



IN THIS ISSUE:

“MY BEST SCORING SHOTS!”

GRAND FOOTBALL ARTICLE BY . . . DAN SHEA BLACKBURN ROVERS' FAMOUS GOALGETTER.



The BOYS' FRIEND 1 1/2

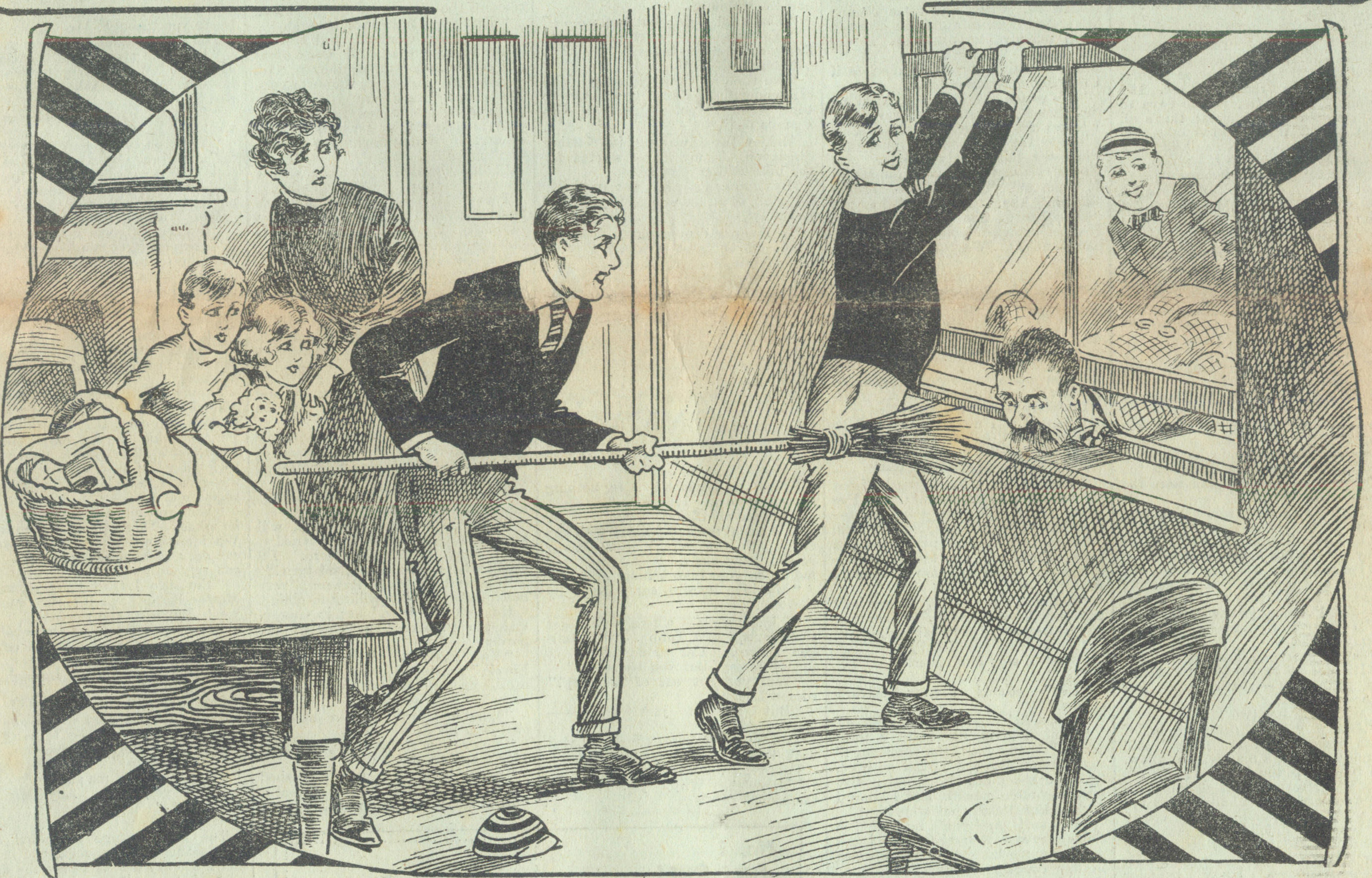
TWELVE PAGES!

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THREE HALFPENCE.

[Week Ending October 18th, 1919.

Rookwood to the Rescue!



HOLDING THE FORT!

As Mr. Smunk popped his head in at the open window, Jimmy Silver dragged down the sash again, and the broker's man gave a howl of anguish. "Yooop!" "Let me give him a oner on the napper with this broom!" said Raby. "Yooop! You keep that broom away!" shrieked Mr. Smunk. "I'll have you up for assault and battery! Yooop!"

The 1st Chapter. The Widow of Coombe.

Tommy Dodd, of the Modern Fourth at Rookwood, wore a worried look.

He was leaning against one of the old beeches in Big Quad, with his hands driven deep into his pockets, and a deep wrinkle in his brow.

So immersed was he in reflection, that he did not even observe Jimmy Silver & Co. as they came sauntering along from the School House.

Jimmy Silver glanced at him and smiled.

Lovell and Raby and Newcome smiled too. They found something

rather comic in Tommy Dodd's attitude, as he stood with his eyes fixed on the ground, unconscious of their proximity. It was a very unusual thing for Tommy Dodd to be so deeply buried in meditation.

"Halt!" murmured Jimmy Silver. The four Classical juniors halted. "Something's up with Tommy!" grinned the captain of the Fourth.

"He must be thinking of his sins, to judge by his look. Let's wake him up."

"Hear, hear!" murmured Lovell. And the Fistical Four trod softly towards the Modern junior, with the playful intention of waking him up by collaring him suddenly and sitting him down in the quad.

Fortunately for Tommy Dodd, he observed them as they came closer, and Arthur Edward Lovell's outstretched hand was almost upon him when Tommy gave a jump and started back in alarm.

That, however, was not fortunate for him. He had forgotten the beech-trunk just behind him.

Crack!

"Yow!" howled Tommy Dodd. The back of Tommy's head had smitten the beech with a sudden and painful smite. Jimmy Silver & Co. burst into a roar.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ow, ow!" Tommy Dodd rubbed the back of his head and glared at the Classical juniors. "You silly

chumps! You startled me! Ow, wow, yow!"

"We were only going to wake you up, old top!" said Jimmy Silver. "What do you mean by going to sleep in the quad, standing up like a horse?"

"I wasn't asleep, you Classical chump! Ow! I was thinking!"

"Gammon!"

"Fathead!" growled Tommy. "Anything up?" asked Jimmy Silver.

"Has Mr. Manders been going for you?"

"No. Ow!"

"Dear old Knowles on the war-path again?"

"No, ass! Ow! I've hurt my napper—"

"Lucky there's nothing in it!" remarked Lovell. "You might have damaged it if there had been!"

"Ass!" Tommy Dodd rubbed his head again. "Well, I suppose its no good thinking; I can't do anything. It seems a shame, though!"

The Fistical Four looked at him. Tommy Dodd's remarks seemed rather cryptic to them.

"Of course you can't do anything," agreed Jimmy Silver. "You Modern chaps never can. But what's the matter? What's a shame? Tell your Uncle James!"

"About Mrs. Wickers!" said Tommy.

"Well?"

"You remember her—the little

ROOKWOOD TO THE RESCUE!

(Continued from the previous page.)

widow at Coombe, who does sewing and things for Mrs. Chisholm?" said Tommy. "You've seen her coming here to the Head's house, I dare say."

"Lots of times," said Jimmy Silver. "Anything wrong there?" "Yes," grunted Tommy Dodd. "I was trying to think whether I could do anything to help. But where's a chap to raise pounds and pounds? Can't be done!"

"Well, it wouldn't be easy!" said Lovell. "If it was bobs and bobs, or tanners and tanners—"

"Oh, don't be funny!" growled Tommy Dodd. "This is a serious matter. I say it's a shame. Her husband was killed in France, and it doesn't seem fair to me, somehow, that she should have to suffer for it. It was bad enough in itself, without losing her home, too. But a chap can't do anything. I was thinking, perhaps, I could call on her landlord and give him a pink eye. But I suppose that wouldn't do any real good!"

"Not to him, anyway," said Raby. "It is a shame, really. How do you know about it?"

"I was down in Coombe before dinner," explained Tommy Dodd. "I met one of the nippers there, and asked the kid how they were getting on. And little Franky told me. It's a shame. Of course, people have to pay rent for their houses; that's all right. But it's a rotten case, because old Grubb, the landlord, is a rich man. It isn't as if he was one of the little property-holders who've been hard hit by the war. He's got lots of oof. He could afford to let it go!"

"And he won't?" "No, he won't! He ought to. Poor old Wickers lost his life, and I don't see why old Grubb can't lose his money. That would make it fair all round. But—but—"

"Well, what's going to happen?" "Bailiffs!" grunted Tommy. "Oh!"

The Fistical Four looked very serious now.

They had a very dim and far-away idea of the mysterious processes of the law, but they knew there was some process by which a tenant's goods and chattels could be seized if the rent was not paid, and that the bailiff and the bailiff's man were the instruments thereof.

"Poor woman!" said Newcome softly.

"I—I say, how much is it?" asked Raby. "If a chap could help—"

"I don't know how much, but it's pounds and pounds," said Tommy Dodd. "I was trying to think it out, but—but I've only got twopence—"

"If we had time—" began Jimmy Silver.

Tommy shook his head. "It's got to be paid by two-thirty this afternoon—that's the last chance," he said.

"My hat! It's two now!"

"And if it isn't paid the bailiff takes possession of the place," said Tommy. "Puts a man in, you know. Old Shingle is the bailiff—crusty old beast! I remember his slanging me last winter because I knocked his hat off with a snowball—awfully crusty old beggar! I jolly well wish now it had knocked his head off. Fancy poor little Mrs. Wickers with a man in possession—a boozey bouncer mooching around the house. And the poor little woman with two nippers—and her husband buried over in France. Oh, it's too bad. It makes me feel ill!"

And Tommy Dodd gave a loud snort, expressive of a variety of feelings.

"If there was time—" said Lovell.

"But there isn't!"

Jimmy Silver knitted his brows.

"This is too jolly rotten!" he exclaimed. "It's got to be stopped!"

"Got any tin?" asked Tommy.

"About five bob—"

"Then you can't do anything, any more than I can!"

"My dear chap, consider the difference in intellect!" said Jimmy Silver reprovingly.

"Fatehead!"

"It's up to us, somehow," said Jimmy Silver. "We haven't any money to speak of, certainly, but—"

"It's money that's wanted, ass!"

"But something going to be done!" said Jimmy Silver firmly.

"Poor Mrs. Wickers is going to be done, and you're a silly ass, Jimmy Silver," grunted Tommy Dodd, and he walked away, evidently in a very depressed frame of mind.

The 2nd Chapter. Up to Uncle James!

Jimmy Silver wrinkled his brows. His chums looked at him silently. The Classical quartette were all deeply interested by poor Mrs. Wickers' misfortune, and they would gladly have done anything they could to help. But certainly they were not in a position to help in a financial way.

Given time, they could possibly have raised the required money somewhere, somehow, and they would have spared no effort to do so. But there was no time.

The heavy hand was about to fall upon Mrs. Wickers' little home.

But Lovell and Raby and Newcome watched Jimmy Silver's thoughtful face with a faint hope. They had great faith in "Uncle James," of Rookwood. Often and often Jimmy Silver had risen to a difficult occasion when nobody else could see a way out.

But this time it really looked as if Uncle James was powerless.

"It's rotten!" said Lovell, breaking the silence at last. "It was Mrs. Wickers that Mornington took some quids to the other week, you know, when the fellows thought he was blowin' his cash at the Bird-in-Hand. It came out through Tubby Muffin watchin' him. I suppose he just helped her to tide over for a time. But the chopper's coming down now, and no mistake. We can't do anything, Jimmy."

Jimmy made a gesture. "I'm thinking," he said.

"Well, what about?"

The junior captain of Rookwood drew a deep breath.

"It's up to us!" he said.

"But what—"

"You chaps know anything about the law?" asked Jimmy Silver.

Lovell shrugged his shoulders.

"Blessed if I do, or want to!" he answered. "I only know it's something the lawyers live on, to save the trouble of working. What—"

"Well, I don't know much about it," admitted Jimmy Silver; "but I've heard about cases like this before—read 'em in the papers. Now, if Mrs. Wickers had time to pay, we could rally round, and see her through—somehow. The question is to gain time."

"But that's the point. There isn't any time," said Lovell. "The man will be in possession in half an hour!"

"He won't!" said Jimmy.

"What'll stop him, then?"

"Us!"

"Us!" echoed Jimmy Silver's chums.

"Little us!" agreed Jimmy.

"Well, if giving the bailiff a thick ear will do any good, I'm your man!" said Arthur Edward Lovell at once.

"I could knock out old Shingle. I've seen him often enough, and I know I could. But would that stop him?"

"No, ass! And you'd be landed in chokey for assault and battery! Don't you know the law has to be respected in this country?" demanded Jimmy severely.

"Oh, blow the law!"

"Why, you're a blessed Bolshevik!" exclaimed Jimmy indignantly. "The law's all right. There's always two sides to a question, and the law takes notice of both sides. Now, I tell you I've read about these things. It's the law for Shingle to put his man into Mrs. Wickers' house till the rent is paid or the goods and chattels sold. But it's also the law that Mrs. Wickers can keep him out if she likes!"

"My hat! Is it really?"

"Certainly!"

"Then what the thump's the good of the law if it can be walked round like that?"

"Well, lawyers must live!" said Jimmy tolerantly. "Anyhow, what we've got to deal with is the matter as it stands. If Mrs. Wickers don't let the bailiff in he can't get in, can he?"

"Couldn't he bust the door?"

"No: that's against the law!"

"Well, my word!" said Lovell, in

amazement. "He can walk in if the door's not locked, but if it is locked he musn't bust it!"

"Exactly."

"Well, the chap who said the law was an ass knew what he was talking about!"

"Never mind that; that's the law! To shove a way into the house they have to get an order or an injunction, or something, from some old johnny in a wig, and that takes time. Everything connected with the law takes time; that's the beauty of it. There's no hustle about the law. Now do you see?" asked Jimmy Silver.

"If the bailiffs are kept out, that gains the time we want, and, somehow or another, the old hunks can be paid."

"But—but little Mrs. Wickers couldn't stand a siege in her house!" ejaculated Raby. "The bailiff would be mooching round all the time, looking for a chance to dodge in if the door was opened."

"Then it must not be opened."

"But Mrs. Wickers couldn't. The poor little soul hasn't the nerve—"

"Probably not; but we have. The end study is famous for its nerves!" said Jimmy Silver calmly.

"We—we— But we—" stuttered Newcome.

"We're going to be the garrison," said Jimmy Silver.

"Oh crumbs!"

"Dash it all, old Wickers stood up for us when the Huns were coming!" said Jimmy Silver warmly. "It's up to us to stand up for his little home and his widow!"

"That's all right; but can we—"

"We can, and we're going to! Come and get the bikes!"

"But—but—"

"No time for buts, old chap. You can understudy a billy goat another time, when it's not so pressing. Get a move on!"

And, without waiting for further discussion, Jimmy Silver started for the bike-shed at a run.

His chums blinked at one another.

"Well, of all the stunts!" ejaculated Lovell.

"I fancy we're going to look for about the biggest scrape we ever landed into!" observed Raby.

Lovell grinned.

"Well, let's go and look for it!" he said. "Anyhow, Jimmy's going, so we've got to go, too. Come on!"

And the Co. ran after their leader.

In a very short time the Fistical Four were wheeling their bicycles out of the gates.

Tubby Muffin of the Classical Fourth met them in the gateway, and planted his fat person in the way.

"You fellows going out for a spin this afternoon?" Tubby inquired.

"Yes. Jump away!"

"Hold on, Jimmy! I've nothing special to do this afternoon."

"We have. Clear!"

"I'll spend the half-holiday with you chaps, if you like," said Tubby Muffin generously. "You can take me up on your bike behind, Jimmy."

"My bike doesn't carry cargo by the ton!"

"I know a place where we can get some tarts," said Tubby. "I'll show you where. I'm rather short of money to-day, but you chaps—"

"Will you get out of the way?" roared Lovell.

"But I was just saying— Yaroooop!"

Two or three front wheels collided with Tubby Muffin's fat legs at once. Tubby gave a roar, and sat down.

"Yaroooh! Why, you rotters! Ooooooop!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Don't you wheel your beastly bikes over my trousers, you rotters! Why, you awful cads! Oh crikey!"

Tubby Muffin sat, looking rather dusty, after the Fistical Four had passed, and shook a fat fist after them.

Unheeding the fat Classical, Jimmy Silver & Co. mounted their machines, and started for Coombe, and the pedals fairly flew.

The 3rd Chapter.

Rookwooders to the Rescue.

Jimmy Silver & Co. put on a speed in Coombe Lane that was almost reckless, but their excuse was that they were, so to speak, riding to the rescue.

The four bicycles fairly hummed along the lane.

In a very brief space of time they were in the old-fashioned High Street of Coombe, and there they had to slacken a little. They turned from the High Street into Water Lane, a straggling street that led down towards the river.

Water Lane was not a wealthy quarter. Little detached cottages stood in little trim gardens, poor, but neat and clean and homely. Half-way down the street a crowd was gathered outside poor Mrs. Wickers' cottage. The news that the "broker's man" was coming had spread, and neighbours had gathered round, to express sympathy and indignation, or to look on and talk. Lovell uttered an exclamation, as he made a gesture towards a fat man, who was marching along towards the cottage on the pavement.

"That's old Shingle!" he said.

The rescuers were only just in time.

Mr. Shingle, the bailiff, was a stout and rather important gentleman, with a red face and thick side-whiskers. He walked with his fat chin well up, perhaps from a consciousness of his own importance, or perhaps to give room for his double-chin to expand over his collar.

Behind him, a shabby man, with a hungry face was shambling humbly.

This, evidently, was Mr. Shingle's factotum, the "man" whom he put in possession when hapless tenants did not pay their rent.

Mr. Shingle did not deign to walk with his "man." He kept ahead, and affected to be ignorant of the "man's" existence.

Jimmy Silver & Co. passed the pair on the way and shot ahead, reaching Mrs. Wickers' cottage a good distance ahead of them.

The crowd cleared back a little as the four bikes came buzzing on, and the juniors jumped down at the garden gate.

There was a Rookwood fellow coming down the street—Rawson of the Fourth—and Jimmy Silver called to him.

"Hallo! What's the row here?" asked Rawson, crossing over.

"Take our bikes, old chap, will you?" said Jimmy Silver hurriedly. "We may be staying here. I'll explain later. Do us a good turn!"

"Certainly!" said Rawson, very much surprised, but willing to oblige.

He took the four bikes in charge, and the Fistical Four entered the garden.

"You stand at the gate a bit, Lovell," muttered Jimmy. "If those cads come up before we're ready, keep 'em back somehow!"

"What-ho!" said Arthur Edward, clenching his fists.

"You're not to hit them, you ass! That's against the law!"

"Look here, I'm not a dashed lawyer!" growled Arthur Edward.

"How am I to know what's against

the law and what isn't? What's the matter with hitting Shingle in the eye?"

"Ass! You come in with me, then!" said Jimmy, catching Lovell by the arm. "Raby, you stay at the gate, and keep them in talk somehow. Give us time to get ready for the cads!"

"Leave it to me!" said Raby.

George Raby stationed himself at the gate, and the other three ran up to the house. Master Franky's chubby face was glued to a front-window pane, and he ran to open the door.

Mrs. Wickers came down the little hall—or, rather, passage—as the juniors entered.

The poor widow's face was pale, and wet with tears.

"Oh, Master Silver!" she exclaimed.

"We know all about it, ma'am," said Jimmy Silver, taking off his cap. "We've come to help."

"Oh, but—but—"

"Mr. Shingle is just down the street."

"I'm expecting him every minute," faltered the widow. "It is terrible! My poor little home, and the children—"

Mrs. Wickers' tears flowed afresh. "What can I do? I could pay my way, with the pension and the garden and the sewing, only it's what I owe for so long! It was because little Alice was ill, and the money went then. But, of course, you young gentlemen wouldn't understand about that."

"We jolly well do understand," said Jimmy Silver, "and we're going to see you through, Mrs. Wickers!"

The widow shook her head.

"But I mean it!" exclaimed Jimmy. "We're going to raise the tin somehow—you take my word for that!"

"But I—I couldn't—I couldn't let you!"

"Yes, you could, and you're going to," answered Jimmy. "That's all right! But we've got to get the time to do it. See, Mrs. Wickers? You're not going to let those men in. See?"

Mrs. Wickers started.

"But they'll come in!" she said.

"They can't, if you keep them out. They have to start another process or something. It's the law," explained Jimmy.

"If—if you're sure it's the law, Master Silver—"

"Quite sure."

"Well, I suppose you know, up at the big school," said poor Mrs. Wickers.

Jimmy Silver suppressed a smile. Valuable as a knowledge of the law undoubtedly was, that was not a subject included in the curriculum at Rookwood. But Jimmy was willing to let it go at that. He was sure of his ground, and it was necessary to reassure the widow.

"Will you leave it to us, ma'am?" he asked. "We will see you through. We know just what those bouncers can do, and what they can't do. You can rely on us!"

"I'm sure I trust your judgment, Master Silver, and it's very kind of you! But what can we do?"

"Fasten all the doors and windows, and tell them to go and eat coke!" answered Jimmy promptly.

Mrs. Wickers smiled through her tears.

She was not likely to tell Mr. Shingle and his man to go and eat coke, but she was ready to carry out the rest of Jimmy's instructions.

"We'll help!" said Newcome. "You'll allow us, ma'am?"

"Yes, yes, yes! Anything you think best!"

"Good!"

The little cottage contained only four rooms and a passage, and it was not a lengthy task to secure the doors and windows. There were only two doors, one back and one front. Newcome ran to the back door, and locked and bolted it. Lovell fastened the windows of the sitting-room and kitchen. Jimmy Silver remained at the front door, ready.

"Right!" called out Newcome.

"All serene!"—from Lovell.

Jimmy shouted to Raby at the gate. "This way, Raby!"

From the gate there was a sound of voices in dispute. Mr. Shingle and his factotum were there.

The 4th Chapter. No Admittance!

George Raby had his foot against the gate. There was no lock on it, only a latch, and it could not be fastened.

Mr. Shingle laid a fat and heavy hand on the gate to open it. As Raby's foot was in the way, naturally it did not open.

Mr. Shingle frowned at the Rookwood junior.

"Are you holding the gate, boy?" he exclaimed.

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ROOKWOOD TO THE RESCUE!

(Continued from the previous page.)

"Not at all, old top!"
"You have your foot against it!" exclaimed Mr. Shingle.
"Well, that isn't holding it, is it?" asked Raby, with a sweet smile at the bailiff.

"Open the gate at once!"
"My dear man, I'm not a gate-opener!"
"Let me pass in!" shouted Mr. Shingle angrily.

Raby cast a glance behind him at the house. He was there to keep the bailiff and his man back until Jimmy Silver had made the preparations for a siege.

"The question is, who are you, and what do you want?" he said.
"I'm doing the lodge-keeper stunt at present for Mrs. Wickers, and I can't let in suspicious characters!"

There was a giggle from the crowd in the road, and Mr. Shingle's fat face became purple.

"Mrs. Wickers knows perfectly well who I am, and what I have come for!" he snorted. "I am here to put a man in possession of the rent!"

"Got any credentials to show?" inquired Raby.

"I shall not show them to you, boy!"

"I am afraid I can't let you pass until I'm sure about you!" said Raby, still with his foot planted against the gate, keeping it shut. "You may be a burglar, for all I know!"

"What!"
"Or a German spy!" said Raby cheerfully. "You look like one!"

"Boy!" roared Mr. Shingle.

"Man!" replied Raby.

"Will you release that gate at once?" thundered Mr. Shingle.

"Otherwise I shall box your ears!"

"Look out for you waistcoat if you do!" retorted Raby undauntedly. "I shall buff you on the watch-chain!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" came from the road.

Mr. Shingle glared at Raby, but certainly he could not box the Rookwood junior's ears without exposing his ample waistcoat to attack. So he refrained. He grasped the gate with both hands and shoved. Raby kept his foot jammed to it, close to the ground, and the gate did not move.

"Smunk!" roared Mr. Shingle.

His man came up.

"Yes, sir!"

"Push this gate open, Smunk, you fool! What do I pay you for?"

Smunk grasped the gate in his turn, and the bailiff and his man shoved together. It was at that moment that Jimmy Silver's call came from the house.

"This way, Raby!"

It was only just in time, for the pressure without was too strong for the junior. Raby made a sudden jump back and ran for the house.

Mr. Shingle and his man were pressing with full force on the gate when Raby jumped away from it. It flew wide open with startling suddenness, and the two men sprawled headlong upon the gravel path inside.

Crash!

Bump!

"Yoooooooooop!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" came in a yell from the delighted crowd in the roadway.

While Mr. Shingle and his man were sprawling, Raby reached the house, and ran inside. Jimmy Silver slammed the door, locked and bolted it, and put the chain on.

"Done 'em!" gasped Raby.

"Good man!" chuckled Jimmy Silver.

He looked through the keyhole.

Mr. Shingle and Smunk had staggered to their feet, very red and breathless and gravelly. The bailiff was relieving his feelings by "slanging" the hapless Smunk. He talked to Smunk with great emphasis for several minutes, while the crowd outside chortled. At length, however, Mr. Shingle came back to the business in hand, and walked up the garden path to the house, Smunk following at his heels like a bullied dog.

Rap, rap, rap!

Mr. Shingle gave three terrific knocks at the door, which could have been heard as far as the High Street.

"Oh dear!" gasped Mrs. Wickers.

She made a movement as if to open the door, overawed by the truculent Shingle, and the unknown and mysterious powers of the law that he was supposed to wield.

But Jimmy Silver interposed.

"Leave him to us, ma'am!"

"If—if you're sure, Master Silver—"

faltered Mrs. Wickers.

"Quite sure, ma'am!"

"Very well, Master Silver," said the widow resignedly.

Rap, rap, rap!

"Will you let me in, Mrs. Wickers?" thundered the bailiff, in a voice that rang through the little cottage from end to end.

There were startled gasps from Alice and Franky, and Alice began to cry. Mrs. Wickers trembled, but Jimmy Silver did not falter. It required more than a loud and bullying voice to disturb the serenity of "Uncle James" of Rookwood.

"Hullo! Who's that?" he inquired through the keyhole.

"Open the door!"

"Is that Shingle?"

"Yes!" roared the bailiff.

"Then you can go and eat coke!"

"What?"

me at once you will take the consequences!" he thundered.

"Oh dear!" gasped the widow.

"All right, ma'am; he's only blowing off gas!" said Jimmy Silver reassuringly. "There aren't any consequences."

"Will you let me in immediately—immediately?" raved Mr. Shingle.

"Not this week, old top!" answered Jimmy Silver through the keyhole.

"I give you one minute!" thundered Mr. Shingle. "If the door is not opened in one minute I will have it broken in. Smunk, get an axe!"

"Yessir!"

There was a wail from little Alice and a sob from Mrs. Wickers.

"Oh, Master Silver, if they're going to break in—"

"Only spoof, ma'am!" answered Jimmy Silver. "He dare not do it. Even bailiffs have to obey the law."

And Jimmy called through the keyhole: "Mr. Shingle, if you do any damage to this door you will be held responsible. You'll be prosecuted, you rotter! Understand?"

There was a furious snort from Mr. Shingle. He was quite aware that he dared not carry out his threat—at least, if there was anybody in the place who was acquainted with the law on the subject. With poor people, ignorant of the law, Mr. Shingle sometimes took chances, but

"Oh dear! Oh dear!" said the widow.

"Of course he's gone!" said Jimmy Silver cheerfully. "Nothing for him to do here. He's left his man, but it won't hurt you if the man stands in the porch for a bit, will it?"

"Not at all!" smiled Mrs. Wickers.

"We'll stay on, if you don't mind," said Jimmy.

"They may come back and try some dodges. It's a half-holiday at Rookwood to-day. Mind, after we're gone you're not to open door or window. They can't do anything so long as you keep them shut out. They've got to get some authority from some old donkey in a court somewhere. I don't know how many days it takes, but it's a good many. Before the time's up we'll manage to square the rent with Mr. Grubb."

"Oh, sir!"

"You won't be able to go out and do any shopping," said Jimmy.

"But that's all right. We'll do some shopping for you."

"But—but I—"

"This is our treat, Mrs. Wickers!" said Jimmy Silver firmly. "You're to give me a list of things you want, and we'll get them—grub and so on. Shell out, you chaps!"

"Oh, rather!"

Jimmy Silver held out his cap, and the chums of Rookwood "whacked" in contributions, so far as their limited financial resources allowed. Fifteen

be hanged than I am," said Jimmy Silver.

"Why can't you show your face like an honest man, instead of coming here with a mask on?"

"Eh? Watcher mean? I ain't got a mask on!"

"What? Isn't that a Guy Fawkes mask you're wearing?" asked Jimmy Silver, in surprise.

"You—you—you young rip!" roared Mr. Smunk, greatly enraged at having his features mistaken for a Guy Fawkes mask.

"My mistake!" said Jimmy Silver. "Natural mistake, under the circumstances, Mr. Smunk—don't you think so?"

"I wish I 'ad 'old of your hear!" was Mr. Smunk's reply.

"Hard lines on you, waiting here like this, Smunky! What will they do without you at the pub?"

"My eye! I'll—I'll—!" Words failed Mr. Smunk, and he began to kick furiously at the door by way of expressing his feelings.

"Go it, old bird!" said Jimmy Silver encouragingly.

Mr. Smunk went it.

He was thus engaged when Arthur Edward Lovell came round the cottage from the back, grinned at him, and passed on to the gate. Mr. Smunk stopped kicking the door, and stared after him. He realised that the back door must have been opened, and he rushed round the house.

But the back door was closed and bolted; and at the kitchen window Raby kissed his hand to the enraged bailiff's man.

Mr. Smunk shook his fist in response, and retired to the front porch again, in a very surly temper. The bailiff's man was not enjoying his afternoon.

Mrs. Wickers made tea, and Jimmy Silver & Co. started a game with Alice and Franky to keep up their spirits. Newcome displayed a keen and well-sustained interest in Alice's doll, and did not seem to tire of seeing it open and shut its eyes—indeed, he displayed wonder and delight every time Alice made the doll move its optics—and Alice was quite happy.

Franky rode about on Jimmy Silver's shoulders in a state of great delight, oblivious of bailiffs and men in possession. There was quite a happy family in the cottage when Lovell returned with a bag crammed with provender of various kinds.

Mr. Smunk blinked at Lovell with beery eyes as the junior came up the garden path.

He understood that the Rookwooder had brought provisions for the siege, and he grinned at him evilly.

"So you're a-going in agin, are you?" he said. "Well, when you goes in, in I goes, and you can put that in your pipe and smoke it, young feller-me-lad!"

"Thanks, I don't smoke," said Lovell politely.

"You jest look out!" said Mr. Smunk.

"I'm here, Jimmy!" called out Lovell.

"I know you are, old top!" called back Jimmy. "I could hear your fairy footsteps a mile off!"

"Fathead!"

"Got the provender?"

"Yes, here it is; but this bat-eyed blighter says he's coming in when I do!"

"You jest watch!" sneered Mr. Smunk.

Jimmy Silver had expected this emergency, and he was ready for it.

"Bring it round to the kitchen window, Lovell," he called out.

"Right you are!"

Mr. Smunk followed Lovell round to the kitchen window with a very vengeful expression on his face. Jimmy Silver's face appeared at the little window. Behind him was Raby, with a garden-broom in his hands. Mr. Smunk had a rather dubious expression as he looked through the glass and saw that broom.

Jimmy opened the lower sash of the little window as Lovell put the crammed bag on the sill. He caught the bag and drew it in, and at the same moment Mr. Smunk shoved Lovell roughly aside, and shoved his head and shoulders in at the window after the bag.

"Now, then!" he said triumphantly.

The little window was just about large enough for Mr. Smunk to crawl in through—if he was not stopped.

But he was stopped!

Jimmy Silver dragged down the sash again, and Mr. Smunk's triumphant remark was cut short, and turned into a howl of anguish, as the sash caught him on the back of the neck.

"Yooooooooop!"

The expression on Mr. Smunk's face was extraordinary as he stood pinned, with his head inside, his body outside, and the sash jammed on the back of his neck.

"Leggo!" he howled.

"Not a bit of it!" answered Jimmy Silver cheerily. "I'm holding this sash for the present."



RABY'S LITTLE JOKE! Mr. Shingle and his man were pressing with full force on the gate when Raby jumped away from it. It flew wide open with startling suddenness, and the two men sprawled headlong upon the gravelled path inside. "Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the delighted crowd.

"Coke!"

"Why, you—you—what—who—"

spluttered Mr. Shingle. "I demand admittance to this house at once!"

"Rats!"

"Smunk!" howled Mr. Shingle.

"Sir!"

"Don't stand there staring like a fool! Go round and get in at the back door, and open this door for me."

"Yessir!"

Smunk went round the cottage.

There was a chuckle from the Fistical Four inside, as they heard Smunk trying over the back door. He came back to his master in a few minutes.

"It won't open, sir!"

"What?"

"It's locked inside, I think, sir!"

"Fool! Find an open window, then!"

The hapless Smunk went round the house again. But he came back after a fruitless quest.

"All the winders seem to be fastened inside, sir!"

Mr. Shingle gave a snort. He was growing intensely exasperated. He was a busy man, and this was wasting his time. He had other homes to break up, and he felt indignant at being delayed in carrying out that happy task.

He rapped fiercely on the door again.

"Mrs. Wickers, if you do not admit

he was aware that it would not pay him to take chances now.

The minute elapsed, but there was no attack on the door; neither had Mr. Smunk fetched an axe.

Outside, in the little wooden porch, Mr. Shingle fumed and snorted. He was quite at a loss.

"Smunk!" he rapped out at last.

"Yessir!"

"Stay here. Enter the house as soon as the door is opened, and do not leave it again!"

"Yessir!"

And Mr. Shingle whirled round and strode away, still snorting with fury; and his fat form disappeared up the street, followed by a loud and prolonged hiss from the crowd of on-lookers. The faithful Smunk remained on guard, sucking at a tobaccoless pipe in the porch, and looking thoughtfully into the honeysuckle.

The 5th Chapter.

Besieged!

"Victory!" grinned Arthur Edward Lovell.

"Hurrah!"

"He—he is gone!" exclaimed Mrs. Wickers breathlessly.

"He's gone, mum!" howled Master Franky, from the front window. "I see him go. He's mizzled, mum!"

shillings reposed in the cap. It was all they had.

"But—but I can't allow—"

gasped Mrs. Wickers.

"Stuff!" said Jimmy. "Ain't we in charge of this fort, holding it against the Huns? You're only a member of the garrison, Mrs. Wickers. You place this matter in my hands just as if I were your father, you know."

Mrs. Wickers laughed. She could not help it.

However, Jimmy Silver had his way, and Mrs. Wickers, having made up the list required, it was handed to Lovell, who was to do the shopping, together with the food-tickets.

"Now, we mustn't let Smunk get in while you're getting out, old top!" said Jimmy. "You get out of the back door, and Raby's to bolt it immediately you're outside. I'll talk to the Smunk-bird through the keyhole here, and keep him busy."

"Right-ho!"

Jimmy Silver looked through the keyhole of the front door.

Mr. Smunk was shifting from one leg to the other, apparently growing tired already.

"Hallo, old man!" said Jimmy.

"Do you want to come in?"

"Yes!" growled Smunk.

"Getting tired of waiting?"

"Ang you!"

"My hat! You're more likely to

"You're a-breaking of my neck!" wailed Mr. Smunk.

"Yes? Is it of any value?"

"Why, you—you—you—"

"I dare say we could screw the window like this," remarked Jimmy Silver thoughtfully. "Would you mind, Smunk?"

"Yaroooooh!"

"Let me give him a oer on the napper with this broom!" said Raby. "He's nicely placed. He won't want more than one!"

"Yoop! You keep that broom away!" shrieked Mr. Smunk. "I'll yave you up for 'sault and battery! Yoooooh!"

"Better fasten him in as he is!" said Newcome.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Lovell outside. "Shall I spank him?"

"Yow-ow-ow! You keep off!" yelled Mr. Smunk, kicking out wildly behind.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, I'll tell you what!" said Jimmy Silver. "I'll push up the sash again, and you knock his head out with that broom, Raby. Catch him fairly on the boko with it, and he'll go, I think!"

"Leave it to me!"

"Yow-ow-ow—elp!"

"Ready?"

"Go it!" answered Raby.

Jimmy Silver pushed up the sash again. Raby was brandishing the broom, and Mr. Smunk did not wait for his head to be knocked out—as Jimmy fully expected he wouldn't! He withdrew it quickly.

Slam! went the window again, and Jimmy fastened it, grinning through the panes at the infuriated Mr. Smunk.

Mr. Smunk shook an enraged fist at him. He came very near smashing the glass in his wrath, but he did not venture to go that length.

"Well, am I coming in?" called out Lovell, as Mr. Smunk stood rubbing his neck and muttering.

Jimmy Silver shook his head.

"No need, old chap. You get home, and ask Rawson for the bikes, and bring them as far as the corner, and wait for us there. We're coming out at dusk, you know. These rotters aren't allowed to act after dark—that's the giddy law!"

"Well, that's rather a sensible law!" remarked Lovell. "I'm off, then!"

And Arthur Edward Lovell walked away whistling.

Mr. Smunk eyed the juniors grinning at the window, with feelings too deep for words. As Lovell was not going in again, after all, Mr. Smunk's chance of getting in along with him had vanished. Jimmy Silver kissed his hand to the enraged bailiff's man and smiled sweetly. Mr. Smunk scowled and tramped round to the front of the house again to resume his vigil in the porch.

The 6th Chapter.
The Victor.

Jimmy Silver & Co. were very cheery that afternoon—it was a rather unusual and rather exciting way of passing a half-holiday, and they had

the pleasant consciousness that they were doing good. Little Alice and Franky forgot all their troubles in the merry company of the Rookwood juniors, and even poor Mrs. Wickers brightened up and smiled. Jimmy Silver's method of dealing with the difficult situation had astounded the poor woman; but his success was very encouraging, and the widow had the firmest faith in "Uncle James," of Rookwood.

During the afternoon Mr. Shingle reappeared, and made some excited remarks when he found his man still outside the house—like a very shabby and beery Peri at the gate of Paradise.

"Haven't you got in yet, you fool?" inquired Mr. Shingle.

"I ain't 'ad a chance, guv'nor!"

"What do I pay you for?" roared Mr. Shingle.

Smunk did not answer that question. He asked another.

"Ow am I to get any grub, sir? I'm 'ungry."

"You have to get into the house. The tenant has to keep the bailiff's man while in possession. You've been in enough houses to know that, you idiot!"

"But I can't get in, can I?" wailed the hapless Mr. Smunk.

"That's your business. You should get in."

"Am I to stay 'ere without nothing to heat?" demanded Mr. Smunk, showing signs of rebellion. Even the worm will turn; and undoubtedly Mr. Smunk was a worm.

Mr. Shingle snorted.

"You ought to have got in, somehow. I don't pay you to loaf around in front gardens admiring the landscape. Get in, and they have to feed you."

"But I can't get in!" howled Mr. Smunk. "There's a gang of young rips in the 'ouse, a-keeping of me hout!"

"That's your look-out! Get in, somehow!"

And Mr. Shingle stalked away in great dudgeon.

Mr. Smunk groaned.

He had to keep up his vigil till dark; and he was hungry, and more thirsty than he was hungry. He thought of the tap-room at the Black Boy, and groaned again. Then he shook a dirty fist at a grinning face that looked from a window, and settled down to his vigil.

After dark, he would have to retire—as the bailiff's delightful occupation cannot be carried on after sunset—but it was not near dark yet. But Mr. Smunk was aware that the schoolboys would have to get away before dark, and he still hoped to dodge in when they dodged out. Once inside, he was a fixture. The poor widow would have to provide for his wants, and Mr. Smunk meant to be very exacting as a compensation for the troubles of the afternoon.

But he was not inside yet.

Jimmy Silver was thinking over the question of retreat, as the dusk began to fall over Coombe.

At the end of the street Lovell was waiting with the bicycles for the

garrison of the cottage to return to Rookwood. The Co. had to join him without letting Mr. Smunk into the house.

"You'll remember, Mrs. Wickers, to keep doors and windows fastened all day to-morrow," said Jimmy Silver. "After dark they can't do anything, so you'll be all right when we're gone. To-morrow we're going to raise the wind somehow to see you clear, but until we've done that,

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you've got to keep those rotters outside. You catch on?"

The widow smiled faintly.

"Yes, Master Silver, I'm leaving it to you. I don't know how to thank you."

"Don't trouble," answered Jimmy. "We'll chance it about call-over, for once, and not leave till it's quite dark. And we'll manage all right about that beery old bird outside. You're to bolt the door after us, you know!"

"Yes, yes!"

"And if they give you any trouble after dark, you'd only have to go to the police-station, but they won't dare do that; they know too much about the law!"

Jimmy looked from the window. It was growing dark now, but Mr. Smunk's weary form could still be seen among the honeysuckle—shifting from one tired leg to the other and back again.

Mr. Smunk ceased to be a blot upon the landscape, however, as the darkness deepened.

But he was still there!

"Now, we've got to be jolly careful, you chaps," said Jimmy, in a low voice.

"Strictly speaking, the man can't enter when we open the door, as it's after sunset, but, as a matter of fact, he would rush in and make out afterwards that it wasn't quite dark if he was tackled over it. We've got to see that he doesn't."

"You bet!" assented Raby.

"He's waiting there—ready to rush," said Jimmy. "If we get the back door open, he may nip round in time before it's closed again. We'll go out by the front door."

"But then—"

"And we'll do the rushing," said Jimmy coolly. "If we rush into Smunk and bowl him over, that's his look out; he shouldn't be in the way."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"If he falls down and we fall on him, we needn't be in a hurry to get up; there's no law about that. And Mrs. Wickers will have time to bolt the door after us."

"Good egg!"

And so it was arranged.

Jimmy Silver withdrew the bolt on the front-door, and he heard a heavy breathing outside, which showed that Mr. Smunk had heard the sound, and was close at hand and on the alert.

Then he rattled the chain off.

"Good-bye, Mrs. Wickers!" he murmured. "We're going. You'll remember to fasten the door at once."

"Yes, yes, Master Silver."

"And don't let anybody in on any account."

"No, no."

"I'll run down on my bike to-morrow, and see how you're getting on, and to see if you want anything. Keep your pecker up, you know."

"I will remember, my dear—dear boy," said the widow.

"Good-night, then! Now, ready, you chaps?"

Jimmy Silver turned back the key, and threw open the door; and in an instant, the three juniors rushed out in a bunch.

Mr. Smunk had his foot on the doorstep, his hand outstretched.

Crash!

The collision was terrific.

But three bodies are heavier than one. Mr. Smunk went staggering blindly back from the shock.

He landed on his back in the porch, and the three juniors of Rookwood sprawled over him.

The door closed.

From the hapless Mr. Smunk, sprawling breathlessly under three

Rookwood juniors, there proceeded a series of remarkable sounds. The three juniors seemed, to him, to have at least half-a-dozen knees and elbows apiece, and all that formidable number of knees and elbows seemed to be jabbing into Mr. Smunk at once.

It was no wonder he roared.

"Hallo! We've run into something," said Jimmy Silver coolly.

"I've fallen over something—"

"So have I!" chuckled Raby.

"There's something wriggling under my elbow," said Newcome.

"Get your elbow out of my eye, you 'orrid young willian!" shrieked the suffering Mr. Smunk.

"Why, it's Smunk!"

"Dear me!" said Jimmy Silver.

"Is that you, Smunk?"

"Which you know it is!" raved Mr. Smunk. "I'll 'av the lor of yer! 'Sault and battery, that's wot it is! Yaroooooh!"

"My dear man, how could you expect us to see you in the dark?" remonstrated Jimmy Silver. "You must have been in the way. Are you hurt?"

"Yurrrggghh!"

The key had turned in the lock, and the bolt was shot. Jimmy Silver picked himself up.

"Come on, you chaps," he said.

He walked down to the gate, followed by his chuckling chums.

But Mr. Smunk did not rise so soon. There was no breath left in his beery carcase, and he remained sprawling on the ground for several minutes. When he picked himself up, he bestowed a final kick on the door, by way of a parting benediction, and limped away. The siege of the cottage had ended for that day.

Jimmy Silver & Co. sauntered along Water Lane, to the corner of the High Street, where they found Lovell with the bicycles.

"Oh, here you are!" yawned Arthur Edward. "You've kept me waiting a jolly long time."

"All serene! He also serves who only stands and waits, you know."

"Bow-wow! We shall be jolly late for calling over!"

"Never mind; keep smiling."

And the Fistical Four rode home cheerily to Rookwood. Roll-call had long been over; and the four had to present themselves in Mr. Bootles' study to explain. Needless to say, they did not mention that they had been doing garrison duty in a besieged cottage. They expressed meek regret for being late; and Mr. Bootles gave them a hundred lines each and missed them.

Prep in the end study was rather neglected that evening. Jimmy Silver and Co. had something more important than prep to think of—how to "raise the wind" and see the widow of Coombe through her troubles. And "Uncle James" of Rookwood set his active wits very seriously to work on that subject.

THE END.

(Another long, complete story of Jimmy Silver & Co. in next Monday's issue of the BOYS' FRIEND, entitled "A Dual Secret!" By Owen Conquest. Order in advance!)



Football

by Prominent Players.

THIS WEEK:

"MY BEST SCORING SHOTS!"

By DAN SHEA.

Goals are the things which count in football, and I have often been asked if there is any right royal road to success as a goalscorer.

Now it is comparatively easy to sit down and answer the question on paper as to how goals should be scored, and the sort of shots which are most likely to be successful. But setting down ideas on paper is not quite the same as working them out in practice. When you write them down, you can ignore the other fellows entirely. On the field of play, however, the other fellow is always a proposition the would-be goalscorer is up against.

Given the ball at my toe in a favourable position, and no other opponents to worry, I could score quite a lot of goals, and so could any other footballer. But in actual play, while a man may get the ball at his toe, there is generally some hefty defender in the immediate vicinity, and, although the player with the ball may know to a nicety what sort of shot he would like to send in, he is often compelled

to shoot any old way, or else risk not being able to shoot at all.

After all, my best scoring shots are those which beat the goalkeeper, and thus register goals. That is how one has to look at it, anyway, for if you shoot the whole of an afternoon and don't succeed in scoring a single goal, the mere shooting hasn't been of much value.

Thinking in this strain, I am reminded of a very good story concerning one of the very first appearances of that prince of goalscorers, Steve Bloomer, and this story has in it a very valuable lesson for every young footballer who wants to score goals.

Steve was making one of his first appearances in top-class football in company with Johnny Goodall. Late in the game Goodall sent in what was really quite a poor shot, but somehow or other it eluded the goalkeeper and entered the net.

As the men walked back to the centre-line Steve said to Goodall:

"That was rather a tame shot to score a goal with, wasn't it?"

To this Goodall replied to young Bloomer:

"Now just listen here, my lad. Always remember this when you are playing football. The best shots are those which score the goals."

In telling the story afterwards Steve declared that he always remembered the incident, and that he founded on it the motto which brought him much success—"When in doubt, shoot."

That is the best advice I can possibly give now. You may not always be able to get in your ideal sort of shot, but provided you are in a shooting position, and there is no other player on the side to whom the ball may be passed with advantage, then let it fly in the direction of goal. The best of custodians make mistakes sometimes, and "shoot hard, shoot often" is a very good principle.

Thinking over the goals I have scored in big matches, I should say that my best scoring shot is a high-rising ball from a slight angle, which enters the net at the corner. Wherever the goalkeeper happens to be standing this is a particularly difficult type of shot to deal with, especially as the ball, being usually taken on the run, generally swerves a bit in its flight, thus helping to deceive the man between "the sticks."

I shall never forget one goal I scored long ago with such a shot in an international trial match between the North and South. Perhaps the importance of the occasion makes me remember the shot more distinctly than others which have registered goals.

I was playing for the South, and quite late in the game the score was one each. The ball came to me and

I rushed off towards goal. Soon I had men coming after me, of course, and coming across to stop me, too, so that when I got within shooting distance, opposition players were almost literally crowding on top of me. But

DANNY SHEA,



Blackburn Rovers' Famous Goal-getter.

just when it seemed that I must lose possession, I shot out my right foot and away the ball went sailing high into the net. That goal won the match.

Now, although "shoot hard, and shoot often," is a very good line to follow, there are occasions in the course of some games when it is a mistake to shoot hard. Sometimes it isn't at all necessary, either, to try to break

the net or kill the goalkeeper with the force of the shot.

Suppose the ball comes to me a few yards from goal, and opponents are so far away that I have time to take deliberate aim. Then my chief concern is not to shoot hard, but to get in a well-placed shot out of the reach of the goalkeeper. Even a gentle shot from short distance, placed a little to the left or right of the goalkeeper, will serve its purpose, and there is much less chance of making a sad mess of a nice opening by taking deliberate aim than by shooting with all the power one possesses.

When taking this deliberate aim, however, it is necessary to try to deceive the goalkeeper as to one's intentions. I particularly recall one scoring shot of mine on this line. I had the ball at my toe a few yards out. I took a quick glance at the left-hand corner of the goal, as if meaning to shoot there. The goalkeeper thought I was going to do that, for he dived into that corner quickly, but at the last moment I changed my intention, and placed the ball in the other corner where the goalkeeper was not.

Especially does this art of deception apply to the taking of penalty kicks, and if the man who is shooting can hide his intentions, he has gone quite a long way towards making goal-scoring easy.

Danny Shea

THE DANDY OF CEDAR CREEK!

A Grand, Complete Story of FRANK RICHARDS & Co., the Chums of the School in the Backwoods.

BY... MARTIN CLIFFORD.



The 1st Chapter. In Style.

"They're late!" Bob Lawless and Frank Richards dashed up along the trail through the timber, and reined in their horses at the fork in the trail.

It was school that morning after the holidays, and the chums were on their way to Cedar Creek.

But Vere Beauclerc was not waiting for them at the fork, as of old, and he was not in sight on the branch trail that ran through the trees towards the creek and the Beauclercs' clearing.

"I reckoned they'd be late!" said Bob, with a grunt. "The Cherub was always as punctual as a dago cow-puncher on pay-day. But that cousin of his—"

Frank Richards laughed. "The Honourable Algernon may not be up yet!" he remarked. "Then the Cherub's a jay to wait for him!"

"Well, as it's Algernon's first day at school I dare say Miss Meadows will go easy if he's a little late."

"More likely a lot than a little!" growled Bob Lawless. "What's it to be? Are we going on, or calling for the Cherub? That'll make us late."

"Let's chance it." "Oh, all right!"

The two schoolboys turned into the branch trail, and rode at a gallop towards the Beauclercs' cabin.

They were wondering a little how Vere Beauclerc was getting on with his cousin from England that morning.

The Honourable Algernon Beauclerc was new, very new, to western ways, and Frank Richards opined that it would probably take him a long time to shake down into Canadian manners and customs.

They came in sight of the Beauclercs' cabin at last, without meeting their chum on the way. Old man Beauclerc could be seen at work on the clearing, a diminished figure in the distance. In the open doorway of the cabin Vere Beauclerc was standing, holding two horses. He was ready to start for school, but his Cousin Algy, invisible in the cabin, evidently was not ready.

"Hallo, Cherub!" shouted Bob Lawless, as he rode up with Frank. Beauclerc looked round at the sound of hoof-beats.

"Hallo, you fellows! You'll be late."

"We've come for you." Beauclerc made a grimace. "I'm waiting for Algy!" he said. "Isn't he ready?" asked Frank. "Not yet."

"What's he up to, then?" "Brushing his topper!" "Wha-a-at?"

"Brushing his topper!" said Beauclerc, in a tone of resignation. "I rather wish the post-wagon had tipped his baggage into the creek. But it didn't, and he's got no end of clothes here, and—and—"

He shrugged his shoulders. Bob Lawless chortled.

"Oh, by gum! You're working off that stunt on him, then, same as I did on Franky when he first came to Canada. You're letting him go to school rigged up in Bond Street style. Ha, ha, ha!"

"No, you ass! I've tried to persuade him not to—"

"Then it's his own idea?" "Yes."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bob. "I'm blessed if I quite know what to do," said Vere Beauclerc, with a worried look. "As he's a guest I can't dictate to him. I've tried to give advice. But he knows best. He thinks he does, at least. Perhaps you fellows may be able to persuade him to—"

"Dry up, Bob, you duffer!" said Frank. "We can't let Beau's cousin make an ass of himself, if it can be prevented. Let's speak to him."

"It's spoiling a good joke," grumbled Bob. "Rats!" "Here he comes!" said Beauclerc. The Honourable Algernon came out of the cabin at last.

Frank Richards and Bob Lawless blinked at him. For the moment they could only blink.

The Honourable Algernon Beauclerc was rather a good-looking fellow, and he certainly looked very nice. At some really select scholastic establishment in the Old Country he would have looked quite the thing, perhaps a little remarkable for fastidious elegance, but no more than that.

But in the backwoods of Canada he

Algernon started. "Change?" he said. "Yes. You see—"

"I have changed for school." "Oh!"

"Algy, old chap—" murmured Beauclerc helplessly. "I'm ready!" said Algernon.

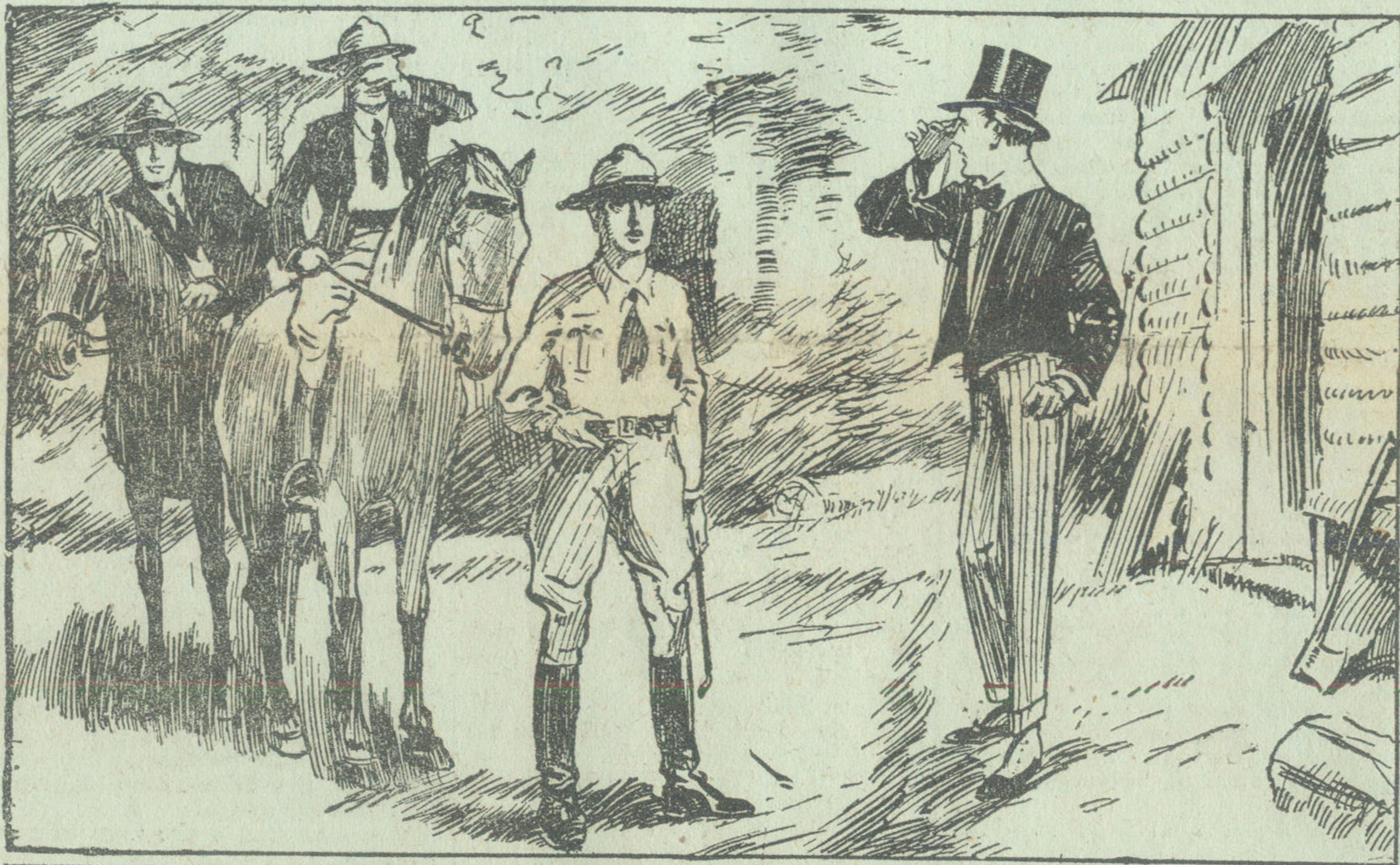
"But, I say—" "This my gee?" "Yes. But—"

"Do you always ride to school?" asked Algernon. "Yes. We—"

"I'd rather drive. I'm not really dressed for ridin'."

"Why not dress for riding, then?" asked Frank Richards. "My dear man, I'm goin' to school."

"We—we don't dress in Etons at Cedar Creek, you know."



A DAZZLING VISION! The Honourable Algernon Beauclerc, looking a perfect picture, extracted an eyeglass from his waistcoat pocket and inserted it in his eye. "Good mornin'!" he remarked. Bob Lawless shaded his eyes with his hands. "Help!" he gasped. "Is it real?"

was a vision to make the oldest inhabitant rub his eyes.

He was dressed in Etons—Etons of an exquisite cut and fit. His white collar, lately unpacked, was spotless. His tie was tied as only an expert in ties could tie a tie. His cuffs were things of beauty, and his bright boots were joys for ever. Handsomest of all was his tall silk hat. It was not the only topper ever seen in the Thompson Valley, for Frank Richards had brought one there with him, in his early blissful ignorance of the place. Frank's topper had long ago gone the way of all toppers. It was his Cousin Bob's sense of humour that had caused Frank to sport it once, only once, at the backwoods school. But Algernon's topper was being sported, not as the result of a practical joke, but from Algernon's own sense of the fitness of things. And it was polished till it reflected back the sunshine.

Bob Lawless shaded his eyes with his hand, as if this vision dazzled him. "Is it real?" he murmured.

Algernon extracted an eyeglass from his waistcoat-pocket, and inserted it in his eye. That gave him the finishing touch. "Help!" gasped Bob. "Shurrup!" murmured Frank Richards.

Algernon turned his monocle upon the two riders, and nodded. "Good-mornin'!" he remarked. "Good-morning, old scout!" said Frank. "You'll have to hurry up and change for school, won't you?"

"So Vere says. You ought to." "Eh?"

"If you fellows don't do the right thing there's no reason why I shouldn't, is there?"

"Nunno! B-b-but—" "Let's get goin'!" said Algernon. "We don't drop out final g's at Cedar Creek, if you don't mind my mentioning it," murmured Frank.

Algernon stared again. "What a country!" he said. "But, you see—ahem!"

"It's time you learned, isn't it?" suggested Algernon.

"Ahem! Look here, if you're really coming to school like that—"

"Like what?" "That!" gasped Frank. "I suppose you're jokin'!" said Algernon coldly. "Can't say I see the joke myself. Anythin' wrong with my clobber?"

"Nunno. But—but in the backwoods, you know—"

"You said I was keepin' you waiting, Vere. Now I'm ready, you don't seem ready to start," said Algernon severely. "I understand that your headmaster is a lady—I mean headmistress. It's rather no class to keep a lady waitin', if you don't mind my sayin' so. Are you comin'?"

Algernon climbed on his horse. There was no help for it. With a hopeless glance at his chums, Vere Beauclerc followed Algy's example; and the four schoolboys started at a gallop for Cedar Creek School.

The 2nd Chapter. Algy at Cedar Creek.

"Here they come!" said Chunky Todgers.

The fat and cheerful Chunky was standing at the gateway of Cedar Creek. It was close on time for the bell to ring for classes, and Chunky had been wondering what had become of Frank Richards & Co.

Four riders came in sight on the trail, riding very fast. Chunky looked at them, and recognised his three old acquaintances, and saw one whom he did not recognise.

Chunky looked at him—and looked again, and then said, in emphatic tones:

"Oh Jerusalem!" "Great gophers!" ejaculated Tom Lawrence. "Who's that? What's that? Great jumping gophers!"

"Vellee nicee, what you tinkee?" chuckled little Yen Chin, the Chinese. "Ha, ha, ha!"

"It's a dude!" roared Eben Hacke. "A dude from Dudesville! Ha, ha, ha!"

Hacke's roar of laughter brought a dozen fellows out of the playground to look.

Every eye was fixed upon the Honourable Algernon.

Some of the Cedar Creek fellows looked astonished; all of them looked amused. There was a grin on every face as Frank Richards & Co. rode up.

Three of the new-comers looked rather red, but the Honourable Algernon was calmness itself.

His garb was certainly distinctive, but Algernon did not mind that. He rather liked being distinctive.

"Well, here we are again, you fellows!" said Bob Lawless, as he jumped from his horse.

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Hacke. "Is

"Algy, you ass—" stuttered Beauclerc.

"Isn't he a stable-boy, then?" "No, you fathead; he's a Cedar Creek chap!"

"Oh, he looked a horsey fellow—I thought he was, naturally. Never mind—only a mistake."

"I don't think Hacke enjoyed the mistake," said Bob Lawless, rather drily. "He looks rather mad."

Algy started. "Begad! Mad? Is this an asylum?"

"Mad is American for ratty," said Frank Richards, laughing.

"Oh my hat! What a language!" The horses were put up in the corral, and the four schoolboys turned towards the lumber school-house. A crowd of Cedar Creek fellows came round them—all interested in the Honourable Algernon. Eben Hacke had his big fists clenched, and was evidently meditating vengeance; but just then Mr. Slimmey, the second master of Cedar Creek, appeared on the scene. Mr. Slimmey's gold-rimmed glasses almost fell off at the sight of Algernon.

"My cousin, sir!" said Beauclerc, colouring.

"Oh, ah, yes!" stammered Mr. Slimmey.

He shook hands mechanically with the boy.

"Your name is Beauclerc, I think?" he said.

"Yes, sir," said Algernon. "Is your sight defective?"

"Eh? No!" "Then why are you wearing a glass?"

"I always do, sir."

"Nonsense! Take it off immediately!"

"Begad!" Algernon seemed indispensed to obey Mr. Slimmey's order, but Bob Lawless kindly jerked at the cord of the monocle, and it left Algy's eye quite suddenly.

"Beauclerc, you should have advised your cousin to dress himself differently here," said Mr. Slimmey severely.

"I—I—" stammered Beauclerc. "This attire is quite suitable for an English school, but utterly unsuited to Cedar Creek. You must be well aware of that, Beauclerc."

"Ye-es, sir, but—but—" "I am surprised at you, Beauclerc."

And Mr. Slimmey, evidently under the belief that Beauclerc had been pulling the leg of his tenderfoot cousin, shook his head severely, and walked away.

"Queer old bird, that!" commented Algernon. And he replaced the monocle in his eye.

The quartette went on towards the School House, near which they encountered Mr. Shepherd. Mr. Shepherd blinked at Algernon.

"Is—is this your cousin, Beauclerc?" he exclaimed.

"Yes, sir," groaned Vere. "Oh! Ah! You—you had better take him in to see Miss Meadows, I think," stuttered Mr. Shepherd.

"Yes, sir."

Algernon was plotted into the lumber schoolhouse, and Beauclerc tapped rather nervously at the door of Miss Meadows' sitting-room. He was wondering uneasily what the Canadian schoolmistress would think of this exotic.

"Come in!" said Miss Meadows' low, pleasant voice.

Beauclerc marched his cousin in, Frank Richards and Bob remaining in the passage.

Algernon held his handsome silk topper in his hand, as he walked in to be presented to his schoolmistress. Miss Meadows looked at him.

A slight smile played round her lips for a moment, but it was replaced by a severe expression.

"My—my cousin, ma'am—Algernon Beauclerc!" stammered Vere.

"I am glad to see you, my boy!" said Miss Meadows.

"The pleasure is all on my side, ma'am!" replied Algernon politely. There was a gurgle from the passage.

"Oh!" ejaculated Miss Meadows. "Beauclerc!"

"Yes, Miss Meadows."

"I am surprised at your not having informed your cousin that his school attire at home was not suitable here."

"I—I—" "Kindly see that he is differently clad to-morrow, Beauclerc."

"Ye-es, ma'am."

"Excuse me, ma'am," said Algernon politely. "If it is all the same to you, I should prefer to dress as I am."

"It is not all the same to me," said Miss Meadows sharply. "You may take your cousin to the school-room, Beauclerc!"

"But, I say—" began Algernon. "Come on!" whispered Beauclerc. He dragged the Honourable Algernon from the room.

this another of your jokes, Bob? This is how you brought Richards to school his first day."

"Oh, dry up, Hacke," answered Bob. "Bring your cousin in, Cherub, and let him see Miss Meadows!"

"Jump down, Algy," said Beauclerc, as he dismounted.

Algernon alighted. He held out his rein to Eben Hacke.

Hacke stared. "Take my horse," said Algernon.

"What?" "See he's properly looked after."

"Hay?" "What are you dawdlin' for? Why don't you take it?" exclaimed Algernon sharply.

Hacke looked at the new boy as if he would eat him.

"Algy!" exclaimed Beauclerc sharply, "what are you up to? Bring your horse in to the corral."

"Can't the stable-boy take it in?" "The—the what?"

"Stable-boy?" roared Eben Hacke. "Who's the stable-boy?"

Algernon looked surprised. "By gad! Am I makin' a mistake?" he asked, with perfect coolness. "Ain't you a stable-boy?"

"Why, I—I—I'll—" Wrath overcame Master Hacke, and he could only splutter. Vere Beauclerc hastily took his cousin's arm and led him in.

Hacke stood spluttering. He was too taken aback and overcome to proceed to action just then. The fellows round him were roaring.



THE DANDY OF CEDAR CREEK!

(Continued from
the previous page.)

Algernon calmly brushed his shoulder with his handkerchief, as if Hacke's grasp had left a stain there—a proceeding that made the other fellows grin, and made Hacke almost foam.

When the school was dismissed after morning lessons, Hacke had the pleasure of remaining, kept in, till dinner-time. He cast a fierce glare after Algernon, as the latter went out; but Algy did not even notice it. He seemed to have forgotten Eben Hacke's unimportant existence already.

He walked cheerfully out of the lumber schoolhouse with Frank Richards & Co. in the midst of a smiling crowd.

His topper was still on the peg, which rather surprised Frank Richards & Co., for a number of the other fellows had been out before the leisurely Algy, and the chums rather expected to find the topper in use as a football in the passage.

But there it was; and Algernon put it on his head.

"He, he, he!" came from Chunky Todgers.

Chunky had been first out that morning—contrary to his usual custom. He was generally slow to move, but he had a reason for hurrying himself that morning. The reason transpired afterwards.

Algernon glanced at the fat Chunky as he heard the chortle.

But he disdained to take any further notice of Chunky, and he walked out into the playground with his friends.

Frank Richards and Bob went down to the creek with their canoe, and Algy was left with Vere Beauclerc. Beauclerc did not feel that he could desert his cousin; though the sensation Algy's appearance was making considerably disconcerted him.

"I don't dislike this place, after all, Vere," Algy remarked.

"I'm glad of that, Algy!"

"The chaps seem to be rather ruffians—"

"Eh!"

"And the schoolmistress doesn't seem to have much sense—"

"What?"

"But I dare say I shall get on all right. The school-work is easy enough—not like the stuff I had to cram with my tutor, old Toots. But I suppose Miss Fields—"

"Miss Who?"

"Fields—isn't her name Fields?"

"Meadows—"

"Oh, yes; Meadows! I knew it was somethin' grassy. Miss Meadows, then! I suppose Miss Meadows was only spoofin' about my havin' to wear different clobber to-morrow—"

"No; of course not! You can't dress like this in the backwoods!"

"I'm goin' to!"

"You heard what Miss Meadows said."

Algernon nodded.

"Yaas! I regard her as exceedin' her authority in the matter. I'm not goin' to take any notice of such rot."

"Algy!" exclaimed Beauclerc, in great distress. "Don't you understand that you're at school now? You have to do as your schoolmistress tells you. She can't indulge you as your tutor used to, even if she wanted to; and, of course, she doesn't!"

"There's a certain amount due to myself," said Algernon loftily. "I can't make myself look a guy—like you, for instance!"

"Wha-at?"

"You're dressed like a stable-hand, Vere. I can't dress like that. I don't criticise your taste, of course. Not my bizney. But I'm the best judge for myself. I shall come to-morrow just as I am to-day!"

"Miss Meadows will be angry."

"I hope not!" said Algernon carelessly.

"But she will be!" exclaimed Beauclerc.

"Well, let her, then! Can't be helped. Where do we have lunch?"

"We have dinner here—all the fellows who live at a distance do. But, look here, Algy, suppose we ride home quick, and change clothes—you, I mean—"

"Rot!"

"Can't you see that you're making every fellow in the school chuckle?" exclaimed Beauclerc, losing patience.

Algernon shrugged his slim shoulders.

"Let 'em chuckle!" he said.

And with that, he swung away, apparently having had enough of his cousin's plain English.

Beauclerc compressed his lips, and went to join his chums by the creek.

Algernon paraded the playground, quite satisfied with himself and the attention he was receiving. Chunky Todgers, and some other fellows kept him in sight all the time, with grinning faces.

"I put it under the lining, you know," Chunky murmured to Dick Dawson. "It will work out soon—there was plenty of it—red ink, you know. He will be the colour of a Kootenay soon!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Algernon gave the chuckling school-boys a haughty glance, and turned away. Down his forehead several red streaks were already showing, but the superb Algernon was unconscious of them.

That was the reason why Chunky Todgers had scudded out so quickly after lessons that morning. The humorous Chunky had been unable to resist the temptation of the topper.

"By gad, it's rather warm!" murmured Algy. "I'm actually perspirin'!"

He felt the damp oozing out from under his hat upon his forehead. But it wasn't perspiration, if the Honourable Algernon had only known it; it was red ink. He brushed his forehead lightly with his hand, smudging the red across with a very striking effect.

"Ha, ha, ha!" came in a roar.

Algy's get-up had already provoked smiles, but now the Cedar Creek fellows seemed to be nearly going into convulsions when they looked at him. The sight of red streaks oozing down under the silk topper was irresistible.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Algernon's haughty glance in reply to the laughter was crushing, but its effect was quite spoiled by the red streaks that marred his face.

The Cedar Creek fellows yelled.

Algernon walked away angrily.

He came upon Miss Meadows near the Schoolhouse, and the schoolmistress stopped and stared at him blankly.

"Upon my word!" she ejaculated. "Beauclerc, come here!"

Algernon stopped, and raised his silk hat to the schoolmistress very gracefully. The raising of the hat revealed a forehead smothered with red ink, and the effect was extraordinary. There was a howl of laughter from all directions.

"Bless my soul!" exclaimed Miss Meadows. "What ever have you been doing?"

"Doin'!" repeated Algernon, in surprise.

"Your face is red—"

"That is not surprisin', madam, considerin' the dashed impertinence I've met with this mornin'!" said Algy.

"But—but what—Bless me, it is ink! Have you been silly enough to put ink into your hat?" exclaimed Miss Meadows.

Algernon jumped.

"Ink!" he stuttered.

He stared into his hat. The lining was dripping with red ink.

"Oh gad!" gasped Algernon.

"You utterly absurd boy!"

"I—I—I didn't do it!" shrieked Algernon. "Somebody has been playin' tricks with my hat!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Silence!" Miss Meadows exclaimed, as severely as she could, though her lips were twitching.

"Beauclerc, you had better go and wash your face! It is streaked with red ink!"

"Oh gad!"

"Todgers, take Beauclerc into the house, and show him where to wash!"

"Certainly, ma'am!" grinned Chunky. "This way, dude!"

Algernon, with a furious face—as furious as it was inky—followed the fat Chunky into the lumber Schoolhouse, leaving the playground echoing with laughter. Eben Hacke was coming out of the school-room as he entered, and at the sight of Algernon he clenched his big fists. But he unclenched them again the next moment, and burst into a roar.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Until dinner-time Algernon was busy washing—washing hard. He found the red ink rather clinging. And his face was still very red—though the ink was gone—when he joined the Cedar Creek fellows at dinner.

The 4th Chapter.

A Threshing for Somebody!

There was a lofty frown upon Algernon's noble face when he came out after dinner. He came out into the playground bareheaded. His topper was not wearable in its present state. He joined Frank Richards & Co., who were smiling.

"Somebody's been playin' japes on my hat!" said Algernon, in tones of deep indignation and wrath. "It's ruined!"

"Go hon!" murmured Frank.

"I shall have to ride home hatless!" said Algernon. "Fortunately, it will be near dusk, and I sha'n't risk my complexion. But I'm not goin' to stand this! I want to know who did it!"

"Are you going to scalp him?" chuckled Bob Lawless.

"I'm goin' to thrash him!" said Algernon angrily. "There's a limit! I've stood enough dashed cheek here already, but there's a limit, and this is it! I want to know who the cad was!"

"It was only a joke, old chap!" murmured Beauclerc soothingly.

"I don't call it a joke," answered Algernon loftily. "Ruinin' a fellow's topper isn't a joke—it's an outrage! I'm goin' to thrash the rotter, and I want to know who the rotter was!"

"I wonder!" grinned Chunky Todgers.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"If the rotter is afraid to own up—"

"began Algy, with a wrathful and scornful glance round him.

"Oh, stow your chin-wag!" growled Eben Hacke. "If it wasn't for Miss Meadows, I'd give you more trouble than you want!"

"I was not addressin' you, my good fellow. I know you didn't do it. I want the cad who did it to put up his hands!"

Chunky Todgers coloured. Chunky was not exactly a fighting-man, but he did not like being called names. He rolled forward.

"I did it!" he announced.

Algernon looked at him.

"You fat rascal!" he said.

"What?"

"I'm goin' to thrash you!" Algernon pushed back his spotless cuffs and advanced upon Todgers. "Now, then, put up your hands!"

"Algy!" exclaimed Beauclerc.

"Don't interfere! I'm goin' to thrash him!"

"You're jolly well not!" exclaimed Tom Lawrence, pushing before Chunky Todgers. "If you're looking for trouble, you silly jay, I'll give you all you want!"

"Yep, that's a good idea!" said Chunky Todgers placably.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Stand aside!" commanded Algernon, frowning at Lawrence.

"Rats!"

"I shall thrash you instead of that fat fool—"

"Go ahead, then!" said Lawrence cheerfully.

"Algy!" exclaimed Beauclerc.

The Honourable Algernon did not heed his cousin's beseeching voice. He dropped his eyeglass, and advanced upon Tom Lawrence. The sturdy Canadian schoolboy stood like a rock to meet him. In another second they were fighting.

The Cedar Creek fellows looked on with grinning faces.

They fully expected to see the "dude" crumple up under Lawrence's hefty blows, but there was a surprise in store for them. There was more in the Honourable Algernon than met the eye.

It was Lawrence who went to grass first.

He dropped on his back, greatly surprised, with a trickle of red flowing from his nose, and gasping for breath.

"Well hit!" exclaimed Frank Richards.

There was a roar.

"Go it, Lawrence!"

Tom Lawrence staggered to his feet. Algernon stood back politely to give him plenty of time. Tom dashed the crimson stream from his nose, and put up his hands again, advancing upon Algernon with a rather grim expression on his sun-burnt face.

Vere Beauclerc looked on uneasily, but it was impossible for him to interfere. No one else wanted to interfere.

Algernon had asked for trouble, and now he was in for it. For, though the dandy of Cedar Creek had plenty of pluck, and some knowledge of boxing, he was no match for the sturdy Canadian. Everybody but Algernon could see that he was booked for a licking, but Algernon was perfectly satisfied with his prospects so far.

Tom Lawrence piled in with all his strength, and Algernon had to give ground. He stood up courageously to his opponent, but he did not have a chance of flooring him again. It was Algernon who was floored, and he went down with a heavy bump.

"Oh gad!" he ejaculated.

Algernon sat and blinked at Lawrence, who seemed to tower over him. The Honourable Algernon was evidently in a state of great astonishment. Somehow he had supposed that like Caesar of old, he had only to come and see to conquer. He was discovering that that supposition was slightly mistaken. Tom Lawrence grinned down on him good-naturedly.

"Want any more?" he inquired.

Algernon scrambled up breathlessly. "I'm goin' to thrash you!" he gasped.

"Go it, then!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Algernon went it.

He charged at his adversary with thumping fists, but the blows that fell on Lawrence did not seem to trouble him. Without troubling to defend, he hit out in return, and Algernon went spinning.

Crash!

"Oh, my hat!"

"Phew!"

Mr. Slimmey was coming round the corner of the school-house as Algernon went flying, and Algy crashed on the ground at his feet. There was a gasp from the Cedar Creek crowd.

Algy threw his arms out wildly, and clasped Mr. Slimmey's slim legs without even knowing what he was doing. It was the instinctive clutch at the nearest object to save himself. There was a splutter from Mr. Slimmey as he was dragged over and rolled on the ground with Algernon.

"Oh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Better vainoose!" gasped Bob Lawless.

And the crowd melted away, leaving Mr. Slimmey and Algernon sprawling on the ground together. Only Vere Beauclerc remained to help his cousin. Algy was dragged, dazed, to his feet. Then Vere gave a hand to Mr. Slimmey.

"C-c-can I help you, sir?" he stammered.

"Bless my soul! Thank you! Oh dear!" gasped Mr. Slimmey.

He staggered up and fixed a grim look upon the gasping Algernon.

"Beauclerc! You—"

"Sorry, sir!" gasped Algernon. "I—I fell over!"

"You have been fighting!" exclaimed Mr. Slimmey.

"I was thrashin' a cheeky fellow, sir!"

Mr. Slimmey looked at Algernon. It was easy enough for him to see which way the thrashing had been going. Algernon certainly looked as if he had had punishment enough, and the master's face cleared.

"Don't let this occur again!" he said severely, and he walked away.

Algernon looked round.

"The fellow's cleared off!" he said.

"Just as well! I should have given him a terrific hidin', Vere."

Vere Beauclerc smiled.

"Better come and bathe your eye," he suggested.

"Oh, yaas! It feels rather queer!"

Algernon's eye not only felt queer, it looked queer when he turned up to afternoon lessons. So did his nose. But Algernon was comforted by the reflection that he had remained the victor on the hard-fought field—to his own belief, at least.

"I can't wear that dashed thing again!"

Algernon held up his inky topper after lessons. Frank Richards & Co. nodded assent, with grinning faces.

"Chuck it away!" suggested Bob Lawless. "Come to-morrow in a Stetson."

Algernon shook his head.

"Oh, it's all right," he said. "I've got several more at home. I'm rather wide, you know. I knew accidents might happen, and I brought half a dozen toppers with me."

"Oh Jerusalem!"

"But you won't come in a topper to-morrow?" murmured Frank Richards.

"Oh yaas!"

"Miss Meadows has told you—"

"Can't be helped! Something's due to a chap's self-respect," said Algernon. "Let's get off, Vere. I'm goin' without a hat."

The quartette rode in thoughtful silence as far as the fork in the trail. There, as they drew rein, Bob Lawless addressed Algernon seriously.

"You know what Miss Meadows said, old scout. You're really coming in different clobber to-morrow?"

"Not at all!"

"But you must, you know!"

"Rot! Good-night!"

Algernon rode away with Vere Beauclerc, and Frank Richards and Bob trotted on their homeward way. There was a twinkle in Bob's eyes.

"Franky, I guess that galoot wants a lesson," he said.

"He does!" agreed Frank.

"And he's going to get one on his way to school to-morrow morning," said Bob Lawless. "I've thought of a stunt! Listen!"

Frank Richards listened and chuckled.

There was a surprise in store the following morning for the dandy of Cedar Creek.

THE END.

In the passage, there were twenty or more Cedar Creek boys and girls, and they were all smiling—with the exception of Eben Hacke. That burly youth was in a towering rage.

He thrust a huge, clenched fist under the Honourable Algernon's startled nose.

"Where will you have it?" he demanded.

"Begad!"

"Hold on, Hacke!" exclaimed Beauclerc hastily.

"Stable-boy!" said Hacke sulphurously. "Giving me his critter to hold! Why, I'll smash him into a jelly! I guess I'll—Fll—Fll—Fll—"

"Hacke!"

It was Miss Meadows' quiet voice. Eben Hacke dropped his clenched fist suddenly, as Miss Meadows looked out of her doorway.

"Oh! Ah! Yes, ma'am!" he gasped.

"Kindly behave yourself, Hacke!" said Miss Meadows sternly. "If I find you quarrelling with the new boy, Hacke, I shall punish you very severely! I shall keep an eye on you. Now go into the school-room!"

And Hacke, suppressing his feelings as well as he could, went. Algernon walked cheerfully into the school-room, leaving his hat hanging up on a peg, along with a crowd of caps and Stetsons, in the lobby.

Beauclerc found a place for him, and he sat down between his cousin and Frank Richards. Miss Meadows came in, followed by Mr. Slimmey and Mr. Shepherd, and classes began. But there was not very much attention given to lessons for some time. The attention was bestowed upon the Honourable Algernon, and Miss Meadows' class was in a state of semi-suppressed merriment all the morning.

The 3rd Chapter.

Chunky is Too Funny!

Algernon, under the peculiar circumstances, might have been expected to betray some sign of self-consciousness.

But he didn't.

Not a sign of it. If he noticed that he attracted unusual attention, he probably took it as his due. He was quite at his ease during the morning. Only once did he wake up, as it were, from his serene repose. Miss Meadows' back being turned for a moment, Eben Hacke took advantage of the opportunity to lean over his desk, and give Algy a fierce whisper.

"You pesky dude! I'm going to smash you after lessons!"

Then Algernon looked round calmly. The big and burly Eben was almost twice as large as the slim Algernon, but Algy certainly was not afraid of him.

"Did you address me, my good fellow?" he asked.

Hacke choked.

"Good fellow! G-g-good fellow! Why, I—I guess I'll—Fll—Fll—"

"If you did, perhaps you wouldn't mind explainin' what a dude is!" suggested Algernon. "I've never heard the word before. Is it American or Canadian?"

"I—you—I—I'm going to break you up into little pieces!" said Hacke, between his teeth.

Algernon shook his head.

"I don't think you could, really," he answered.

"I calculate I'll show you!"

And, by way of a hint, Hacke reached over and grasped the Honourable Algernon by the shoulder.

Unfortunately for the bully of the lumber school, Miss Meadows turned back to her class at that moment. The schoolmistress' brows knitted at the scene that met her view.

"Hacke!" she rapped out.

Eben Hacke released Algy's shoulder, as if it had suddenly become red-hot.

"This is the second time I have had to speak to you, Hacke!" said Miss Meadows coldly. "You will be detained an hour after lessons. If I find you quarrelling with the new boy again, your punishment will be more severe."