

"Peace, my infants! This is no time for strife!" he said. "Tommy Dodd, I'm surprised at you!"

"Why, you Classical dummy—"

"Why, you—"

"Look out!" yelled Tommy Cook warningly. "Here's the car?"

Amid a loud tooting of the horn, Dr. Chisholm's car drove slowly down the drive and turned through the gates.

"Hip, pip, hurrah!" shouted Jimmy Silver & Co.

"Hip, pip, hurrah!" shouted Tommy Dodd & Co.

As the car passed the juniors, Dr. Chisholm's face, pale and thin, appeared at the window.

The Head of Rookwood certainly did not look well.

He gave the juniors a kind smile, nevertheless.

Then the car vanished down the road.

Tommy Dodd turned to Jimmy Silver when the car had gone.

"You—you ass!" he exclaimed breathlessly. "What the dickens did you want to yell like that for? The Head'll think you cheered because he was going!"

Jimmy Silver snorted.

As a matter of fact, Jimmy Silver was feeling extremely exasperated.

His great wheeze had not turned out such a tremendous score as he had anticipated. Certainly they had given the old Head a good send-off, but the fact that the Modern juniors had also thought of the wheeze, and had got there first, quite took the gilt off the gingerbread.

"You—you—well, my hat! You cheeky ass, Tommy Dodd!" he ejaculated at last. "Why, you yelled harder than anyone yourself. As if the Head wanted to be yelled at by an inky crowd of Modern worms. Why—"

"That's it, Jimmy! Cheek, I call it!" exclaimed Lovell warmly. "You Modern rotters don't know your place! Blessed if—"

"Why, you Classical worms—"

"Why, you Modern chump—"

"Sure, an mop 'em up entirely!" came Tommy Doyle's excited voice.

"That's it, whop the cads!" yelled Tommy Cook. "Sock into 'em!"

There was a rush of Modern juniors. "Buck up!" yelled Jimmy Silver.

There followed the trampling of many feet on the gravelled drive, and the sound of sundry grunts and the roar of voices.

In less than a minute, Jimmy Silver & Co. and Tommy Dodd & Co., locked in deadly embrace, were waiting about, pounding each other vigorously. Lovell lay stretched on a flower-bed inside the gates, with Tommy Cook and Tommy Doyle sitting on his head. Raby and Newcome were completely invisible, though a writhing mass of Moderns in the gateway indicated their possible whereabouts.

The Fistical Four were over-matched by long odds, but they put up a terrific resistance, nevertheless.

The scrimmage was at its height when an interruption occurred.

Amid a loud toot, toot! Dr. Chisholm's car, evidently returning from the station, turned in at the gates.

"Look out!" yelled a voice, warningly, followed by the jarring of brakes.

The combatants separated with startling suddenness, and jumped to one side to allow the—as they imagined—empty car to pass.

But the car stopped, and a frowning face, surmounted by a rusty silk hat, appeared at the window.

A face with a hooked nose and small, glittering eyes it was—a face one would have looked at twice, and liked less at the second look than at the first.

"My hat!" ejaculated Jimmy Silver.

There was a sudden hush as the hooked-nose gentleman descended from the car with a thunderous brow.

"Boys!"

The voice was authoritative, it was also grating and decidedly unpleasant to hear—more like the croak of a cornerake, as Raby said afterwards.

"Boys!" exclaimed the gentleman, glaring around at the dishevelled juniors. "What does this disgraceful riot mean—this disgusting brawl?"

Silence!

"You, boy, answer me at once!" demanded the stranger harshly, singling out Jimmy Silver. "What is your name, and to what form do you belong?"

Jimmy Silver grinned.

The hook-nosed gentleman's auto-critical manner and thunderous frown did not frighten the cheerful Jimmy in the least.

He hadn't the faintest idea who the unpleasant stranger was, but he certainly had no intention of answering his overbearing questions—not in the way the stranger desired, at any rate.

"Answer me!" demanded the beaky gentleman, his thin lips closing with a snap. "At once!"

"Certainly, sir!" chuckled Jimmy Silver. "My name is Norval—on the Grampian Hills—"

Smack!

The beaky gentleman's flat palm met Jimmy Silver's face with a crack like a pistol shot, sending the astonished junior spinning across the drive.

Apparently, the hook-nosed gentleman had a somewhat hasty temper.

Jimmy Silver picked himself up from the gravel, his face white and his eyes gleaming.

"Possibly, now you are acquainted with my methods of discipline, you will answer my questions, boy, without further insolence. Your name and—"

The harsh, grating tones ceased as the rustle of a gown was heard, and Mr. Greely came whisking down the drive.

He frowned portentously at the juniors, and turned, with a bow, to the hook-nosed gentleman.

"Dr. Snazlem, I presume!" he exclaimed in his booming tones.

The rusty-looking stranger ignored the question, and eyed Mr. Greely up and down in a manner that made the Fifth Form-master's complexion turn pink.

"You're Greedy, I suppose?" he snapped.

"Ahem! My name is Greely," said Mr. Greely stiffly. "I have been deputed by Dr. Chisholm to meet you and introduce you to Rookwood, sir. Unfortunately, Dr. Chisholm has had an urgent call, and has been obliged to depart much earlier—"

"I am quite aware of that," interrupted Dr. Snazlem rudely. "I had a few moments' conversation with Dr. Chisholm at the station, and he acquainted me briefly with the situation. Whatever the reason, however, I consider Dr. Chisholm's action, in hurrying away before I had arrived to take up my duties as temporary headmaster, inconsiderate and injudicious in the extreme."

"My hat—a new Head!" whispered Lovell excitedly.

Apparently the whisper reached Mr. Greely, for he turned with a start, as if he had forgotten the presence of the juniors.

"One moment, sir—Boys!" he exclaimed angrily. "Go—indoors at once! How dare you stand there in that impertinent manner! Go!"

"Stop!"

Dr. Snazlem's tone was vicious, and his eyes glittered. "I arrived here," said the stranger, "to find these boys in the midst of a disgraceful orgy of ruffianly brawling—they were fighting like savages, sir. Indeed, I wondered if I had been appointed to take charge of a den of hooligans, instead of a public school. It appears to me that discipline at Rookwood is extremely slack, Mr. Greely."

"Indeed, sir! Then I must beg to differ in opinion," exclaimed Mr. Greely, with some spirit. "This—this brawling, as you call it, is merely the result of good-humoured rivalry between the Classical and Modern houses at Rookwood. It is harmless, and whilst I deplore—"

"Do you actually suggest—do I understand, Mr. Greely—that this hooliganism is a regular occurrence at Rookwood?" demanded Dr. Snazlem, in shocked surprise.

Mr. Greely coughed.

"Then, if that is the case, I shall certainly make it my business to put an end to this—h-m—rivalry, as you call it, Mr. Greely. You will kindly make it your duty to cause any case of h-m—rivalry to be brought to my notice immediately. That is my command, Mr. Greely!"

And, turning his back on the master of the Fifth Form, the new headmaster stamped angrily along the drive towards the Head's house.

Looking somewhat agitated, Mr. Greely followed him, apparently forgetting the juniors.

"My—my hat!" exclaimed Tommy Dodd excitedly. "A new Head, by gum! And a fire-eater at that! What price Greely?"

"Well, I'm blessed!"

"What a sell!"

Jimmy Silver rubbed his head woefully, his usually cheery face red and angry.

"He's a cad—a rotten, ruffianly brute!" he exclaimed warmly. "Oh, dear, he nearly knocked my blessed head off!"

There was a buzz of excited voices as the juniors proceeded indoors.

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THE RAINBOW 2

Every Monday.



THE TYRANT OF ROOKWOOD!

(Continued from the previous page.)

In fact, there was a buzz of excited voices all over Rookwood that evening.

The appointment of a stranger as temporary Head during Dr. Chisholm's absence came as a tremendous surprise to the school as a whole.

They had naturally expected Mr. Greely, who was the senior master at Rookwood, to take over the reins of government.

And now the question was settled, and the new headmaster had arrived, there was much discussion and speculation as to the possible result of his administration.

But to the juniors, Classics and Moderns alike, who had already made the Head's acquaintance, there was nothing but gloomy foreboding of trouble ahead, especially if his determination to put an end to the rivalry between Classics and Moderns was adhered to.

For it was as impossible to stop the incessant rows between the juniors of the two sides of Rookwood as to stop the sun from shining, or the rain from falling.

The 3rd Chapter. Not Cricket.

Crash!
"My hat! You ass, Jimmy Silver!"
"Now you've done it, Tommy Dodd!"

"The Head's window, too! Oh, dear!"

At the bottom of the steps on the Modern side of Rookwood, clad in spotless flannels, stood Tommy Dodd, gazing aghast at the awful thing he had done.

At the bottom of the steps on the Classical side of Rookwood, also clad in spotless flannels, stood Jimmy Silver, gazing equally aghast at the awful thing he had helped to do.

It had all happened quite suddenly and quite unexpectedly.

Jimmy Silver had, in the exuberance of high spirits, flung the challenge—in the form of a cricket-ball—across the quad.

And Tommy Dodd had accepted the challenge by making a mighty swipe at the whizzing sphere with the bat he carried. Then, crack! came the sound of good bat meeting ball.

And crash! came the sound of breaking glass as the ball disappeared through the sacred window of the headmaster's study.

Hence the horrified remarks of Moderns and Classics as they waited for the storm to break.

There was a sudden hush as the window opened with a vicious slam, and the face of Dr. Snazlem appeared.

"Boys, come here at once!"

There was a wealth of concentrated fury in the command.

Classicals and Moderns moved gloomily across the quad, and stopped beneath the Head's window.

At that moment Mr. Manders came rustling up with a thunderous frown.

"Mr. Manders, will you see to it that not one boy moves until I come?"

The window closed with a slam, and Dr. Snazlem's face vanished.

Mr. Manders' eyes gleamed; he was not in the least likely to allow a boy to move.

A minute of silence, and the new Head appeared down the Classical steps, a cane in hand, and a fierce glitter in his eyes.

"Hold out your hand, boy!"

The command was addressed to Lovell, who happened to be nearest. Lovell hesitated, then his hand went out slowly.

Swish, swish!

"Now the other hand!"

Swish, swish!

"Now the next boy!"

There were groans of pain and murmurs of anger as each of the juniors present went through the same punishment in turn.

The cuts were cruel and vicious, and the juniors, tough as they were, had turned white with pain.

Not once did the new Head mention the broken window, nor did he demand the name of the culprits. And a low murmur of anger went up at

Jimmy Silver was the first to recover his voice.

"Well, my word!" he stuttered, taking a deep breath. "What a—what a Prussian!"

And that was all Jimmy Silver had time to say then, for there was a sudden rush of curious juniors from every corner of the quad.

Dozens of juniors on their way out to the playing-fields had watched—from a safe distance—the little drama, and now were curious to know what it all meant; and the heroes—or, rather, victims—were soon the centre of a buzz of excited voices.

But the excited buzz soon changed to howls of wrath and groans of dismay.

And great was the consternation, and great was the wrath, of the Lower School at the news.

Slowly the excited throng broke up into little groups, gloomily discussing the extraordinary decision of the new headmaster.

Jimmy Silver was looking quite unlike his usual cheery self as he wandered with his chums disconsolately towards Big Side.

The recent brutal and unjust caning was bad enough, but the prospect of a future without cricket was to the junior captain of cricket almost too appalling to contemplate.

A big match was in progress between the Rookwood and St. Jim's senior elevens, and Big Side was unusually crowded, for, Little Side being deserted, most of the Lower School were there, their gloomy faces sadly out of keeping with the bright sunshine that April afternoon.

"Hallo! Rookwood's bagged first innings!" grunted Jimmy Silver,

"Scandalous! Disgraceful!" came Dr. Snazlem's harsh, grating tones. "It passes my comprehension, Mr. Manders, how the authorities of any school can permit this reckless waste of time and energy in such barbarous pursuits."

"It is indeed scandalous, Dr. Snazlem," agreed Mr. Manders. "This unhealthy excitement cannot fail, in my opinion, to exercise a demoralising influence upon the—"

Mr. Manders paused, and frowned blackly as a loud roar went round the field.

"Well hit, sir! Good old Bulkeley! Good man!"

"Savages!" ejaculated Dr. Snazlem. "Hooligans!"

"Positively dangerous!" exclaimed Mr. Manders. "That boy—surely that ball will hit him!"

At mid-off Darrel was slowly backing away, his hands outstretched, his eye on the ball dropping towards him.

"Well caught—Ah—ah!"

The delighted roar from the St. Jim's supporters changed to a groan as Darrel fumbled the catch, and the ball dropped.

"Fortunately, the boy stopped it with his hands!" exclaimed Dr. Snazlem. "What an exceedingly brutal game! That boy might have been severely hurt."

Dr. Snazlem's remarks, funny as they were, passed unheeded. All eyes were on Bulkeley, who faced the bowling again.

Bulkeley was playing the game of his life, and the Rookwood score rose steadily.

Crack!

"My hat! That's a boundary!" exclaimed Lovell, his eyes on the soaring ball. "Hallo! Look out!"

Bulkeley left his position at the wicket and crossed to meet the new Head.

"Sir?" he questioned, in utter bewilderment.

Dr. Snazlem pointed dramatically schoolwards.

"Go!" he commanded furiously. "Leave the field! Go to your room at once!"

"But—but, sir, the match? What I—"

"Go!" thundered Dr. Snazlem. "How dare you bandy words with me, boy! Had I the power, I would expel you instantly for this unprecedented outrage! Go!"

With bowed head and white, set face, the captain of Rookwood left the field.

For a fellow in his position, the humiliation of such a scene was bitter in the extreme.

A deep murmur of sympathy for the Rookwood captain went up from Rookwood fellows and visitors alike.

Angry and mutinous glance from seniors and juniors followed Dr. Snazlem and Mr. Manders as they left the field together.

Slowly the astounded spectators dispersed amid a clamour of excited voices.

Never had such an astonishing scene been witnessed on a field of sport in all the long annals of Rookwood School—or St. Jim's either, for that matter.

The St. Jim's contingent boarded their brake and departed towards the station, full of sincere sympathy for Rookwood, and thankful that St. Jim's did not possess such a headmaster.

And upon all Rookwood that evening there descended an atmosphere of gloomy foreboding most profound.

The 4th Chapter. N.G.

"Seen the notice?"

Conroy of the Fourth asked that question as Jimmy Silver came along the passage the next morning.

Lessons had been decidedly unpleasant, both for masters and boys.

There was seething discontent and a rebellious spirit abroad that augured ill for the future peace of Rookwood whilst it remained under the administration of the new headmaster.

Jimmy Silver & Co. were looking at any rate anything but happy when Conroy stopped to ask that question.

"No. What blessed notice is that?" exclaimed Jimmy irritably. "Forbidding us to play tiddley-winks, or what?"

Conroy grinned.

"Go and look, old top!" he said.

And Jimmy Silver & Co. went to look.

They found Big Hall in a turmoil of excitement and wrath.

Jimmy Silver pushed his way through the seething throng towards the notice-board.

"What is it?" exclaimed Lovell over his shoulder.

"Only what I expected" remarked Jimmy, turning away with an angry frown.

"Cricket forbidden for seniors and juniors without exception until further notice. Got our sentence yesterday, so that part's nothing new to us. Hang it, though! Means we cannot even watch a match now. It's—"

—it's rotten!"

And that, forcibly expressed by Jimmy Silver, was the general opinion.

Cricket banned at Rookwood!

After what had happened on the cricket-field the previous afternoon, it was, perhaps, not quite unexpected.

But the fact stated in black and white created consternation, nevertheless.

"The old brute's mad!" exclaimed Raby warmly, as the Fistical Four left Big Hall.

"We oughtn't to stand it! Tubby Muffin says that old Greely and Bootles have protested against it. Anyway, something ought to be—"

My hat!"

Raby stopped as the tramp of feet was heard, and Bulkeley, Neville, Lonsdale, and half a dozen other seniors, their faces set and determined, marched down the passage towards the headmaster's study.

"My word! A deputation!" ejaculated Jimmy Silver.

"Old Bulkeley's goin' to beard the merry old lion in his den! Good luck, Bulkeley, old man!" he called out, as the procession passed.

"Shut up!" snapped Bulkeley angrily.

Evidently the captain of Rookwood had neither time nor politeness to waste on juniors just then.

In grim silence the deputation marched on to the headmaster's door.

Bulkeley knocked firmly.

From inside sounded the harsh voice of Dr. Snazlem.

There were few at Rookwood who had not already learned to hate and dread that unpleasant croaking voice.



THE NEW HEAD PUTS HIS FOOT DOWN! "I intend to discourage sport in any shape or form during my stay at Rookwood!" said Dr. Snazlem. And with a threatening glare at the dismayed juniors, he whisked indoors. Mr. Manders followed, with bats and stumps sticking from him like pins in a pin-cushion.

canker spot in public school life, and is as debasing as it is time-wasting. What is your opinion, Mr. Manders?"

"Ahem! I quite agree with you, sir!" exclaimed Mr. Manders, with a spiteful glare at the astonished juniors. "I have held that opinion for some years."

"Ah! I'm glad to hear it, Mr. Manders, for, as it is my firm conviction that this unhealthy craving for sport is at the root of the deplorable slackness in discipline at Rookwood, I not only intend to discourage sport in any shape or form during my stay at Rookwood, but"—Dr. Snazlem glared around—"I most emphatically forbid the Lower School, at least, to participate in games of this description in any form whatsoever from this moment."

"That is my command, Mr. Manders. And now would you be good enough to bring those—h'm!—articles to my study? And I will take immediate steps to make this order known to all concerned."

And Dr. Snazlem, after another threatening glare around, whisked indoors.

Mr. Manders followed more slowly, with bats and stumps sticking from him like pins in a pin-cushion.

They left behind them the silence of utter stupefaction.

Jimmy Silver & Co., Tommy Dodd & Co., Classics and Moderns alike, stared speechlessly after the departing tyrant of Rookwood.

gazing moodily across the smooth green turf dotted with flannelled figures. "Old Bulkeley's batting, too— Oh, well hit, sir!"

Nothing seemed to be worrying the skipper of Rookwood, for he was on the top of his form, and did practically what he liked with the St. Jim's bowling.

And as they watched, the spirits of Jimmy Silver & Co., keen cricketers all, gradually revived.

"My hat! Look!" exclaimed Raby suddenly. "The Head and old Manders! Talk about birds of a feather! Surely the rotters haven't come to see the match!"

"More likely come to stop it!" remarked Lovell moodily. "Looks to me, though, as if it's only old Manders showing the old beast round."

Jimmy Silver frowned thoughtfully.

"My hat! Look at his chivvy! Ever seen such a bad-tempered looking rotter!" he exclaimed. "Blessed if I can understand it! Fancy a brute with a temper like his, placed in charge of a public-school like Rookwood! Where on earth have the Governing Board dug the beast up, I wonder? I'm hanged— Look out, here the rotters are!"

There was a sudden hush.

Dr. Snazlem, engaged in earnest conversation with Mr. Manders, approached and stopped a few yards away.



Continued from the previous page.

THE TYRANT OF ROOKWOOD!

And the deputation of seniors wavered a moment.

Then Bulkeley set his teeth, and, pushing open the door, entered. After a slight hesitation, his supporters filed in after him.

Jimmy Silver grinned as the door closed behind them.

"What a funny lot of owls!" he remarked. "My hat! Now the band begins to play! Watch 'em come flying out on their necks in two ticks!"

The juniors waited breathlessly. The door opened suddenly, and the deputation crowded out hurriedly and confusedly.

Bulkeley's handsome face was flushed, and his eyes gleamed with anger.

In fact, the faces of the whole deputation were pink, and decidedly wrathful.

"I say, Bulkeley, how did you get on?" asked Jimmy Silver excitedly.

"Any luck? Yarrough!"

Jimmy Silver yelled, as Bulkeley cuffed his head and marched on.

"The answer is in the negative," remarked Lovell, with a grin.

"Wow! Oh dear!" groaned Jimmy, rubbing his ear. "What did the old ass want to answer me like that for? I say, the deputation must have been a wash-out, you know!"

"Not really?" murmured Newcome sarcastically.

"Burr!" grunted Jimmy Silver, leading the way along the passage.

Mornington came strolling along towards them, grinning reminiscently.

"Heard Tubby Muffin's latest?" he observed, with a chuckle. "It's a scream, by gad!"

"Eh? No. What is it?" asked Jimmy Silver.

"Ha, ha! It's too rich for words. The silly ass is spinning a wonderful yarn that all the Lower School has in future to go for a ceremonial walk every half. You know, girls' school 'croak' sort of game. The imagination that fat chump's got is wonderful! What? Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" joined in Jimmy Silver & Co.

And Mornington passed on, still chuckling.

The Fistical Four entered their study, also chuckling—at least, Lovell, Raby, and Newcome were. Jimmy Silver, however, was looking thoughtful.

"I—I say, you chaps, suppose there's something in that yarn of Tubby's! Mustn't be surprised at anything now—"

Jimmy Silver paused. From the passage outside came the whisk of a gown, then Mr. Bootles' voice:

"Ah, Bulkeley, I wished to speak to you!"

Jimmy Silver rose to shut the door, but he sat down again on seeing that the master of the Fourth had turned and was standing half in and half out of the open doorway.

"I have bad news for you, Bulkeley," said Mr. Bootles. "I—er—h'm—regret very much to tell you that the interview Mr. Greely and myself had with Dr. Snazlem with regard to the banning of cricket was—er—unsuccessful."

"Oh, sir!" came Bulkeley's voice, in disappointed tones.

"In fact, Bulkeley," went on Mr. Bootles, "the interview was—er—h'm!—most unsatisfactory. Dr. Snazlem was—h'm!—very angry indeed, and refused even to discuss the subject of cricket. Indeed, I fear, Bulkeley, that our interview has done more harm than good—at least, so far as the Lower School is concerned. Both Mr. Greely and myself pointed out in most emphatic terms that it was imperative that boys should not be debarred from some form of healthy exercise in which to give vent to their surplus energies, and—h'm!—natural high spirits. Dr. Snazlem agreed with us upon that point. But—"

Mr. Bootles paused and coughed—"I fear, Bulkeley, that the suggestion the headmaster made, and fully intends to

carry out, will not at all appeal to the juniors."

"Sir?"

"The suggestion is, Bulkeley, that the whole of the Lower School be taken out for walks, under the supervision of a master, every half-holiday. Dr. Snazlem strongly disapproves of boys roaming about the country at will, and he also insists that they be suitably attired for these walks."

From the passage came a loud gasp.

"Ahem! A most unusual order, Bulkeley," pursued Mr. Bootles, "and one which will, I fear, cause a great deal of discontent and dissatisfaction among the juniors."

"My h— It will, indeed!" came Bulkeley's choking gasp.

"Undoubtedly. Our own opinion, Bulk—" Mr. Bootles stopped and coughed again. "Ahem! Mr. Manders considered it an excellent idea, and has volunteered to take charge of the—er—walks. However, I regret that our efforts were unsuccessful. That is all, Bulkeley."

And the sudden whisking of a gown told the amazed juniors that Mr. Bootles had gone.

In the passage Bulkeley was walking away, coughing violently. Apparently he had a severe cold.

And for fully two minutes afterwards the Fistical Four stared at each other in stony silence.

Then suddenly Jimmy Silver jumped up, and began smiting the air savagely with his fists, as if he were fighting an imaginary opponent—possibly an imaginary Dr. Snazlem.

He paused at last, breathless.

"Well, I'm blessed!" he spluttered wrathfully. "That's the limit! So—so Tubby Muffin's yarn was true, after all! I'm hanged! Would you believe it?"

"It's—it's simply awful!" ejaculated Lovell, in alarm. "In crock, like a blessed girls' school! Oh dear!"

"Every half, too. An' suitably attired. That means toppers an' best Etons. Oh, the howling Prussian! He must be potty!"

And for some time after that groans of dismay and sounds of wrath floated from the end study.

Whatever the views of the Lower School as a whole were likely to be, there was very little doubt that Dr. Snazlem's latest order most emphatically did not appeal to Jimmy Silver & Co.

The 5th Chapter. Simply Awful!

"Oh gad!" ejaculated Mornington dismally. "This is awful!"

"Simply awful!" agreed Jimmy Silver, with a groan.

"Too awful for words," added Arthur Edward Lovell helplessly.

And from the Rookwood juniors' point of view it was indeed awful.

Up to the last moment the one hope of the juniors that Saturday afternoon had been that it would rain—rain in torrents!

But, alas! for that hope.

The bright sun shone down from a cloudless sky on the shiny toppers, the spotless Etons, the clean white collars, and polished boots of the juniors of Rookwood.

Big Quad that afternoon was like a parade-ground.

Practically the whole of the Lower School of Rookwood were there, drawn up two deep in four parties—Second third, Fourth, and Shell.

Practically the whole of the Fifth Form were there also—as spectators.

And from the delighted grins on their faces they appeared to be enjoying the scene immensely.

But the whole Lower School, Classicals and Moderns alike, wore looks of the deepest dejection.

Mr. Manders, however, was looking extremely well-pleased with himself.

In fact, Mr. Manders wore a smile of malicious exultation.

"Look at the rotter!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver. "Wouldn't have been so bad if it had been Bootles. Old Bootles would have made it as easy as

he could for us. But Manders—burr!"

"Hallo! Old beaky-nose has finished his inspection," exclaimed Newcome suddenly. "My hat! Now we're off!"

Tramp, tramp, tramp!

With dignified stride and Napoleonic mien, Mr. Manders led the way out through the gates.

Behind him came the unhappy juniors, looking, as Lumsden of the Fifth said, "as cheerful as a centipede with sore feet."

First came the Shell, making a lofty, though dismal attempt to look unconcerned and disinterested.

Next came the Fourth Form, with red, furious faces, and eyes gleaming savagely.

Then came the young heroes of the Third Form, looking angry and mutinous.

And finally came the Second Form, looking as if they weren't quite sure whether to laugh or cry—whether to take the whole business as a tremendous lark or an appalling tragedy.

Tramp, tramp, tramp!

Outside the gates Mr. Manders called a halt.

"Howard! Tracy!" he commanded.

Howard and Tracy of the Shell were the leading couple.

They did not, however, appear to appreciate the high honour that had befallen them.

In fact, they scowled murderously at Mr. Manders as he addressed them.

"Sir?"

"You will kindly lead on through Coombe village," snapped Mr. Manders. "My orders will be passed on to you from boy to boy. And be good enough to allow for the—er—shorter legs of the younger boys behind you, and adjust your speed accordingly."

A murmur of consternation buzzed down the lines of juniors.

Mr. Manders' decision in choosing the route via Coombe was the last straw.

The glances shot at the Modern Housemaster were positively Hunnish.

But Mr. Manders was used to Hunnish glances from the juniors of Rookwood.

He fell to the rear, and took up his position at the extreme end of the Second Form party.

From there he had a good view of the whole unhappy crocodile.

Tramp, tramp, tramp!

Amid the tramp of many feet and clouds of dust, the procession wound its way like a huge serpent along Coombe Lane.

They marched in grim silence—too fed-up even to talk.

At last, tired and perspiring, they came in sight of the village.

The dull tramp changed to a clatter as the vanguard of the "croc" turned from the lane on to the cobble stones of Coombe High Street.

P.-c. Boggs, who was standing on the curb, dozing, awoke and blinked in amazement at the juniors.

Mr. Knowles, the butcher, and indeed all the tradesmen of Coombe, rushed to their doors in astonishment.

Mr. Mobbs, the undertaker, even stepped out into the street, and stared along and behind the "croc" with a puzzled look on his face.

Apparently he thought it was a

funeral, and was looking for the hearse.

But undoubtedly the striking sight interested the juvenile population most of all.

Mr. Manders had had no idea what a number of errand boys and miscellaneous urchins such a small village could muster.

And the "croc" increased in numbers visibly.

But it did not decrease the juniors' discomfiture, nor improve Mr. Manders' temper to hear the running fire of comments from the new recruits, who seemed to see a great deal of humour in the situation.

"Oh, help!" groaned Jimmy Silver. "Look there!"

He pointed to a long, lanky youth in cricket flannels, with a Bagshot cap, who was leaning on a bicycle outside Mrs. Wick's establishment.

It was Cecil Pankley, of Bagshot School.

And with Pankley was Poole, also of the Fourth Form at Bagshot School.

Pankley and Poole were laughing.

In fact, Pankley and Poole were nearly two-double with uncontrollable mirth.

"What rotten—beastly rotten luck!" exclaimed Lovell dismally. "Now for it!"

Pankley and Poole mounted their machines and rode leisurely alongside the "croc."

And then, to the immense surprise of the Rookwooders, they put on speed, and quickly disappeared down the road in the direction of Bagshot School.

"Well, I'm blessed!" murmured Raby, in amazement. "Who'd have thought it? I expected no end of a ragging."

"Now, I call that jolly good of Pankley and Poole," exclaimed Jimmy Silver warmly. "Expect they spotted we were having a pretty rotten time of it, an' decided not to rub it in. Jolly decent of 'em, I think!"

And the juniors of Rookwood tramped on, busily discussing the unexpected delicacy and generosity in Pankley and Poole's characters.

But, sad to relate, they were to find out very soon that their confidence in the Bagshot juniors' good nature was sadly misplaced.

About a quarter of a mile outside Coombe, the "crocodile" branched off down a lane.

Mr. Manders, for obvious reasons, did not intend to return to Rookwood via Coombe village.

The village urchins and other hangers-on had gradually deserted—for which both master and boys were truly and exceedingly thankful.

Tramp, tramp, tramp!

The juniors were tired, dusty, and perspiring freely.

The had long ago come to the conclusion that "toppers" especially were decidedly unsuitable for route marches.

Even Mr. Manders was looking extremely uncomfortable and heartily sick of the whole business.

"Whoop!"

The juniors were marching down a steep cutting about two miles from Rookwood, when Raby suddenly made that exclamation, and rubbed his ear vigorously.

"You silly fathead!" roared Morn-

ington, whose nose had come into violent collision with the back of Raby's head. "Oh, gad—my nose!"

"Some blessed thing stung me!" yelled Raby. "What—"

"Whoop!"

This time it was Tommy Dodd who gave a yell, and clapped his hand on his face.

And then there followed a succession of yells, as a volley of peas rattled round the heads of the Fourth-Formers.

In less than two minutes the juniors "broke croc," and became a disorganised rabble.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

From the grass on either side of the lane appeared scores of grinning faces, and foremost among them the cheerful countenances of Pankley and Poole.

"My hat! Bagshot bounders!" roared Jimmy Silver. "Smash the rotters! Go for 'em!"

But the Rookwood juniors did not need telling to "go for 'em!" They were fed up, and spoiling for a scrap.

But at Jimmy Silver's call to charge, the Bagshot juniors dropped peashooters and prepared to repel the Rookwooders.

There was a simultaneous rush on both sides.

Then followed a terrific scrimmage in the lane.

The young gentlemen of the Third Form at Rookwood "piled in," and did great execution.

The young heroes of the Second followed them.

Even the lofty men of the Shell came rushing back along the lane and joined in the scrimmage with vigour and energy.

Over and over in the dust Bagshot and Rookwood juniors rolled in deadly embrace, and the excitement and uproar were intense.

"Toppers" went west by the score, spic-and-span Etons were soon conspicuous by their rarity, but discoloured eyes and swollen noses were everywhere in evidence.

Early on in the fight Mr. Manders dived into the scrimmage, shouting and gesticulating wildly.

But his frenzied commands were unheard—at any rate, they were unheeded.

And Mr. Manders, dishevelled, and minus his silk hat, staggered out again, and wisely decided to remain out.

It was a battle-royal indeed, but the issue was not long in doubt.

The Bagshot fellows put up a tremendous fight, but they were outnumbered, and, disconsolately mopping eyes and noses, they broke from the scrum and drifted away.

Then a tremendous charge led by Jimmy Silver scattered the remnant, and they fled in all directions, leaving Rookwood standing triumphant amid a sea of squashed "toppers," crumpled collars, and twisted neckties.

"My eye! What a merry scrap!" gasped Jimmy Silver. "Oh dear, look at my nose!"

"And my eye! Wow!"

"Never mind, we licked 'em!" said Jimmy Silver. "Oh crumbs! Here's Manders!"

"Boys!"

Mr. Manders came rustling up, his face positively fiendish, and his recovered silk hat sitting on his head like a crushed concertina.

"Never," said Mr. Manders hoarsely—"never, in all my long scholastic experience, have I witnessed such a disgraceful scene of brutal savagery. Never have I been subjected to such gross disrespect and contempt. Return to Rookwood at once, boys. There will be a terrible reckoning for this!"

In grim and deadly silence, Mr. Manders waited while juniors feverishly hunted for lost "toppers," collars, and ties. Then, salvage operations being completed, he marshalled his forces, and the return journey to Rookwood began.

Now the excitement of the conflict was over the juniors were looking somewhat thoughtful, and the prospect Mr. Manders held out of a terrible reckoning to come did not cheer them in the least.

They had won a glorious victory certainly, but at what a cost!

And it was a very disconsolate and disreputable crocodile that wended its weary way back to Rookwood in consequence.

The 6th Chapter.

Jimmy Silver's Wheeze!

"Gentlemen—" "Hear, hear!" "Gentlemen—" "On the ball! Go it, Jimmy!" "Gentlemen—" "That's us, you know!" remarked Tommy Dodd, with pride. "He means us!"

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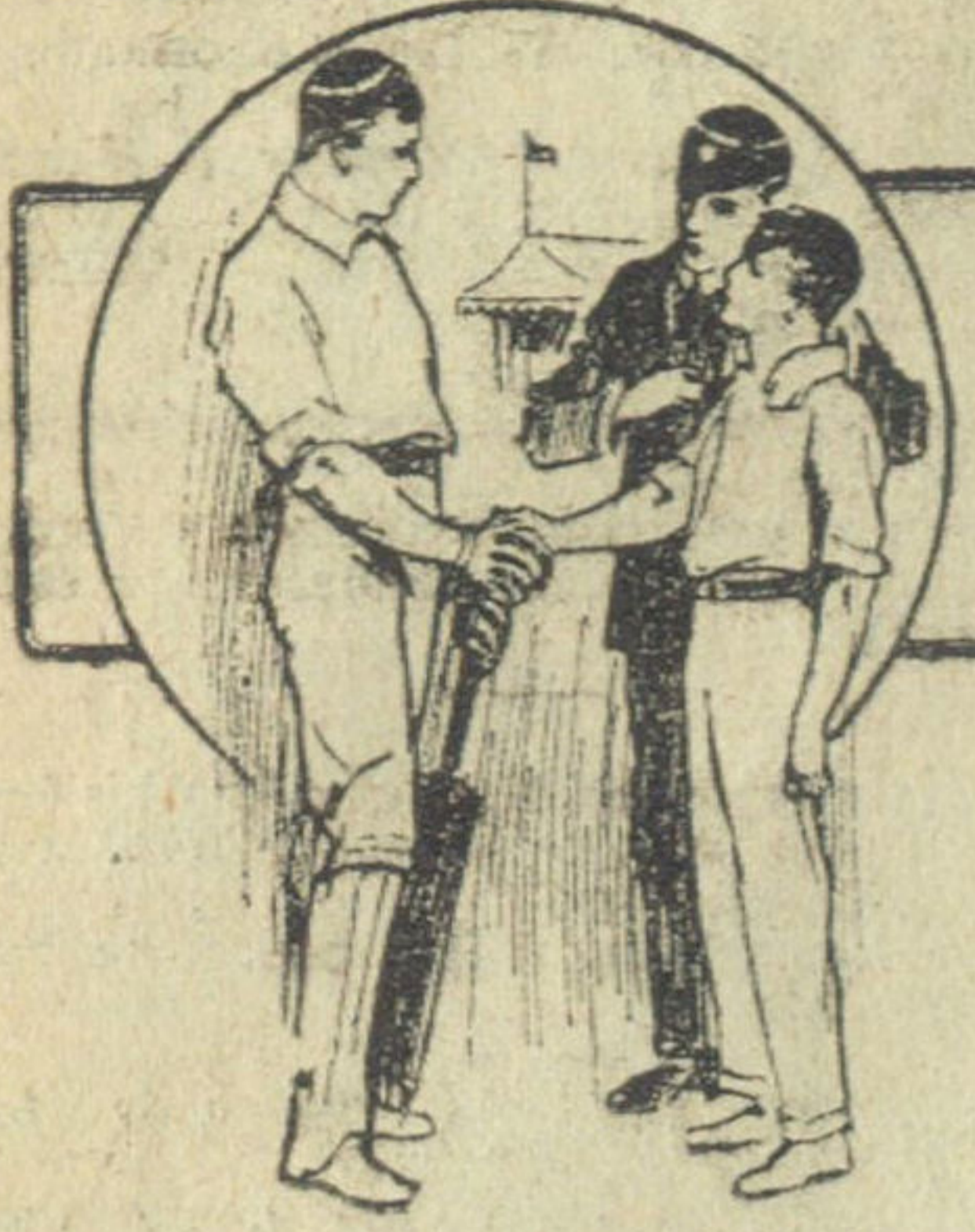
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THE TYRANT OF ROOKWOOD!

(Continued from the previous page.)

"Gentlemen!" roared Jimmy Silver again, glaring Hunnishly at the humorous Tommy Dodd. "Look here! Will you silly asses shut up, an' let me get on?"

"Silly asses, he's calling us now!" murmured Tommy Dodd.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Jimmy Silver glared round in extreme exasperation.

Jimmy Silver was mounted on the rickety old table in the end study on the Classical side of Rookwood.

That famous apartment was crowded almost to suffocation with the leading lights of the Fourth Form at Rookwood, both Classicals and Moderns.

It was, briefly, an extraordinary meeting of the Fourth Form of Rookwood, called by Jimmy Silver, to discuss the grave and unusual state of affairs at that famous seat of learning.

And Jimmy Silver was in the chair—or, rather, on the table.

But though he had been addressing the meeting for fully five minutes he had only got as far as "gentlemen" in his opening speech, owing to the frequent interruptions.

Hence Jimmy Silver's exasperation.

"Gentlemen," began Jimmy Silver once more, hopefully—"gentlemen and fellows. This meeting has been called at my instigation—"

"Good word that!"

"At my instigation," repeated Jimmy, with a glare, "to discuss the unprecedented—"

"Ahem!"

"Go it, Jimmy!"

"State of affairs at Rookwood."

"Hear, hear!"

"Since Dr. Chisholm went away," continued Jimmy Silver, "there has been nothing but trouble at Rookwood."

"Shame!"

"The new headmaster appointed, Dr. Snazlem—"

Groan.

"Has turned out a rotter, a tyrant, and a ruffian!"

Loud groans.

"First of all, gentlemen, as you know, he has forbidden cricket—cricket, mind you!—to be played at Rookwood."

"Shame!"

"Not only that, he has mucked up our half-holidays, and brought ridicule on the Lower School at Rookwood by forcing us to tramp about the country in 'crocs,' like a girl's school!"

"Shame!"

"And now, because his first experiment last Wednesday was not a success, because those Bagshot bounders chipped in—"

"And got a good licking for their trouble," chimed in Lovell.

"Bravo!"

"And got a good licking for their trouble," agreed Jimmy Silver, "the old beast has punished us by 'gating' the whole Lower School for a month, and adding an extra hour a day on to lessons."

"As if lessons weren't long enough!" observed Conroy.

"Hear, hear!"

"We won't stand it!" roared Jimmy Silver.

"Never!" came an answering roar.

"Life," proceeded the orator, "will not be worth living without games—without halves it will be a hollow mockery and a sham. Is Rookwood a blessed reformatory that we should be treated thus?" asked Jimmy Silver.

"Are we slaves?"

"No!" came a thunderous chorus.

"Then why should we stand it?" demanded Jimmy Silver. "Why should we let old beaky-nose have all his own way? To-morrow, gentlemen, is a half—"

"Go it!"

"But before to-morrow we've got to think of a way to make the old tyrant sit up and realise that Rookwood fellows are not worms, to be trodden upon. Something must be done, and done quickly. Therefore, if any fellow present has any ideas or suggestions to make, let him not be backward in coming forward. 'Nuff said!"

"I—I say, Jimmy, old pal——"

Tubby Muffin pushed his way excitedly towards the table, a fat grin on his face.

"Hallo! Who's let that fat ass in?" exclaimed Jimmy Silver irritably.

"Buzz off, Tubby. We're too busy to listen to your cackle."

"But—I say, Jimmy. Such a lark," observed Tubby with a fat chuckle. "Who do you think's coming here to-morrow—"

"I don't know and I don't care," roared Jimmy Silver. "Shove off, you——"

"But—look here! It's about the cricket!" exclaimed Tubby excitedly. "Then in that case, let's hear it. Go ahead, you fat chump, and out it short!"

"I've just heard the news!" gasped Tubby breathlessly. "Old Colonel Blundell's coming to-morrow. Fancy that. Colonel Blundell—he, he, he!"

"Oh, Colonel Blundell, he, he, he! is coming to-morrow is he?" said Jimmy Silver sarcastically. "You crass ass! What's that got to do with cricket, fathead?"

"Lots!" said Tubby with a fat chuckle. "You fellows know what a sporty old boy he is. Chaps say he only comes here to see the matches an' not to visit the Head at all. Well, won't it be a sell for him when he hears there's no cricket match to watch! An' won't he just be ratty! He, he ho! I bet he'll kick up a frightful shindy with——"

"You—you ass!" breathed Jimmy Silver wrathfully. "Worrying us with potty news like that. For goodness' sake, sit on that fat idiot someone. Blessed if——"

Jimmy Silver paused, his youthful brow wrinkled thoughtfully.

"My hat! Yes, I believe it could be worked!" he exclaimed aloud suddenly. "I say, you chaps, blessed if that fat porpoise hasn't put me on the very wheeze we want. Tubby is quite right——"

"I always am," observed Tubby Muffin complacently, tapping his forehead. "Brains, you know."

"Shut up, you fat ass!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver. "As I was saying, you fellows, Tubby is quite right about old Blundell. Besides being an old Rookwooder and a member of the governing body, the old colonel is a keen upholder of all manly sports—especially cricket. Remember the old buffer? Always quoting that old gag about the battle of Trafalgar being won on the playing-fields of Eton!"

"What about Waterloo?" grinned Lovell.

"But we know all that. Buck up with the wheeze!"

"I'm coming to that, ass! Well, like our friend Tubby, I also think the old colonel will be not a little ratty to learn that cricket is banned at Rookwood—in fact I shouldn't be surprised if he didn't kick up a fuss about it."

"Quite likely," grinned Mornington. "Go on, old top!"

"Well, I think it's a pity to let the old duffer depart without seeing a game of some sort. So my idea is, that we provide a game—in fact, quite a number of games—for the old chap to see. We——"

"You potty fathead!" exclaimed Tommy Dodd witheringly. "Isn't cricket banned?"

"Well, there are lots of other games he can see. Marbles, for instance! He could see Morny and Erroll playing Marbles!"

"Eh?"

"Or Tommy Dodd and Tommy Cook playing battledore and shuttlecock."

"Wha—what!"

"Or Conroy and Pons playing hopscotch!"

"Why——"

"Or Tubby Muffin and Raby and Newcome, and Lovell and Dawson playing kiss-in-ring. Why, there are plenty of games——"

"Well of all the potty, dotty lunatics——" ejaculated Lovell warmly. "Mad! Hopelessly mad!"

"Not a bit of it!" said Jimmy Silver calmly. "It sounds silly I know. But that's the idea! It could easily be worked! We could have a whip round an' some of us could sneak over to Coombe and buy all the toys and games in the village for the purpose. An——"

"But what good would it do? You ass—what's the object of it, fathead?" roared Tommy Dodd.

"Simply this. Old Colonel Blundell is bound to be ratty about cricket being banned; but when he sees Rookwood has taken to playing kid's games like a blessed infant school, why, he'll simply rave. Old Blundell will make Snazlem reconsider his decision, or I'm mistaken. Besides, even if it doesn't work the oracle, it'll be a tremendous lark and holds possibilities for lots of fun. Anyway, that's the wheeze!"

"An' a nice lot of fools we'll look," grunted Tommy Dodd in disgust.

"Of all the fat-headed——"

"That's where you're wrong," said Jimmy Silver firmly. "We shan't look fools! Old beaky-nose, the chap who's stopped cricket and caused it all, is the merchant who'll look a fool. An' that's my idea, to bring ridicule on the rotter and his cranky ideas about cricket and outdoor games being dangerous and brutal. And now, what do you think of it?"

For a full minute there was a painful silence whilst the captain of the Fourth's extraordinary wheeze gradually soaked into the brains of the meeting.

"By gad! You're right, Jimmy!" exclaimed Mornington, suddenly breaking the silence. "I also see possibilities in the wheeze. My hat! Blessed if I don't! What——"

"Hear, hear!"

"Rather! It's great!" gasped Conroy.

There were murmurs of delighted approval all round the room.

"That'll do, then," remarked Jimmy Silver with satisfaction. Remember it's a Fourth wheeze, and we'll work it on our own. An' now let's put our heads together and work the details out."

And for the next hour, a continuous buzz of excited voices and spasmodic roars of laughter floated from the direction of the end study on the Classical side of Rookwood.

Whether the result of Jimmy Silver's gigantic wheeze would have any effect upon Dr. Snazlem's decision in banning sports at Rookwood, remained to be seen.

But there was certainly little doubt that the carrying out of that wheeze would provide no end of fun to cheer the sorely tried and jaded spirits of Rookwood on the morrow.

The 7th Chapter.
The Wheeze That Won!

stopped speaking suddenly, and glared along the passage as if he could scarcely believe his own eyes.

Apparently he had just become aware of a group of juniors crouching in the passage.

But Lovell, Raby, and Newcome didn't appear to be aware that they were observed—they seemed to be too absorbed in an exciting game of marbles to notice anything.

"Boys!" thundered Dr. Snazlem. "How—how dare you play that childish game of marbles in a public passage! Take five hundred lines, the three of you! Scandalous! Scandalous!"

Colonel Blundell's white moustache fairly bristled.

"Bless my soul! What's that? Marbles—Rookwood boys playing marbles?" he gasped, in astounded surprise. "Good heavens! Boys, cannot you find a more manly game to play than—than marbles? By gad!"

"P-please, sir, we're not allowed to play rough games like cricket, sir!" announced Lovell meekly.

Dr. Snazlem's eyes gleamed.

Colonel Blundell snorted angrily.

"By gad!" he almost groaned. "The old school's going to the dogs! Never——"

Colonel Blundell's eyes almost started from his head.

From the passage ahead came a sudden shuffling of feet, and Jimmy Silver, puffing like a steam-engine, sailed into view.

In Jimmy Silver's hand was a piece of string, and on the other end of the string was a toy train.

"Boy!" thundered Dr. Snazlem.

Jimmy Silver stopped, and the train stopped also.

"Boy!" shouted Dr. Snazlem furiously. "Are you mad, or is this a piece of astounding impudence—an unparalleled insult to your headmaster?"

"P-please, sir, I'm playing at trains!" murmured Jimmy Silver meekly.

"Wha-what?"

"P-please, sir, as cricket is forbidden, I—I've taken up engineering!" explained Jimmy Silver.

"That," said Dr. Snazlem, in a grinding voice, "is enough, boy! You will come to my study at six to-night, when I will deal with this—your insolence!"

And, giving the tin train a savage but undignified kick, that sent it tinkling along the passage, the furious headmaster strode on.

Colonel Blundell, almost exploding with indignation, followed him.

Jimmy Silver & Co. also followed, cautiously and expectantly.

Lovell, Raby, and Newcome were chuckling, but Jimmy Silver was looking thoughtful—possibly thinking of his appointment at six with Dr. Snazlem.

Dr. Snazlem reached the doorway, and was about to descend into the quad, when he stopped suddenly, and gazed helplessly outside.

And no wonder; for never, perhaps, had the old quad presented such an animated and extraordinary scene as it did at that moment.

Cricket being banned, the young gentlemen of the Fourth Form at Rookwood had apparently found other games to play at.

The ancient old quad resembled the girls' side of an elementary school playground, rather than the august quadrangle of a public school.

Some of the juniors certainly were spinning tops and playing marbles and other exciting boys' games.

But the majority were enthusiastically engaged in the games that are dear to the hearts of younger school girls.

Here and there were sturdy Fourth-Formers playing hopscotch or skipping-rope.

Others were trotting around, cheerfully trundling wooden hoops.

And quite a number, armed with battledores, were chasing the elusive shuttlecock with tremendous energy.

But the star turn was undoubtedly being enacted in one corner of the quad, where Tommy Dodd and a crowd of Modern youths were busy playing Oranges and Lemons.

And the voices of those cheery youths rose crescendo above the general hubbub as they solemnly maneuvered around, chanting the famous refrain that is the indispensable accompaniment to that ancient game.

All the Fourth-Formers had entered into the spirit of the business with the wildest enthusiasm.

And, to judge from the shrieks of hilarity, they were finding, as Mornington had prophesied, plenty of fun in Jimmy Silver's great wheeze.

But it was plain that Dr. Snazlem and Colonel Blundell, at least, did

not see any humour in Jimmy Silver's wheeze.

Colonel Blundell, indeed, seemed to be on the verge of a serious fit of apoplexy.

Dr. Snazlem's face was black as the waters of Styx with rage.

"This—is—is unbelievable!" he gasped, at length. "This is the most astounding and gigantic insult I have ever been subjected to!"

"By gad! By gad! By gad!" the colonel was ejaculating, with the rapidity and force of pistol-shots.

Then, quite suddenly, Colonel Blundell's face underwent an astounding change.

He seemed to become aware, for the first time, of the rows of laughing faces of seniors and juniors framing the windows overlooking the quad.

Then, with astounding suddenness, he doubled up and roared with laughter.

It was evident he had remembered just then that he had been a boy himself once, and realised that this was nothing but a gigantic jape.

But apparently Dr. Snazlem had no such remembrance, nor had he, like the visitor, a sense of humour.

"Colonel Blundell," he ejaculated angrily, "I—I am surprised—this unseemly hilarity——"

Dr. Snazlem paused as Mornington of the Fourth, who had the nerve of a whole regiment, came up just then, mopping his eyes with a shady-looking handkerchief.

"P-please, sir," wailed Mornington, weeping copiously. "P-please, sir——"

"Well?" thundered Dr. Snazlem, with a dangerous gleam in his eyes.

"P-please, sir," said Mornington, "that—booh—booh—over there's ta-taken me b-b-ball from me! Boohoo!"

Dr. Snazlem glared speechlessly at Mornington, his face working spasmodically.

Then suddenly a fit of ungovernable rage seemed to sweep over him.

And:

Smack! Smack!

Mornington went spinning against the wall, and slipped helplessly on to the ground.

The sound of the vicious smacks was heard all over the quad.

There was a sudden silence, followed by a low murmur.

Severity was not unknown at Rookwood, but brutality—and in a headmaster—was decidedly new.

Colonel Blundell's laughter ceased abruptly, and his face was grim and serious as he helped Mornington to his feet.

Mornington looked dazed, and his face was white as chalk.

"Dr. Snazlem, I—I"—Colonel Blundell's voice trembled with indignation—"I am ashamed, disgusted! Your action, sir, was brutal—ruffianly in the extreme! That poor boy——"

Dr. Snazlem's face was a mixture of rage and apprehension.

"Sir," he stammered, "that boy was insolent—more than insolent! I—I admit I lost my—my temper. But—but——"

"Lost your temper!" thundered Colonel Blundell. "Headmasters have no right to lose their tempers, sir!"

"Colonel Blundell! You—you forget yourself!" stuttered Dr. Snazlem. "This—this scene before the boys! I—I——"

The glance of the old Rookwooder was one of scorn and contempt.

"Then, Dr. Snazlem, I request an immediate interview in private!" he exclaimed, with grim determination.

The discomfited headmaster hesitated; then, with face red with mortification, he led the way indoors.

When they had gone, a murmur of subdued excitement filled the quad.

The Fourth-Formers with one accord dropped their games and trooped indoors, discussing the astonishing affair almost in whispers.

The astounding and sudden ending to Jimmy Silver's great wheeze left them scared and breathless.

Instinctively the juniors turned their steps towards Big Hall, which was soon buzzing with excitement and seething with the wildest rumours.

Jimmy Silver being the indirect cause of the whole thing, was the centre of interest and excitement.

Although it was nearly six o'clock, Jimmy Silver made no attempt, nor had he any intention, after what had happened, to keep his appointment with Dr. Snazlem.

The excitement in Hall reached fever-pitch as Bulkeley was seen coming from the Head's study.

Pushing his way through the throng, he pinned a slip of paper on the notice-board.

There was an immediate rush of

THE TYRANT OF ROOKWOOD!

(Continued from the previous page.)

juniors to the spot, as the captain of Rookwood strode away with a grim smile on his face.

The notice was brief, and in Dr. Snazlem's handwriting:

"The recent restrictions placed upon outdoor sports at Rookwood are hereby cancelled," read Jimmy Silver aloud. "Well, I'm blessed! What—"

Jimmy Silver paused speechlessly for a moment.

Then suddenly, as the meaning of it became apparent, a tremendous cheer went up that echoed all over Rookwood.

"Hurrah for little us!" yelled Jimmy Silver wildly. "We've won the day! What do you think of your uncle Jimmy's wheeze now—eh? Hip-hip—"

"Well, I like that!" shouted Tubby Muffin indignantly. "Wasn't it my wheeze?"

"Eh?"

"It was—you jolly well know it was, Jimmy Silver!" almost shrieked Tubby angrily. "You chaps heard me—Yarrough!"

Tubby Muffin's protestations ended in a yell as Jimmy Silver grabbed the fat youth and began to waltz around with him in sheer exuberance

of spirits.

And when at last Tubby was released, he was too breathless to make any further claims to be the author of the famous idea for some time.

All that evening, and part of the next day, a feeling of subdued excitement and expectancy hung over Rookwood.

Then about six o'clock in the evening Tubby Muffin rushed into the junior Common-room, his fat face ablaze with excitement.

"He's gone!" he yelled breathlessly. "He's just gone, you chaps!"

"Ass!" said Jimmy Silver. "Who's gone, fathead?"

"Old Snazlem!" gasped Tubby fervently. "Fancy that! I spotted him going through the gates in the Head's car, with all his blessed luggage on top! Hurrah!"

And Tubby rushed away to spread the news to all and sundry. It was very soon apparent that Tubby Muffin's news was true.

Mr. Greely, swelling with importance, was seen in occupation of the Head's sacred chair, in the Head's sacred study.

And it soon became known for a certainty that Dr. Snazlem had in-

deed gone, and that Mr. Greely was to take over the reins of government until Dr. Chisholm should return.

"Only what I expected, by gad!" said Mornington, when he heard the news. "Either old Blundell's insisted on the old brute resigning, or else he's called a meeting of the governing body and got the beast booted out. Anyway, the beggar couldn't very well stay at Rookwood after that shindy in the quad before everybody, so it's all the same."

But whatever the true version was, the Lower School at least never knew—nor did they care much now.

One of Mr. Greely's first acts as temporary Head had been to cancel the orders relating to the extra hour on lessons, and "gating" of the Lower School.

Two days later Dr. Chisholm returned. He looked a great deal better, and had evidently resolved to forgo the rest of his holiday rather than risk the possibility of further trouble arising at Rookwood, owing to his absence.

The tyrant of Rookwood had gone—for good. And once again King Cricket reigned supreme at the old school.

THE END.

(Another grand school story next Monday, entitled "Jimmy Silver's Day Out!" By Owen Conquest. Order in advance.)

GOOD STORIES!

Wife: "Have you tried those cigars I gave you?"
Hubby: "Yes. And I found them guilty."

Artist: "By the way, Cooper, I'm going to paint your cottage to-morrow."
Cooper: "Thank ye kindly, sir. I'll bring ye a couple of ladders."

Diner: "Waiter, look here! This steak's like leather, and you've given me a blunt knife."

Waiter: "How would it be to use the steak for stropping the knife on, sir?"

Labourer: "What shall I do with all this rubbish?"

Foreman (Irish): "Bedad, ye'd better dig a hole and bury it."

Labourer: "How about the dirt that comes out of the hole?"

Foreman: "Why, ye fool, dig a hole big enough to bury the lot!"

Weary Pedestrian: "Will you please take this overcoat to the next town for me? It's awfully heavy."

Motorist: "Certainly. But how will you get it again?"

W. P.: "Oh, I'll stop inside it all the way."

Policeman (to father of fifteen, taking his offspring out for a walk): "I'll have

to arrest you, sir. Will you come along quietly?"

Father of Fifteen: "Arrest me? What- ever for? What have I done?"
Policeman: "I don't know. What's all this crowd following you for?"

Lady Passenger: "Conductor, what are we stopping for?"

Conductor: "The current's off, ma'am."

L. P.: "But the motor-buses are still running!"

Manager (to office boy, who has his leg through the copying-press): "Whatever are you doing, boy?"

Office Boy: "I'm trying to crease me trousers, sir."

"Can you tell me the way to 'Chuckles' office, Jimmy?"

"How did you know me name was Jimmy?"

"I guessed it."

"Then guess yer way to 'Chuckles' office! Me name ain't Jimmy."

Diner (calling waiter to settle heated argument): "Waiter, what is a pineapple, a fruit or a vegetable?"

Waiter (calmly): "Neither, sir. It's an extra, and costs sixpence."

Parson: "How is it you weren't at church on Sunday, my man?"

Man: "I did a job, sir, for a quid."

Parson: "You broke the Sabbath!"

Man: "Well, one of us had to be broke, mister."

Teacher: "Now, Georgie, what great lesson does trouble teach us?"

Georgie: "To swear, miss."



THIS WEEK:

THE SQUARE CUT, AND HOW TO MAKE IT!

By GEORGE GUNN.

Even given the most robust frame, good muscles, strong nerves, and perfect sight, there is not one of my readers who can ever hope to improve in the slightest degree unless he is thoroughly keen and willing to sacrifice some of his other pleasures.

There may be certain departments of the game which do not appeal to a young fellow. For instance, he may be particularly fond of batting and dislike fielding, and so on; but I assure those who are on-sided in their affection for the game that unless they throw their whole hearts into every department they cannot hope to become what we call first-class cricketers.

I don't know if any of you have heard the story of a certain amateur player, who was a very good batsman, but was never asked to play for his county because he would not take the trouble to excel or even take a moderate amount of interest in bowling or fielding. A friend of his met him one Saturday evening, and questioned him regarding the match in which he had been playing that afternoon.

"How did you get on, Jack?" the friend asked. "Oh, pretty well, thanks!" the player replied. "You see, I got 65, and had a good time!" "Splendid!" ejaculated the other. "But who won the match?"

"Oh—well, I don't quite know! You see, it was like this. We batted first, and scored 150; and when the other side went in I soon saw that we hadn't a bowler in the team, so I gave a Johnny who was standing on the boundary half-a-crown to field for me and came away!" I mention this as a horrible example.

Now for the square cut, which can be made at any ball which is short and outside the off stump, providing the ball is not still rising, when it would be an act of madness to attempt such a shot. I don't think I ever knew such a satisfactory stroke as the square cut, when it is made properly and goes sailing along the turf to the boundary. First of all the bat is lifted well back and high, and as the ball comes up near, the right foot goes towards the off-stump, and you quickly get well on the toes at the same time as the bat meets the ball with all the strength at your command.

There is still another shot, which is half a cut and half a drive, and which is made off a short off-ball; but this is made earlier, and the ball is sent past cover-point. However, in this case the right foot is kept down, and the left put across towards the off.

This is quite easy, provided the ball

is something of the nature of a long hop. Practise these as much as possible, for the strokes I have described mean hundreds of runs in the course of a season.

I suppose as a rule a great deal of mischief is done by a senior who goes to see the first-class match, and is deeply impressed with the style of a certain batsman, who, maybe, has scored a century. He sees the steady and correct strokes, the wrist work of the late cuts, the accurate placing of the ball just beyond the reach of the fieldsmen, and a dozen other things which, perhaps, are only the result of many years' practice.

Then he goes home and endeavours to teach his son in an hour or two what has taken the county player many years to learn. The youngster,

GEORGE GUNN,



the Famous Notts and All-England Professional, who has written this article specially for THE BOYS' FRIEND.

however, has his own ideas of enjoyment and exercise, and hits out lustily, perhaps at the ball which he shouldn't. Then the restraining influence of the parent comes in, and his hitting powers are likely to be spoiled.

On the other hand, the prevailing habit of the young batsmen of to-day, as soon as they know how to stop a ball, seems to be to play for "keeps," or, in other words, endeavour to remain in at the wickets for as long a period as possible without troubling about scoring. Much of this is due to

the ambition of a youth to make his runs in a graceful and stylish manner.

Style seems to come first, yet I am sure it is a matter of impossibility for any batsman to properly watch and time a ball if he is thinking only of making pretty strokes. A flourish of the bat and a graceful bend of the body may look all right from the pavilion, but nothing can be more effective from an artistic, as well as serviceable, point of view than the meeting of the bat and ball at the right moment, with the result that the maximum of power is imparted with the minimum of effort.

One of the greatest faults committed by many second-class cricketers is over-eagerness to keep playing forward on every kind of wicket. The forward stroke is safe enough on a good plump wicket, but on one which lends itself to the wiles of the bowler I know of no more dangerous method.

It stands to reason that in playing forward a man starts his stroke a little earlier than when playing back, or, at any rate, he has not such a great command of the ball if there should be any amount of break upon it. Sticky and caked wickets give the bowler every assistance, and at such times it is almost an act of madness to play forward in the orthodox manner.

We hear people speak of the ball pitching on the "blind spot," but that is only one way of admitting that after reaching a certain length the ball is unwatched. This losing sight of the ball is a habit which is hard to get rid of, and requires assiduous practice to master.

It is no uncommon thing to see a batsman commencing his stroke at the same time as the ball is leaving the bowler's hand. Somehow he has got it into his head that unless he does he will never be able to play the ball in time, and as a result we see cases of mistiming, playing prematurely, forward strokes absolutely spoiled, and the minimum of power used in the actual hit, which, by careful methods of watching, would in all likelihood have resulted in four being added to the total, instead of a catch; or, at the best, no run at all.

This fault is more common in club cricket than on first-class grounds; but youthful cricketers are not by any means alone in spooning back a ball to the bowler, ruining the chance of a four leg-stroke, and failure in an attempt to score with a sharp stroke past cover-point.

It means the clockwork movement, for the forward stroke is made at every ball which is not actually right down short. This is a habit which must be broken, and I would strongly advise all my young readers to make a fresh start, as it were, and make up their minds to watch every ball right on to the bat.

In this way strokes will come instinctively, and, remembering always to get the left foot as near to the pitch of the ball as possible when driving and playing forward, you will be surprised at the power which you will get into your strokes. I am quite sure that had I not followed such lines as I am now suggesting to you, I would not have met with the success which I have, I am thankful to say, achieved.

Geo Gunn.

ROOKWOOD
PERSONALITIES



No. 3.
TOMMY DODD.

SPECIAL
NEW FEATURE!

WHEN summer sunshine floods the earth,
And schoolboys bask in freedom,
The Rookwood yarns, so full of mirth,
Give joy to all who read 'em.
Upon the meadows wide and green,
Upon the beach at Brighton,
The Conquest stories may be seen,
To gladden and enlighten!

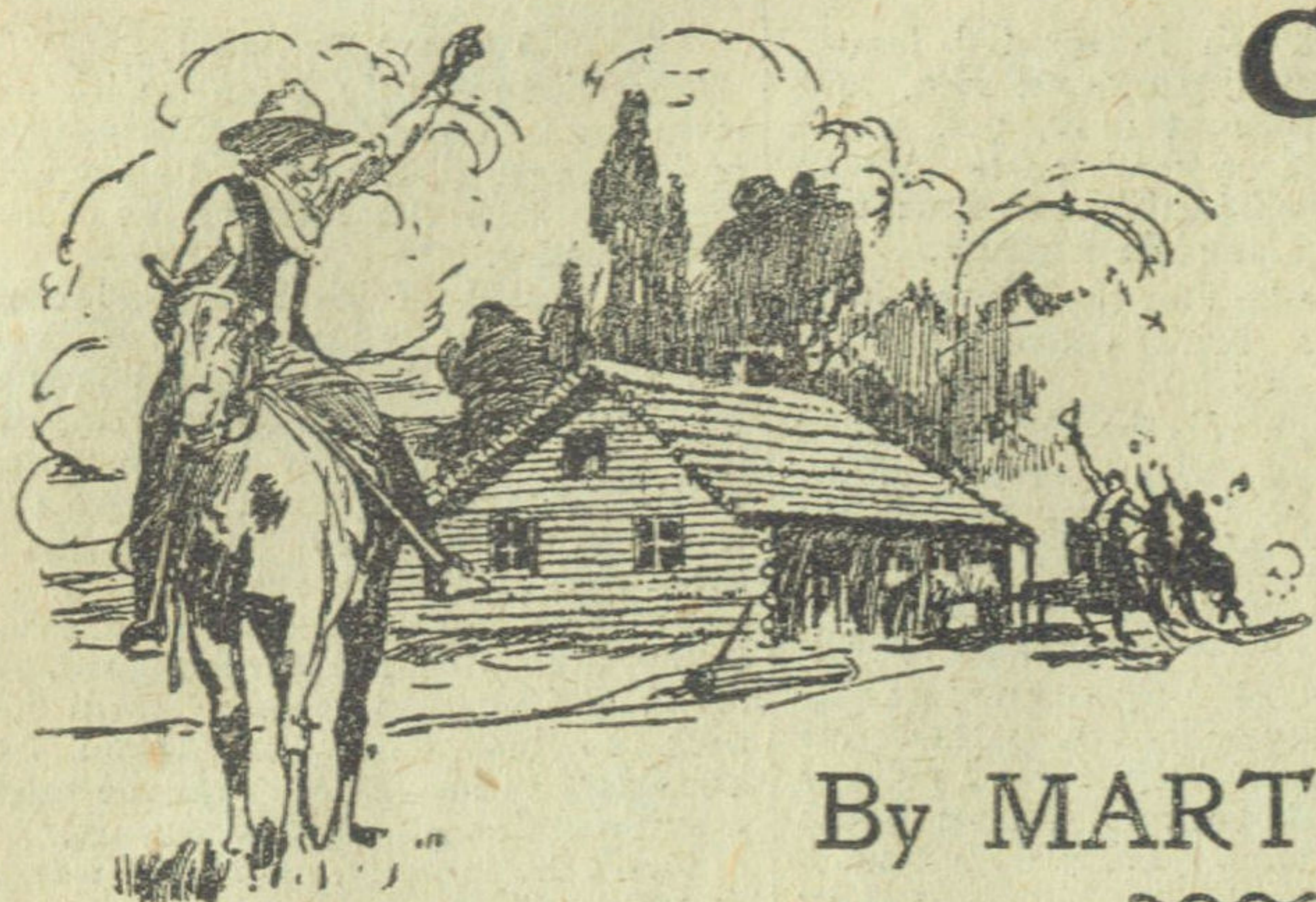
The Classic heroes are admired,
There's Silver, Lovell, Raby,
And Newcome, too; and if you're tired,
As possibly you may be,
Of reading how they exercise
Their youthful minds and bodies,
You'll turn, with gay and sparkling eyes,
To scenes where Tommy Dodd is!

For Tommy Dodd is hard to beat;
His weird and wondrous capers
Have won for him a lofty seat
Among the schoolboy japers.
And many a man in days of war,
Who well knows where the Somme is,
Has heeded not the battle's roar
When reading pranks of Tommy's!

The leader of the Modern clan
Is very justly famous;
And Tommy Cook, his right-hand man,
Is not an ignoramus.
While Tommy Doyle, renowned and rare,
Is great, I give you MY word!
But Tommy Dodd can beat the pair—
His prowess is a by-word!

Good luck to him—a real good sort,
Who shines in all that's splendid;
And strives to win a good report,
As many famous men did.
We all admire his merry pranks—
I almost think a crook would!
Long may he figure in the ranks
Of mighty men at Rookwood!

—THE ROOKWOOD RHYMESTER.



CHUNKY'S CHANCE.

A Splendid Long, Complete Story of FRANK RICHARDS & CO., the Chums of the School in the Backwoods.

By MARTIN CLIFFORD.

The 1st Chapter.

A Chance for Chunky.

"A galoot had a chance in those days."

Chunky Todgers made that remark. He made it to Frank Richards & Co., who were leaning on the trunk of a big tree near the gates of Cedar Creek School, chatting as they waited for the bell to ring for afternoon lessons.

The fat and chubby Chunky was lying in the grass, his elbows resting on the earth, his fat hands supporting his podgy chin, and his eyes glued upon a book.

The book was one of the volumes from the Thompson Circulating Library, to which Chunky was an unwilling subscriber. Chunky would not miss paying his fee at the circulating library, even to buy maple sugar.

He looked up from the volume, and spoke to the three cheery schoolboys, who looked down at him, smiling. They knew Chunky's taste in books. Chunky was keen on romances of all sorts, and he loved to picture himself in the characters of the novels—when he did not want to be a pirate, he yearned to be the long-lost son of a missing marquis.

"What have you got now, fatty?" asked Bob Lawless.

"The 'Red Rover,' or the 'Pink Pirate,'" asked Vere Beauclere, laughing.

But Chunky's fat face was very serious.

"I tell you, a galoot had a chance then!" he repeated. "We live in rotten, commonplace times, you chaps. This book is about the Crusades. Sir Reginald Fitzpippin was a regular tin terror! The way he hewed down the Saracens was a caution. I jolly well wish I'd lived in the reign of Richard the First. A galoot had a chance in those days!"

"My hat!" murmured Frank Richards. "Fancy Chunky hewing down Saracens, with an iron pot on his head!"

"Clad in complete armour!" pursued Chunky Todgers, his eyes glistening. "Clad in complete armour, from top to toe. Sir Reginald rushed into the fray—"

"I guess I don't think much of that galoot," said Bob Lawless, decidedly. "Must have been a bit of a funk, to wrap himself up like that before he went into a scrap."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, you're a silly ass, Bob Lawless," said Chunky disdainfully. "You haven't any of the spirit of romance. You've got pluck. I dare say, in your fat-headed way, but you'd never have made a knight of chivalry. Now, that's just where I live. I can just imagine myself rushing on the Saracens—"

"Rushing the other way, you mean."

"No, I don't!" roared Chunky Todgers. "Rushing on the Saracens and cleaving them to the chine with my trusty blade."

"But what had the Saracens done?"

"Eh? I don't know that they'd done anything, if you come to that. But I'd have cleaved 'em to the chine, anyhow," said Chuky Todgers, with a bloodthirsty look. "Waving my trusty sword, streaming with blood—"

"Grooogh!"

"I'd have called on my gallant esquires—"

"Oh, my hat!"

"And charged the dastardly enemy home," said Chunky, in a thrilling tone. "I'd have rushed upon the Soldan, and as my dripping blade gleamed over his head—"

"Phew!"

"I'd have spared his life, when his beautiful daughter threw herself at my feet," said Chunky. "Raising her from the ground with knightly chivalry, I should have kissed her—"

"That's jolly familiar, isn't it, if you hadn't even been introduced?"

"I'd have kissed her—"

"I'm shocked at you, Chunky!"

"Hand!" roared Chunky. "I'd have kissed her hand, you silly ass!" "And you'd have made it jolly sticky, if you'd just been scoffing maple sugar, as usual," remarked Frank Richards.

"Ha, ha, ha!" "Ha, ha, ha!" Chunky Todgers gave the chuckling trio a withering look. Evidently, they were sadly lacking in the spirit of romance, which possessed Chunky Todgers, and filled his fat mind with visions.

"We've fallen on rotten, degenerate times," said the fat Chunky, gloomily. "You fellows are an example! There's nothing chivalrous going on now. Chaps don't rush into fearful peril to rescue damocels in distress—"

"I'd have rushed in to rescue the Soldan's daughter, if you were going to make her hand sticky."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, don't be a silly jay, Frank Richards. Look at me!" said Chunky. "Why, I was simply born to be a crusading knight. But suppose a galoot went crusading in these days? Folks would think he'd just got out of a circus—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And if he started slaying dastards and traitors, he would get strung up," said Chunky warmly. "And there ain't any dragons to kill—"

"There are still some grizzly bears!" suggested Bob Lawless.

"We don't get even any bears here," said Chunky disconsolately. "There isn't a chance for a galoot! I jolly well wish a grizzly would show up here—suppose he got into the school, you know—"

"I know you'd jolly soon get out of it."

"I wouldn't! Suppose he collared Miss Meadows or Molly Lawrence?" said Chunky breathlessly. "Suppose his fearful paw was on her neck, and she was shrieking for help, you know, in heartrending accents—same as the Lady Gloxiana de Popcorn, when the Saracen grasped her flaxen locks in his red, right hand! I can just see myself—"

"Scooting!"

"No, you jay!—rushing on the grizzly, axe in hand!" roared Chunky Todgers. "With one terrible blow, splitting his head to the chine—"

"That would be rather hefty," grinned Bob Lawless.

Chunky Todgers sighed deeply. The picture of himself as a conquering hero was delightful and attractive, but it was, alas, impossible. No grizzly bear was likely to wander down from the Rocky Mountains and seize Miss Meadows in his terrible claws, simply for the sake of allowing Chunky to cleave him to the chine.

Frank Richards & Co. chortled. Chunky Todger's vision of himself as a knight of chivalry tickled them. Certainly, he would have required a suit of chain-mail of unusual circumference.

"But there ain't any Saracens, and there ain't even a grizzly bear," said Chunky sorrowfully. "I—I say, what are you looking at, Bob?"

Bob Lawless had suddenly detached himself from the tree, and was looking into the shadows of the timber, with a set, scared expression on his face.

He raised a trembling hand to point into the deep shadows.

"Look!" he gasped.

"What the—"

"Bear!" shrieked Bob. "Run for it! Bear! Bear!"

Frank Richards and Vere Beauclere stared blankly for a moment. Then they shouted, too.

"Bear! Bear!"

Chunky Todgers was on his feet in a twinkling. He had a good deal of weight to lift; but he was up like lightning.

His fat, ruddy face had become suddenly pale.

"Run!" roared Bob. "Chunky will keep him off while we get away! Run!"

The three chums started for the school gates at top speed.

But Chunky Todgers did not stop to cover the retreat.

He did not even look into the timber to see the bear.

He pounded after Frank Richards & Co. with a burst of speed that was really astonishing, and passed them in the race for the lumber school.

"Hold on, Chunky!" shouted Bob Lawless. "Drop behind and keep him off."

Chunky did not heed.

He bolted in at the gates like a deer, and crossed the playground without a stop, gasping great gasps, and scuttled into the porch of the schoolhouse. There he slammed the big door, jammed a bar into position, and sank down on a bench, spluttering.

"Ow, ow! Grough! Help! Yoop! Oh, dear! Oh, oh, oh!"

The 2nd Chapter.

And What Came of It!

"Ha, ha, ha!" Frank Richards & Co. sauntered cheerily in at the gates, having stopped their desperate rush as soon as Chunky Todgers was well ahead.

The gallant Chunky was prepared to face any number of imaginary dragons, but a real bear was quite a different proposition. Though if Chunky had only known it, the bear in this instance was as imaginary as the dragons.

"What's the row, you chaps?" asked Tom Lawrence, as the Co. came smiling in. "Has Chunky gone off his roof? He's just bolted across to the house and vamoosed in, as if a panther were after him."

"I guess he thinks there's a bear around," answered Bob.

"But why—"

"Because I called 'Bear,' I guess," answered Bob Lawless cheerfully. "I didn't say there was a bear, of course; but Chunky seems to have concluded there was. And he vamoosed the ranch like thunder."

"Where is he now?" asked Beauclere, laughing.

"In the house—and I guess I heard him sticking up the bars," said Lawrence.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Frank Richards & Co. walked on to the lumber schoolhouse, some of the other Cedar Creek fellows joining them—all chuckling. The big door was closed and fast, and Bob Lawless knocked on it with his knuckles.

There was a howl from within.

"Gerraway, you beast! Oh, dear! Help!"

"Let us in, Chunky—"

"I c-c-can't—"

"Do you want the bear to gobble us?" roared Bob.

"Ca-a-a-can't you get in at a window?" quavered Chunky.

"My word! Ain't you coming out with an axe to cleave him to the chine?"

"I—I haven't got any axe."

"Ask Miss Meadows for one."

"Oh, dear!"

Knock, knock, knock!

Miss Meadows, the schoolmistress of Cedar Creek, came out of her sitting-room as she heard the knocking.

"Dear me! Why is the door barred?" she exclaimed. "Have you done this, Todgers?"

"D-d-d-don't unbar it, Miss Meadows," shrieked Chunky, in alarm.

"Why not?" demanded the schoolmistress severely.

"There's a bub-bub-bub—"

"What?"

"Bub-bub-bear—" stammered Chunky.

"Let us in, Chunky!" roared Bob Lawless, outside. "Do you want us to be chewed up, you fat villain?"

Miss Meadows hastily removed the bar and threw the door open. There was a roar of laughter outside; but it died away suddenly as Miss Meadows was seen.

"What is all this?" exclaimed Miss Meadows. "Have you been frightening Todgers for nothing?"

"Oh, ma'am!"

"There is no bear, of course—"

"Nunno, Miss Meadows."

"I wasn't fuf-fuf-frightened!" gasped Chunky Todgers. "N-n-nothing of the kik-kik-kind."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Lawless, have you been playing some foolish trick?" exclaimed Miss Meadows.

"I—I guess I called 'Bear,' ma'am," murmured Bob Lawless meekly. "Chunky was saying he wanted to kill dragons and Saracens, and things, so I thought I'd see how he took it."

"And we've seen!" murmured Frank Richards.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You should not play such foolish tricks," said the Canadian schoolmistress. "You have frightened Todgers—"

"Oh, no, ma'am!" gasped Chunky, his fat face growing the hue of a very rich beetroot, as he realised how his leg had been pulled. "I—I wasn't frightened. I—I simply rushed in for an axe—"

"What?"

"I—I was going to tackle the b-b-bear, and— and cleave him to the chine, ma'am!" gasped Chunky. "I rushed in for an axe—"

"And why did you bar the door?"

"The — the door!" stammered Chunky. He had forgotten the door.

"Yes, why did you bar the door against the other boys, if you thought there was a bear?" exclaimed Miss Meadows sternly.

"Oh! I—I never thought about them—I—I mean, I—I was thinking of you, ma'am."

"Of me!" exclaimed Miss Meadows.

"Ye-e-ep, ma'am. I—I was thinking of your danger, you see," said Chunky Todgers, recovering confidence. "Beauty in distress, you know, ma'am—"

"You utterly ridiculous boy!" exclaimed the schoolmistress, as there was an irresistible chuckle outside. "How dare you utter such nonsense?"

"It—it ain't nonsense, ma'am," murmured Chunky feebly. "It—it— it's chivalry, you know, ma'am— knightly chivalry."

"You were simply thinking of your supposed danger, to such an extent that you forgot your schoolfellows," said Miss Meadows. "I am ashamed of you, Todgers!"

And Miss Meadows went back to her room.

Chunky Todgers stared at the crowd of schoolboys in the porch, and his fat face grew redder and redder.

He had had his chance of proving that he was, at heart, as gallant a knight as any of the "galoots" of ancient times, who went into battle clad in complete armour, and clove Saracens to their unfortunate chines—he had had his chance, and this was what he had made of it.

He wished devoutly that he had stayed to cover the retreat of Frank Richards & Co.—especially as there was no bear.

But it was rather too late to wish that.

After his high words, running away from a real bear would have been bad enough; but running away from a non-existent bear was the limit!

"I—I say, you chaps," stammered Chunky, "I—I—I really—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You needn't think I was frightened—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I—I knew—I mean, I—I simply came in to protect Miss Meadows—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The roar of laughter drowned poor Chunky's voice. He gave it up, and beat an ignominious retreat, leaving the Cedar Creek fellows yelling.

The 3rd Chapter.

Chunky Has an Idea.

Frank Richards & Co. smiled when they came into class that afternoon, and found Chunky Todgers there. For once, Chunky had been early—he wanted to elude the merciless chipping he had been receiving on the subject of the bear.

Chunky gave them a dolorous and reproachful look.

He was not feeling happy. Having recovered from his fright, he was once again the valiant Chunky, ready to face Saracens, or dragons, or whole battalions of dastards and traitors. But such romantic foes were not likely to come along to the school in the backwoods—the utmost Chunky could possibly hope for was a bear—and he was quite tired of the subject of bears.

"Feeling better, old scout?" asked Frank Richards.

"I—I say, Richards, I—I wasn't frightened, you know—"

"Of course not," said Frank, laughing. "You simply did that little run for exercise. I know. I hope your exercise has done you good, Chunky."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look out, Chunky!" roared Ben Hacke. "There's something under your desk—"

Chunky jumped.

"Eh—what—"

"Only your feet, old chap."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You silly jay!" howled Chunky, in great wrath. "If you think you can frighten me—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Miss Meadows came into the school-room, and the merriment ceased, and the unhappy Chunky was relieved of his tormentors for a time.

But there were many smiles in the class that afternoon; and, to the great unhappiness of Chunky, among the girls as well as the boys. It was the unkindest cut of all when Chunky saw Molly Lawrence smiling. Above all, Chunky would have liked to shine as a hero in Molly's pretty eyes. And now Molly's merry smile showed how heroic she thought the fat Chunky was.

Todger's face, which was usually beaming with fat cheerfulness, was quite gloomy, when Cedar Creek School was dismissed after lessons.

Frank Richards & Co. led their horses out, and Chunky came out with his fat little pony. Bob Lawless called out a warning.

"Look out for bears in the wood, Chunky!"

"You pesky chump!" roared Chunky Todgers. "Do you think I'm afraid of bears?"

"Ha, ha! I rather guess so, old scout. Just a few."

"I jolly well wish a bear would come moseying along, and I'd show you!" said poor Chunky; who, to do him justice, was really ashamed of the lamentable display he had made that afternoon.

"What would you show us?" asked Bob. "A clean pair of heels?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Chunky snorted and turned to his fat pony. He was getting tired of the chipping, but it was not likely to cease yet. A dusty-looking "pilgrim" was coming along the trail, and he stopped and dragged off his rag of a hat in salute to Frank Richards & Co. It was Mr. William Bowers, generally known as Dry Billy Bowers—a gentleman who was reputed to possess the greatest thirst in the Thompson Valley.

Dry Billy was supposed to be looking for work, but he generally looked for it with his back resting against the post outside the Red Dog saloon in Thompson town—which was, perhaps, the reason why he did not find any.

"Evening, young gents!" said Mr. Bowers, in an oily tone. "Long way from hyer to Thompson, Mister Bob?"

"I guess so!" assented Bob Lawless. "I hope the exercise will do you good."

Dry Billy made a grimace. "I wouldn't ask you young gents to help a pilgrim on his way," he said. "That ain't my kind."

"Besides, it wouldn't be any good, would it?" remarked Bob Lawless affably.

And his chums grinned, and even Chunky Todgers emitted a fat chuckle. The Cedar Creek fellows had no money for Mr. Bowers to expend upon "fire-water" at the Red Dog.

Mr. Bowers looked pathetic. "I've had hard luck to-day," he said. "I've been down to Grimm's fruit farm on a job, and coming back I've lost the money."

"Poker or euchre?" asked Bob sympathetically.

Dry Billy grinned faintly. He had a sense of humour.

"You've got me!" he answered. "Gents, I'll tell the truth—"

"Not too suddenly—think of your health!"

"I was going to spin you a yarn," said Mr. Bowers. "But I own up—I lost the money at poker." Mr. Bowers looked still more pathetic.

"Gents, I've got a powerful thirst on me—"

Bob Lawless pointed to the creek with his riding-whip.

"Free drinks there!" he remarked. Mr. Bowers shuddered. He did not care for water taken internally; and, to judge by appearance, he did not care for it very much externally, either.

"Gents, it ain't my kind to ask a galoot for a dollar," he said. "But if you handed me twenty-five cents—"

"It would be time for the skies to fall," answered Bob cheerily. "Good-night, old scout!"



CHUNKY'S CHANGE!

(Continued from the previous page.)

terday," grinned Bob Lawless. "Are we to wait till Canada is invaded by the Saracens?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" "You watch out!" was Chunky's reply. "I guess I'll make some of you sing small when I get my chance!"

It really seemed that Chunky was expecting a chance to come along, specially to set him right in the eyes of his schoolfellows. Certainly, no Saracens could be expected to "mosey" along to British Columbia.

Bob Lawless suggested that perhaps he hoped to see Miss Meadows fall into the creek some day, so that he could plunge in and rescue her from the rapids.

After morning lessons he strolled away towards the creek, which was glimmering and rippling by the timber in the spring sunshine.

And Frank Richards & Co. rode away by the timber trail, leaving Mr. Bowers blinking after them disconsolately.

"Mister Todgers—" he began. "Scat!" was Chunky's reply.

"Come off!" said Todgers. And he started up the trail to Thompson, Dry Billy trudging after him with downcast face, troubled with a gargantuan thirst.

Chunky's face wore a thoughtful expression, and there was a peculiar gleam in his eyes. Great thoughts were working in Chunky's brain, apparently in connection with Mr. William Bowers.

He beckoned to the loafer, who hurried to overtake him, moved by a faint hope of "touching" the fat schoolboy for a "quarter."

"You're looking for work, I believe?" said Todgers. "For years," said Mr. Bowers impressively.

"I know," assented Chunky. "Well, suppose I could offer you a job—" "Farm work," said Mr. Bowers, "don't agree with my health."

"I'll tell you as we get along," said Chunky. He made his fat pony proceed at a walk, and Mr. Bowers kept pace with him.

And as he listened, Mr. Bowers first stared blankly. Then he grinned, and then he chuckled. Finally he said:

"Two dollars." "One!" answered Chunky. "I ain't rolling in dollars!"

"Two, and it's a cinch!" insisted Mr. Bowers. "I've only got one and a half."

"Then I'll tell you what I'll do," said Mr. Bowers generously. "Dollar and a half, and I'm your mutton, with the wool on."

And after some warm argument, Chunky Todgers assented, as the town of Thompson came in sight.

Mr. Bowers, securing half a dollar in advance of the payment for the "job," whatever it was, made a bee-line for the Red Dog saloon to quench his thirst.

The chums dashed through the trees, and a dozen other fellows, who had heard the stentorian shout, dashed after them.

They came out on the bank of the creek in an excited crowd. Then there was a yell of astonishment.

On the bank lay Mr. William Bowers, of Thompson, apparently insensible, running with water. Beside him was kneeling Chunky Todgers, also dripping.

"Safe now!" Chunky was saying, as the Cedar Creek fellows came breathlessly up. "You're all right now, my man!"

There was a deep groan from Mr. Bowers, and his eyes remained closed. Frank Richards & Co. gathered round in amazement.

Bob tapped Chunky Todgers on the shoulder. "What's happened, Chunky?" Chunky looked up impatiently.

"Great gophers!" "Jerusalem crickets!" roared Eben Hacke. "You went in for him!"

Mr. Bowers groaned again, and sat up dizzily. He passed his hand over his eyes, and blinked at the breathless circle of schoolboys.

"Help!" he moaned. "I'm drowning! Ow! Help!" "You're all right now," said Bob Lawless.

"Brandy!" moaned Mr. Bowers. Bob looked at his chums. Mr. Bowers' taste for brandy was pretty well known.

"Brandy!" groaned the loafer. "I'm sinking fast!" "Cut off and ask Miss Meadows, Cherub!" said Bob.

Vere Beauclerc nodded, and ran off to the school. Bob Lawless supported Mr. Bowers with his strong arm.

"Thank you, Mister Lawless!" murmured Dry Billy. "I-I say, young gents, what's happened?"

"I may have had a little refreshment this morning," said Mr. Bowers. "Don't be hard on a pilgrim what was born with a big thirst."

Meadows, the whole contents of the flask gurgled down his throat. "Goodness gracious!" ejaculated Miss Meadows.

She fully expected Mr. Bowers to roll over in the grass, senseless, after that gargantuan sip. But Mr. Bowers didn't!

"I feel better now!" he murmured. "Bless you, ma'am! After this young gent, I guess you saved my life!"

"Good gracious! Todgers—" "It—it wasn't much, ma'am!" stammered Chunky modestly.

"Wasn't much!" exclaimed Mr. Bowers. "Sir, you risked your life—your precious young life—plunging into the creek to save a man who was sniking, at the last gasp!"

"Oh, ma'am!" stammered Chunky. "A very brave action indeed," said the schoolmistress.

"I-I never thought of that, ma'am!" "Run to the school at once, Todgers, and dry your clothes. You will catch cold if you are not careful."

"We'll take care of him, ma'am," said Frank Richards. "Come on, Chunky."

"Shoulder high!" exclaimed Beauclerc. "Yes, rather."

"Oh! I-I-I say!" gasped Chunky. "Up with him!" "Bravo, Chunky!"

Up went Chunky Todgers to the shoulders of Beauclerc, Frank Richards, and Bob Lawless—the three of them were needed to support Chunky's very considerable weight.

Nobody gave a thought now to the bear story; there was no thought of chipping Todgers any more.

The gallant rescue of Billy Bowers atoned for all—even if Billy Bowers wasn't really worth the trouble of rescuing.

And Dry Billy took his homeward path to Thompson town, with a grin on his stubby face and a dollar in his pocket.

There was a flask in Miss Meadows' hand, and Dry Billy's eager eyes glistened at the sight of it.

"Bless you, ma'am!" he said faintly. "Quick—quick!" "Take a sip from the flask, my poor fellow!" said the kind-hearted schoolmistress.

Dry Billy took a sip—a big sip! To the surprise and horror of Miss Meadows, the whole contents of the flask gurgled down his throat.

"Goodness gracious!" ejaculated Miss Meadows. She fully expected Mr. Bowers to roll over in the grass, senseless.

"I feel better now!" he murmured. "Bless you, ma'am! After this young gent, I guess you saved my life!"

"Good gracious! Todgers—" "It—it wasn't much, ma'am!" stammered Chunky modestly.

"Wasn't much!" exclaimed Mr. Bowers. "Sir, you risked your life—your precious young life—plunging into the creek to save a man who was sniking, at the last gasp!"

And Dry Billy was of opinion that there were more dollars to follow.

He bore his blushing honours thick upon him with becoming modesty.

He did not spoil his new glory by swanking. Indeed, he seemed loth to give the details of the gallant rescue.

There was no doubt that any fellow who plunged into the creek to rescue a drowning man, took his life in his hands—and especially Chunky Todgers, who was not by any means a first-class swimmer.

It was a shame, old chap," said Bob. "You see, I never thought for a moment you were such a plucky chap. I'm real sorry."

"It's all right, Bob—you'll know better another time," he said. "So I shall, Chunky," said Bob honestly.

Chunky was the recipient of many glances in the class that afternoon. Molly Lawrence smiled upon him, and thus translated him to the seventh heaven.

He had the unusual felicity of sitting in class, and doing next to nothing while the other fellows worked, and he enjoyed it.

On that occasion, Chunky had certainly not shown up well; but he had more than redeemed his reputation now.

After lessons Chunky Todgers came out of the schoolhouse as if he were walking on air.

"Ride home with us, Chunky?" "Yes, rather, I guess," answered Chunky, with a beatific grin.

The happy smile faded off his fat face, however, as his eyes fell upon a dusty, disreputable figure lounging by the school gates.

It was Mr. William Bowers. Chunky blinked at him, as Dry Billy dragged off his rag of a hat, in very respectful salute.

"I guess I couldn't help coming to see how you was, sir, arter wot you did for me," said Mr. Bowers. "Skuse the liberty, sir."

"Oh!" gasped Chunky. "All right! I-I-I'm all serene." "Not catching cold, or nothing, sir?"

"Oh, no! Nunno!" "I guess I'm glad of that," said Mr. Bowers feelingly.

Frank Richards & Co. looked rather curiously at Mr. Bowers. They had hardly expected so much gratitude and good feeling from the dusty loafer.

"I ain't a 'andsome man, p'r'aps, young gents," said Mr. Bowers, looking round; "but I've got a heart, and that heart, gents, is touched, sirs. I ain't forgetting wot this gent has done for me, his uncommon bravery, sirs, and his generosity, too."

It isn't every gent who'd help a man to get some noo clothes, gentlemen, arter saving his life; but Mister Todgers has undertook to do it."

Chunky started violently.



THE HERO OF CEDAR CREEK! On the bank lay Mr. William Bowers, of Thompson, apparently insensible, running with water. Beside him was kneeling Chunky Todgers, also dripping. "Safe now!" Chunky was saying, as the Cedar Creek fellows dashed up. "You're all right now, my man!"

Frank Richards & Co. soon forgot all about him, being busy upon the task of cutting down a sapling near the school.

It was about a quarter of an hour later that a sudden yell from the direction of the creek startled the schoolboy woodsmen.

"Help! Help!" Bob Lawless dropped his axe. "Hallo! What's that?" he exclaimed.

"Help! Help! I'm drowning! Help!" "Come on!" shouted Frank Richards. "Somebody in the creek!"

They came out on the bank of the creek in an excited crowd. Then there was a yell of astonishment.

On the bank lay Mr. William Bowers, of Thompson, apparently insensible, running with water. Beside him was kneeling Chunky Todgers, also dripping.

"Safe now!" Chunky was saying, as the Cedar Creek fellows came breathlessly up. "You're all right now, my man!"

I seemed to feel something catch me—" "It was me," said Chunky Todgers. "You jumped in for me?"

"Bless you, young sir—bless you for saving my life! My life ain't worth much, p'r'aps," said Dry Billy pathetically.

Mr. Bowers' gratitude was really touching to witness. But he passed on quickly from gratitude to thirst.

"Brandy!" he gasped. "Miss Meadows is coming—" "Brandy!" "This way, Miss Meadows."

Vere Beauclerc was hurrying back with the schoolmistress. Miss Meadows had come at once, on hearing of the accident.

There was a flask in Miss Meadows' hand, and Dry Billy's eager eyes glistened at the sight of it.

Dry Billy took a sip—a big sip! To the surprise and horror of Miss Meadows, the whole contents of the flask gurgled down his throat.



CHUNKY'S CHANCE!

(Continued from previous page.)

"I—I—I—" he stammered.

"He's giving me two dollars to help me through," said Mr. Bowers. "My duds, such as they are, are spoiled, and that generous young gent is giving me two dollars to help me through. Ain't that noble and generous of him?"

"More generous than I'd be, I know that," said Bob Lawless. "I can guess where the two dollars will go. You're an ass, Chunky!"

"But I—I—I—" gasped Chunky helplessly.

Mr. Bowers gave him a significant look.

"Two dollars I think you said, sir?" he remarked.

"I—I paid—I mean, I gave you a dollar!" gasped Chunky Todgers. "I'm speaking of the other two dollars, sir," explained Mr. Bowers, in a tone of kind patience, but considerable significance.

Chunky Todgers breathed hard. There had been no mention of any other two dollars; but he understood that if they were not forthcoming there would be mention of several little things on the spot—things he was extremely desirous should not be mentioned before the Cedar Creek crowd.

The unfortunate Chunky was in the toils.

He turned an almost baggard look on Frank Richards. His own pockets were empty. Mr. Bowers had already corralled his last dollar.

"I—I say, Franky, c-c-can you—" Frank Richards nodded.

"You're an ass to give the man money, Chunky," he said. "But if you've promised, you'd better keep your word, I suppose."

"I—I—I guess that's just it," said Chunky, in an expiring voice. "I—I—I—P'd be obliged—I—"

"Well, I can stand one," said Frank. "What about you, Bob?"

"Here's the other," grunted Bob. "Next time you offer galoots dollars, Chunky, count up how many you've got in your pockets first."

"I—I will!" groaned Chunky.

Frank and his Canadian cousin handed over the dollar each, and Chunky Todgers passed them to Mr. William Bowers. That dusty gentleman received them with a profusion of thanks.

"Ain't he got a kind heart, gents?" he asked. "Ain't he the king-pin of them all, that brave and generous young gent? It's grit he's got, gents—real grit; and when it comes to real grit, I put my money on Mister Todgers! He's the real white article, he is—brave as a lion, gentlemen, and generous, too—werry generous!"

And with that fulsome tribute, Mr. Bowers pulled off his ragged hat again and faded away up the trail.

Chunky Todgers stood rooted to the ground, the colour coming and going in his fat face. The interview seemed to have dismayed him utterly. Tom Lawrence tapped him on the shoulder.

"We're off," he said.

"Oh, all right!" gasped Todgers. He rolled towards his fat pony and clambered into the saddle.

But somehow all the pleasure of a ride home with Molly Lawrence seemed to have vanished.

Frank Richards & Co. waved their hands cordially to the hero of Cedar Creek, and rode away on the homeward trail, discussing with a surprise that was not wholly complimentary to Chunky, his gallant deed of the afternoon.

But the hero of the lumber school was not thinking of them. What he was thinking of, Tom and Molly Lawrence did not know; but they saw that his fat face was deeply clouded as they trotted along on the Thompson trail.

They passed Mr. William Bowers on the trail as he trudged along; and Dry Billy swept off his ragged hat in salute, smiling in the most genial way at his rescuer.

The look Chunky Todgers gave him in return was anything but genial. It expressed dread and wrath and fury more than anything else.

After he had passed with his companions, Mr. Bowers winked at the trees, and indulged in a soft chuckle.

"Two dollars!" he murmured. "'Tain't much—bust me, I guess it ain't much! But I kinder calkerlate there's more to come—leetle by leetle—leetle by leetle!"

And Dry Billy chuckled again.

Perhaps Chunky Todgers had some inkling of the unscrupulous loafer's thoughts as he trotted along on his fat pony. Molly and her brother spoke to him in vain; they drew only monosyllabic replies from Chunky Todgers, whose thoughts seemed far away.

When they parted from him, Chunky rode on to the Todgers' homestead in a very unenviable frame of mind.

The thought of Mr. William Bowers, and the loafer's leering face, haunted him. He had a strong suspicion that he would see Mr. Bowers the next day—and the next—and the next—

"Oh, dear!" groaned Chunky. "I—I—I wish I hadn't— Oh, dear!"

Chunky's people found him rather low-spirited that evening. He was still down in doleful dumps when he started for school on the following morning—which really was very surprising in such a distinguished person as the hero of Cedar Creek.

THE END.

IN YOUR EDITOR'S DEN.

Write to me whenever you are in doubt or difficulty. Tell me about yourself; let me know what you think of the BOYS' FRIEND. All readers who write to me, and enclose a stamped envelope or postcard, may be sure of receiving a prompt and kindly reply by post. All letters should be addressed: "The Editor, the BOYS' FRIEND, The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C. 4."



Readers of the BOYS' FRIEND are invited to contribute short original paragraphs of general interest for publication on this page. Cash prizes of five shillings and half a crown, according to merit, will be awarded to the senders of all paragraphs published.

ARTHUR S. HARDY'S NEW STORY!

Next Monday's big number of the BOYS' FRIEND will be quite remarkable for value. In addition to our usual popular stories, which have grown in favour until they have come to be looked upon as regular features of the paper—the splendid stories of Jimmy Silver & Co., of Rookwood School; of Frank Richards & Co., of the School in the Backwoods, and of Dick Dorrington & Co. and Captain Bones, of the school-ship Bombay Castle—the first instalment will appear of a brand-new serial of school and sport, entitled

"THE SPORTS OF ST. CLIVE'S,"

By Arthur S. Hardy.

This story will be worked out in popular Mr. Hardy's own inimitable way, and, while the scene is laid at St. Clive's School, the story will contain a strong sporting interest which will inevitably make an irresistible appeal to the sporting proclivities of all my chums. Every British-born boy and girl inherits sporting proclivities, whether they will or no. It is bred in the bone, and it is largely this sporting spirit that has made the British Empire what it is to-day. Of course, it is more marked in some than in others, in accordance with varying temperaments, but it is there all the same, in every son and daughter of Britain. And it is just in his almost uncanny power of appealing to this inbred sporting spirit that the special charm of Arthur S. Hardy's work lies. His knowledge of human nature—and especially of the sporting side of human nature—is unrivalled, and this knowledge is the mainspring of his genius.

With these few words I will leave "THE SPORTS OF ST. CLIVE'S" to the judgment of my chums next week.

FAMOUS REGIMENTS.

A Service reader asks me to run a series of short histories of famous British Regiments. It is a great idea, but it offers many difficulties. There are so many famous corps, and there would take volumes to do justice to them all. Such a record would amount to a large part of the military history of the world. We should want to hear about King James the Second and the Coldstreams, and the old Scots Regiments, and the Welsh Fusiliers—famed in song as well as on

the battlefield—to say nothing of the Guards in the old wars in Flanders! The subject is so big that it could hardly be tackled in the way of brief weekly histories. Northumberland, Middlesex, Shropshire, Hertfordshire, and more, right down the long corridor of history. One has only to remember the names on the colours of any regiment to see this fact.

HAWKER.

Hawker will be a name to conjure with for ever. He was a pioneer, and the story of his heroic attempt to cross the thousands of miles of the Atlantic will ring through the ages. Whether he won or not is beside the point. He belongs to the Anglo-Saxon race, and he has carried on the story of our race in stirring style. Here is a new romance. It makes one smile to hear folks talk of this age as one in which romance is fading. Romance will never fade, and the spirit of it is found in the thought of two men who did not know fear up there in the loneliness of the desert spaces, the mighty sea beneath them, and just grit to carry them through.

HOLIDAY WORK.

This is all right enough in its way, but I think, in the case of boys and girls from school, that the less there is the better. It is not fair on the holiday, and it is not fair on the work. These summer tasks are apt to get pushed aside for more urgent matters—and the river, the country, and the playing field are urgent—while the thought of them hangs round most of the time. Something has got to be done, and there is the worry of it. No, there are times when work should be given a miss.

O.B. AND BUSINESS WRITING.

A cheery correspondent asks me what the letters O.B. mean. They stand for several things, including the Order of the Boot, but I am dead certain my racy friend will not get that on account of his writing. Yet he is a bit unhappy on that score—i.e. the state of his calligraphy, otherwise his "fist." The latter is all right, in my humble opinion, being as plain as palm trees, which is, together with neatness, the main requirement. Some people write in the catch-as-catch-can style. It is turn round three times and get what you may with them. There are others whose writing looks as if it had been swept by a strong wind. It lies all flat, like the farmer

hates to see his corn. I congratulate my Manchester chum on his method. Moreover, a plain, confident hand shows business ability and a desire to "get there."

THE VASTY DEEP.

"Dear Editor, my ambition is to be a sailor and see The sea! The sea! The rolling sea, The vasty deep."

My correspondent means the vasty deep, but his aim is right enough, and I wish him luck. He should read what Mr. John Margerison has to say about the calling in that useful book, "The Sea Services," which every bookseller knows about. Of course, it is not the easiest thing in the world to go to sea. Shipmasters often have jobs for lads, but the latter must be on hand when wanted. A fellow who is willing to chance it and seek employment at the docks when a ship is taking on fresh hands, may stand a very good chance, supposing he is cut out for the life, with a strong physique and a readiness to take what is going.

A FELLOW OF TWENTY.

The other day I received a lengthy letter from a young man of just over twenty. He was not satisfied, and I am not surprised at it, although he occupies a fine position, and is working for exams. The plain fact was that, notwithstanding his advantages, the possession of a luxurious home and the chance of getting through into a learned profession, he itched to be up and doing—making money, taking his place right away in the battle of the world. He fills up his spare time with amateur boxing. There was the spirit of action all through his letter, and plenty of manliness to boot. I fancy he is one among many. A chap is happier if he is earning his bread. He likes it better than depending on his father—even if the latter is the Pay-ter, as it were.

"Eight hours work, Eight hours play, Eight hours sleep, Eight bob a day."

There is a lot in it. My correspondent was, so to say, in a state of rebellion—quiet rebellion—not against his indulgent father, but against his fate of apparent indolence. A man is really a man when he earns the wherewithal to meet his own bread and margarine expenses, and the cost of his soap and shakedown. The allowance man, the remittance party and

the whole crowd, are a bit out of date. You can't get away from Burns—not that I want to, for that matter:

"The rank is but the guinea stamp, A man's a man for a' that!"

A CAPITAL WALK.

So many of my London friends ask me what to do with a half-day off, and where to go for a good country tramp, that I give below a brief outline of a little afternoon's tour of the Surrey commons. They are worth a visit.

Book from Victoria to Balham—only a few pence—and keep alongside Clapham Common as far as Nightingale Lane. You cross a corner of Wandsworth Common, pass over the railway-bridge, and take the Mitcham road. Mitcham is country still; but we have not got there yet! Tooting Common is next, and is quite interesting. It is reckoned the finest common near town. Keep to the right of Tooting Common and make for Streatham. This is likened in shape to an hour-glass. Anyhow, it is a breezy upland, where the visitor gets a whiff of the open, and the views are grand. When you reach the pond midway across the common, take the second footpath on the left and gain the fields. If you want a longer walk, don't turn off to Streatham, but bear away to Norwood and Thornton Heath, from which last-named place the train can be taken back to London.

Thousands of us neglect the nearby country. I am referring now only to those who can spare but little time for a rest and a scent of the fresh breezes. There is an enjoyable afternoon to be spent in a look round some of the Kentish villages—Eltham, Bickley, Keston, Hayes, and as far as Down, where Darwin lived.

A BIG BACK NUMBER DEPARTMENT.

Back numbers are always interesting, though it is as well to make sure one is not a back number oneself! I am only sorry that many of my friends who ask for the very old copies of the "Green 'Un" and the other Companion Papers have to go unsatisfied. The best way to have back numbers is to keep them. Otherwise, the papers get lost in the odd corners of the world.

Of course, there is one place where every paper is to be seen, under certain conditions, and if there is good reason for the request. That place is the British Museum, where all publications are filed. It would surprise

some of you to see the vast cellars where all the papers, daily and weekly, are taken care of, in case they are wanted later on. It all takes plenty of work as well as room. The BOYS' FRIEND is there—the first number dated 1895—as well as the "Magnet," the "Gem," and all the fleet of papers in connection.

There are acres of history in Bloomsbury. Everything that has happened is put on record ready for when wanted. The work went on despite the war.

If ever any of you visit the reading-room of the British Museum, it may interest you to remember that, apart from the countless thousands of books you see there, underneath, in the vast subterranean galleries, all the papers published are kept in perfect order and indexed for ready reference.

THE "BOYS' FRIEND" IN INDIA.

A friend of mine, writing from Fife, tells me that he heard a missionary, whose work lies in India, asking for papers for the boys of India, and special stress was laid on copies of the BOYS' FRIEND. I am glad to know that the old paper is so popular in the East, also that a representative of the Church should go out of his way to speak so well of the "Green 'Un"; but certainly it is reasonable enough, for the BOYS' FRIEND from the start was a weekly which was read throughout the British Empire, and wherever the English language was spoken.

LIFE'S WORK WELL DONE.

James Harvey Dale was a hero. He was one of those who would have succeeded in life any way; and he did succeed, though death came to him when he was still a lad.

Dale was a young reporter on the "South-Eastern Herald," and, when hurrying to his office with "copy," was knocked down and mortally injured by a lorry. Before he died he handed his despatch to a man and asked him to take it to the office, as it was very important. Then he dropped back and died.

We all like to read of heroism such as Dale's. He put duty before self. It is fellows of his mould who help the world onward.

Your Editor