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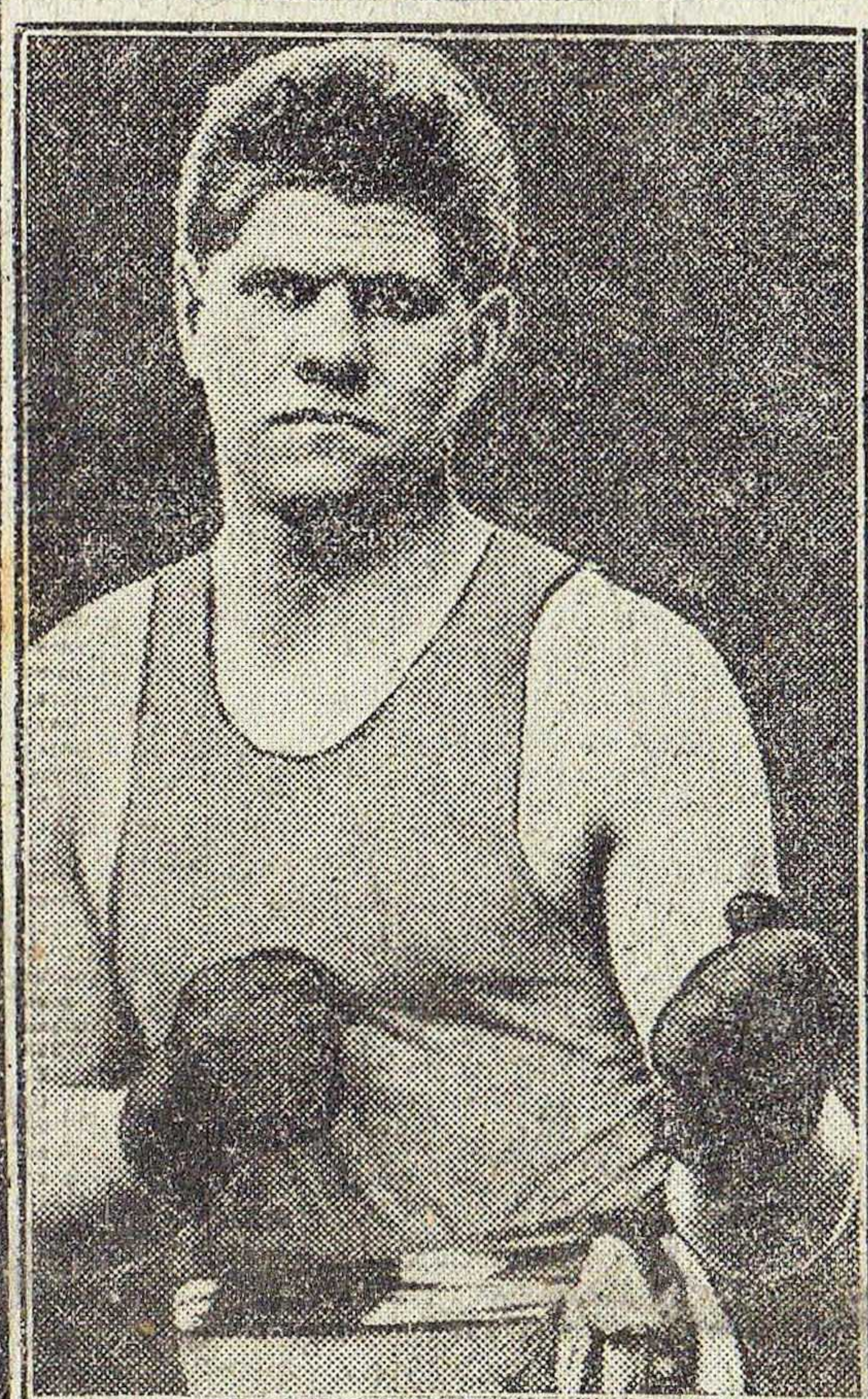
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THE BEST BOYS' PAPER IN THE WORLD!

[Week Ending August 5th, 1922.]



FRANK GODDARD.

Two-punch Kerrigan!

by
Walter Edwards.

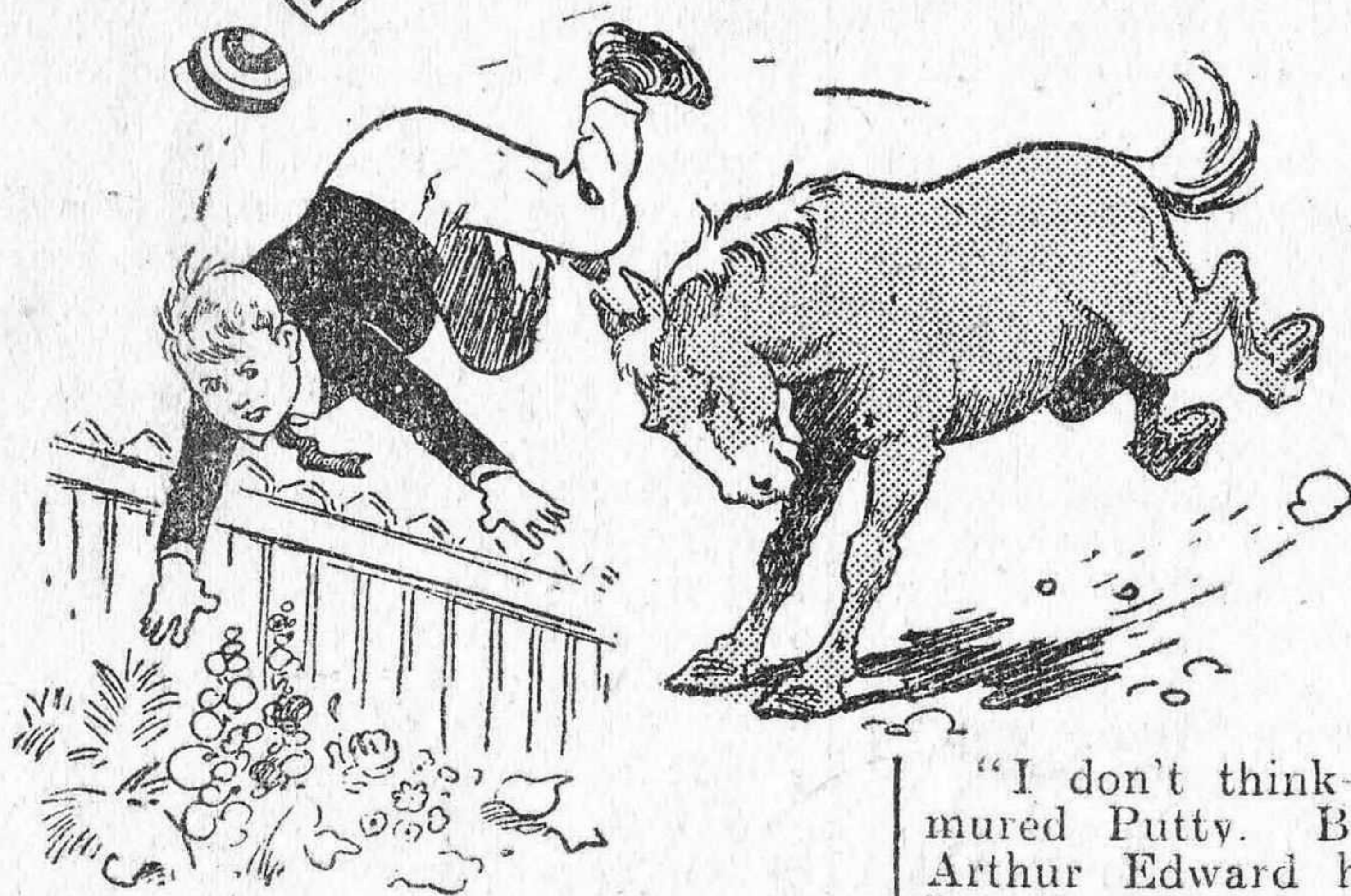


THE DUKE'S DESPERATE BID FOR FREEDOM!

(A thrilling incident from the long complete story of the Clean-Sport Crusaders included in this number.)

A RIPPING STORY OF JIMMY SILVER & CO. ON THEIR HOLIDAY TRAMP!

Rookwooders On The Road!



By OWEN CONQUEST.

(Author of the Tales of Rookwood appearing in the "Popular.")

The 1st Chapter.

The Pony That Wouldn't Go!

"Seems an awful lot of stuff!" Putty Grace of the Fourth made that remark.

He was looking into the little cart which was to accompany the chums of Rookwood on their holiday tramp.

It was a handy little cart, fitted with lockers, and with an amazing amount of storage capacity considering its diminutive size.

It was full now almost to overflowing.

Jimmy Silver & Co. were starting on their holiday tramp on the day the school broke up for the holidays; and for two or three days they had been getting ready.

Everything that was necessary for the trip—or that was considered necessary—was dumped into the little cart; and it had grown fuller and fuller.

Arthur Edward Lovell had remarked that they would sort the things out and get them into order later on; and it really looked as if a lot of sorting out and getting into order would be needed.

Half a dozen ground-sheets were spread over the top of the load, which rose in a pyramidal form in the cart.

"Plenty there for Trotsky to carry!" Putty added.

Trotsky was the pony.

The juniors had named him Trotsky; not because of his trotting powers, but because he hated work.

"Oh, he's a good pony!" said Raby. "He'll pull that little lot all right. We can give a shove up the hills."

"We shall want it all," said Newcome. "Can't do without the cricket things."

"The blessed load seems to have grown a lot bigger than I thought," said Jimmy Silver "but when it's all packed it will be all right."

"We ought really to pack it before we go," said Putty.

"Well, we think of something fresh every minute," said Newcome. "We'll turn it out at the first camp and pack properly. How long is Lovell going to be with that pony?"

Arthur Edward Lovell was fetching Trotsky from the stables, where he had been housed ever since the outfit had been lent to the juniors by a kind friend.

All was ready now for the start. Rookwood School was breaking up that day, and already a good many of the fellows had departed. Others were lingering to see Jimmy Silver & Co. start—the Fistical Four's outfit having roused great interest in the Fourth Form.

The Co. had made all arrangements about their boxes, they had said their good-byes; and now all that remained was to harness Trotsky and take the road from the school gates.

There were five in the party: Jimmy Silver, Raby, Newcome, Lovell, and Putty Grace. There had nearly been six, but Tubby Muffin had been gently but firmly suppressed. Tubby was convinced that the tramp would not be a success unless he was a member of the party, and he made only one condition—that he should sit in the cart while the other fellows walked. Jimmy Silver & Co. failed to agree with Tubby.

Fortunately, Tubby Muffin had disappeared now, and the Co. hoped that he had started for home, and that they were finished with the fat youth till next term.

"Lovell!" shouted Jimmy Silver. "Coming!" answered a breathless voice from the stables.

"Want any help?" called out Putty Grace.

"Do you think I can't handle a pony?" came back Lovell's voice, in tones of considerable excitement.

"I don't think—I know!" murmured Putty. But he did not let Arthur Edward hear that remark. Lovell was evidently getting excited.

The juniors waited. A dozen other fellows were looking on, and they were all grinning. In the dusky stable, Lovell was apparently in combat with Trotsky, who was not nearly so keen on the holiday tramp as the juniors were.

"We shall never get off, at this rate!" said Raby. "We'd better go and help Lovell!"

Lovell's voice was heard through the stable doorway.

"Come on! Good old horse! Good boy! You horrid, obstinate beast; if you don't get a move on I'll jolly well wallop you! Good horse! Oh, you lazy, obstinate, shirking blighter! Come on!"

"Like me to fetch him out?" asked Peter Cuthbert Gunner.

"Rats!" said Jimmy Silver.

"Lovell," roared Raby, "when are you coming with that dashed pony?"

He had the narrowest escape in his life; but somehow he flung his arms round the pony's neck, and clung on. Jimmy Silver & Co. rushed out of the stable after Trotsky and his bold, bareback rider. There was a yell from the crowd of fellows gathered round the cart.

"Look out!"

The juniors scattered as the bareback rider charged. Gunner and Trotsky flew past and vanished out of the stable yard, the pony going strong and Gunner letting out a fearful yell at every clatter of the pony's heels.

The 2nd Chapter.

A "Going" Concern!

"After him!" gasped Jimmy Silver.

"Oh, my hat!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Jimmy Silver & Co. rushed in desperate pursuit.

Trotsky, having made up his mind

He stood in the way, and waved his majestic hand.

"Gunner, stop at once! How dare you ride about here! Stop, I say—"

Mr. Greely did not finish. He had just time to jump aside as Trotsky thundered down on him.

He sat down with a bump as the pony and its terrified rider thundered by.

"Bless my soul!" ejaculated Mr. Greely.

"Help!" yelled Gunner.

"Oh dear! After him!" gasped Jimmy Silver.

Trotsky was going for the Head's garden now, and the juniors fairly shivered at the thought of the pony trampling into that sacred precinct.

"Stop him, Gunner, you idiot!" raved Lovell.

"Pull him in!"

"Stop him!"

There was a roar of voices behind the pony now. Half Rookwood was in pursuit of him. He reached the gate of the Head's garden and stopped suddenly.

So sudden was his stop that the jerk detached Gunner from his hold, and he shot over the pony's head, flew over the gate, and bumped into the garden beyond.

There was a roar from Peter Cuthbert as he landed. But nobody heeded Peter Cuthbert for the moment. The pressing need just then was to recapture Trotsky.

Fortunately, now that he was rid of his burden, Trotsky relapsed into his habitual calmness. He stood quite still and placid, and Jimmy Silver & Co. surrounded him. Jimmy grasped the halter to lead him away.

"Come on, you brute!" he gasped. Trotsky did not come on. After his exhibition as the fiery untamed, he was now giving a display as the donkey that wouldn't go.

But the juniors were fed up with Trotsky and his little ways. Raby had a cricket-stump in his hand, and

"Hold on!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver, waving Raby back. "He's doing his best, I believe. The wheel's caught, or something."

There was a sudden roar from Lovell.

"Those funny idiots are holding the cart."

"Why the—the—the—" gasped Jimmy Silver.

The Fistical Four rushed round the cart. Conroy & Co. were supposed to be pushing behind, instead of which they were holding on, with their feet firmly planted in the ground. It was no wonder that Trotsky couldn't get going, in the circumstances.

Conroy & Co. were grinning, enjoying their little joke. But Raby found a use for his stump, and the practical jokers ceased to grin.

Whack, whack, whack, whack!

"Here, stopp!"

"Oh crumbs!"

"Whoooooop!"

Trotsky started quite suddenly as the cart was released. Once again the stump had proved useful.

"Off at last!" said Jimmy Silver. And the Rookwood tramps started.

The 3rd Chapter.

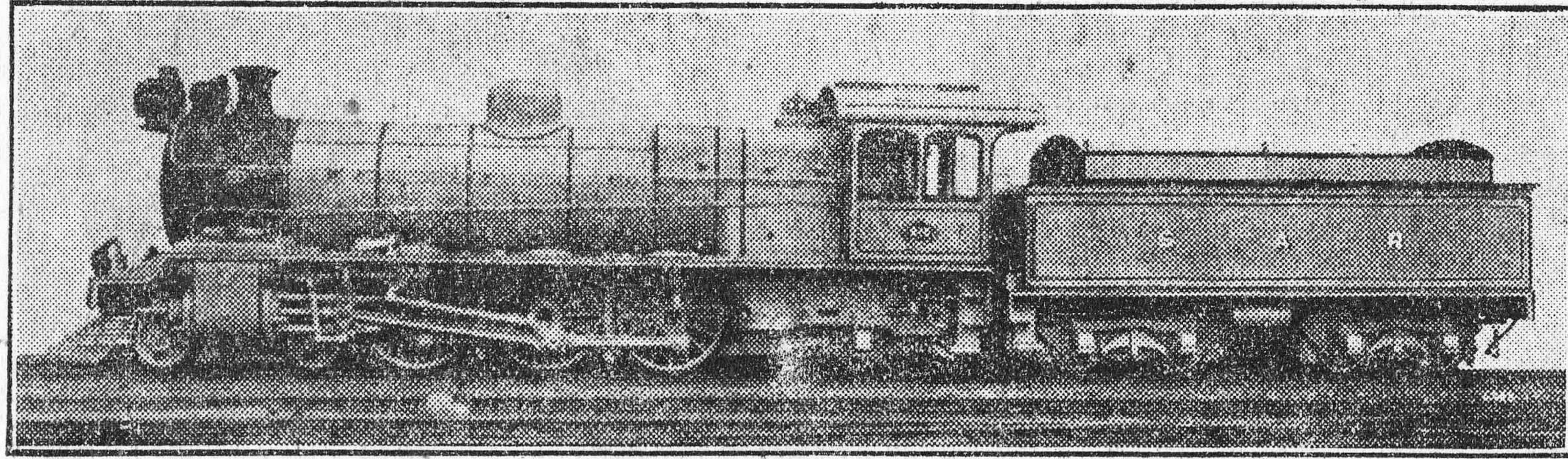
Unexpected!

"We shall have to get rid of some of it," said Jimmy Silver decidedly. He was referring to the baggage in the cart.

Trotsky appeared now to be in a willing humour. Either he was willing to work, or unwilling to take any more stumps: Whether it was willingness or unwillingness, he was doing his best, and no pony could do more than that.

But the laden cart was a hefty proposition for Trotsky. On the hills he simply couldn't do it, and the juniors had to help. They shoved behind the cart and strove at turning the wheels when the road was steep,

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"Oh, go and eat coke!" Jimmy Silver & Co. decided to go and help. Arthur Edward Lovell flattered himself that he could handle any kind of horseflesh, but it looked as if Trotsky was too much for him.

The juniors entered the stable. Trotsky had been taken out of his stall, but he had his forefeet firmly planted and his head down, and had obviously made up his mind that he would not go.

"What do you fellows want?" snapped Lovell.

"We're going to help—"

"Think I can't handle him?"

"Looks as if he can handle you, anyhow," grinned Raby. "If he won't move, give him a whack!"

Gunner of the Fourth came in. It was Gunner's little way to butt in at the most exasperating moments.

"Leave him to me!" said Gunner loftily. "I'll manage him for you!"

"Clear off, you fathead!" roared Lovell, in frenzied tones.

"My dear chap, you can't handle that pony," said Gunner. "Leave him to me; I'll ride him out for you."

"Fathead!"

"Well, he seems glued here," said Jimmy Silver; "give Gunner a chance. Push him out, Gunner!"

"Look here—" roared Lovell wrathfully.

But Gunner went ahead. He clambered on the pony's back to ride him out.

Lovell watched him savagely. "Do you think you can make him move?" he sneered.

"Gee-up!" said Gunner, unheeding; and he smacked the pony.

To the surprise of Lovell, and perhaps of Gunner himself, the pony did move. He was not accustomed to a rider; and perhaps the novelty stirred him into action. He jumped into sudden life, as it were, and fairly flew out of the stable.

"He's off!" yelled Putty.

"So's Gunner!" gasped Jimmy Silver.

But Gunner was not quite off.

at last to go, was going strong. Gunner had no control over him whatever. Riding was one of the numerous things that Peter Cuthbert Gunner couldn't do. In less than a minute Trotsky was in the quadrangle, careering at a terrific rate, with Gunner like a bundle on his back, clinging wildly to his neck.

"Help!" Gunner was yelling.

"Serve him jolly well right!" gasped Lovell. "What did he want to meddle for, the silly ass!"

"After him!"

Jimmy Silver & Co. might as well have chased a lightning flash as Trotsky, now that Trotsky was fairly on the go.

His rapid heels kicked up the gravel from the paths, and he headed direct for the School House, as if he intended to go indoors. There were a crowd of fellows outside the School House, and some stacks of baggage, as well as several vehicles preparing to start. Loud shouts of alarm greeted the unexpected arrival of Trotsky.

"Keep off!"

"Great Scott!"

"Clear off, you young idiot!" roared Carthew of the Sixth. "How dare you come riding here!"

Gunner would have cleared off with the keenest pleasure if he could possibly have done so. But he couldn't.

He could only cling to Trotsky's neck convulsively. He rounded a stack of luggage, and kicked over a hatbox belonging to Carthew. The box came open, and a silk topper rolled out on the gravel.

"My hat!" yelled Carthew. "You young villain—"

Crunch!

The hat rolled in Trotsky's way. What was left of it when Trotsky had passed looked more like a concertina than a hat.

Trotsky swerved away from the steps, apparently changing his mind about going indoors. Carthew brandished his fists wildly after him.

Mr. Greely, the master of the Fifth, was walking into the quadrangle, and he rushed to intercept the wild rider.

he brought it into play. The stump had a wonderful effect on Trotsky. One resounding whack and he started, and he trotted away to the stables with cheerful obedience. Jimmy Silver resolved to keep a stump handy in his future dealings with Trotsky. He was evidently an intelligent pony, and understood stumps.

The juniors rushed him away, anxious to get him off the scene. Fortunately, Mr. Greely and Carthew were occupied with Gunner: fortunately, that is, for Jimmy Silver & Co., not for Gunner. The loud yells that came from Gunner seemed to indicate that Peter Cuthbert was not enjoying himself.

"Shove him in, quick!" said Jimmy Silver breathlessly. "We want to get started sharp now."

"Leave him to me," said Lovell.

"No jolly fear!" said Jimmy emphatically. "No time, you know. Life's too short!"

"If you think I can't handle a pony—"

"Bow-wow!"

Many hands assisted to harness Trotsky. That intelligent animal allowed himself to be harnessed with admirable placidity. Doubtless the stump lingered in his memory.

Then the Rookwooders led him away.

They were very anxious to get clear before anyone began inquiring into Trotsky's performance in the quadrangle. A grinning crowd followed them into the road. The heavily-laden cart rocked a little behind Trotsky, and several times a false alarm was raised that the baggage was coming down with a run. On the open road Conroy and Van Ryn and Pons and Oswald pushed behind to give Trotsky a start with his burden. But Trotsky did not move.

"He wants the stump," said Raby.

"Come on, old hoss!" urged Jimmy Silver.

"If you won't leave him to me you can't expect him to go," said Lovell. "You see—"

"Cheese it! Come up, you brute!"

"Stump him!"

and there are some very steep roads in the Sussex downs.

Downhill the going was easy—too easy in places; but on the rises it was a case of all hands to the mill.

"We've only put in what was necessary," remarked Lovell. "Of course, we shall have to pack it in better order."

"That won't make it lighter," observed Putty Grace.

"Did Lovell put in his extra pair of boots?" asked Raby thoughtfully.

"Of course I did!" said Lovell.

"Oh, that accounts, then!"

"If you are going to be a funny idiot, Raby—" began Lovell. Arthur Edward was a little sensitive about the size of his feet.

"I'm blessed if I quite understand it," said Jimmy. "We've not got any stuff we don't want that I remember. But we shall have to go over it and lighten the load. We can't spend our holiday shoving behind a giddy bus. We'll do an easy stage for the first day, and camp early, and go through the lumber, and see what we can do without."

"There's Putty's camera," said Lovell.

"How much does that weigh?" demanded Putty, rather warmly.

"Well, every little helps, or hinders," said Arthur Edward oracularly.

"I don't see how Trotsky can be feeling the weight of my camera," said Putty. "In fact, I know he isn't."

"How?" roared Lovell.

"Because I'm carrying it in my rucksack."

"Oh!" ejaculated Arthur Edward.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Arthur Edward snorted, and tramped on. Putty Grace smiled gently. He seemed to derive a little harmless and necessary amusement from pulling the leg of the rather hasty-tempered Arthur Edward.

"Here's another blessed hill!" said Newcome, after a time. "Now, then, all hands shove at the bus!"

Jimmy Silver paused. Ahead of the Rookwooders the road rose to the

brow of a down, and the ascent was a good mile in length, with a fairly sharp rise to it. Shoving the baggage-cart up that acclivity was not really an attractive occupation on a hot, sunny afternoon.

"Hold on!" said Jimmy. "If we're going to clear off some of the lumber, the sooner the better. Let's go through it now."

"What can we get rid of?" demanded Lovell. "Want to throw the cricket things overboard?"

"No; but—"

"Or the tent?"

"We shall want the tent. But—"

"Lovell's boots!" murmured Raby.

But Arthur Edward looked so ferocious that he did not finish.

"Perhaps we can carry a few more things in our rucksacks," said Jimmy Silver mildly. "Anyhow, let's see what can be done."

"We want the lot!" said Lovell doggedly. "I'll eat anything you find in that cart that we can do without."

"Let's see, anyway."

"Waste of time!" said Lovell.

Lovell seemed to be in an argumentative mood that day.

But a halt was made, notwithstanding, and the baggage-cart drawn up on the grass by the roadside. Trotsky contentedly cropped the grass there, seeming to like that occupation better than pulling uphill.

Jimmy Silver & Co. began to unpack the baggage. Arthur Edward Lovell looked on with a lofty expression of sarcasm.

There were plenty of things in the cart—cooking utensils, ground-sheets, tents, and bats and stumps, and some books, and a writing-case, and other things. But the juniors had really been rather careful in keeping their baggage within limits, and it was rather a puzzle how the load came to be so very heavy.

The ground-sheets were taken off, and then the tent was unloaded. And then there was a sudden yell of astonishment from Jimmy Silver & Co.

From the bottom of the cart, amid the various articles there, a fat, red face stared at the juniors, and two round, sleepy eyes blinked at them.

"Tubby!" yelled Jimmy Silver.

"Muffin!"

"You fat villain!"

Tubby Muffin blinked at the juniors. They did not blink at him, they glared.

It was easy to understand now why the load had been so heavy. Tubby Muffin was not a feather-weight. His circumference was considerable, and his avoirdupois was in proportion.

"I—I say—" gasped Muffin.

"Tubby!" howled Lovell. "Why, the fat villain's hid himself in our cart!"

"Under the baggage!" gasped Raby.

"I—I say, Jimmy—"

"Lynch him!" roared Lovell.

"I—I say, I knew you chaps wanted me to come!" said Muffin. "I—I say, I knew it was only your little joke, you know, so I—I got in, you know. I say, it was awfully warm under all that stuff! I don't mind, though, as—as you're glad to see me!"

"I—I—I'll—" stuttered Jimmy Silver.

"I wish you hadn't stopped so suddenly," said Tubby Muffin. "I was having a little snooze, and you woke me up. I was dreaming of pork-pies."

"I'll give you something else to dream about!" roared Lovell. "Hand me a stump!"

"I—I say, old chap—"

"Roll out, you fat villain!" snapped Jimmy Silver.

"I'm all right here," said Muffin, blinking at him. "I told you that if I came I should have to ride. I can't hoof it like you fellows. If you're camping here, I'll get out, of course. I'm ready for tea, if you come to that. I hope you've brought plenty of grub. I— Yaroooh!"

Tubby Muffin was interrupted.

A grip of iron fastened on his collar, and he came out of the baggage-cart and landed in the road with a resounding bump. And the yell that Muffin gave as he landed woke the echoes of the downs far and wide.

The 4th Chapter.

Tubby, Too!

Jimmy Silver & Co. gathered round Tubby Muffin with deadly looks.

For miles—long, weary miles—they had shovelled along the baggage-cart over hilly roads, helping Trotsky to do his duty. And all that labour had been expended on Reginald Muffin.

It was Muffin's weight that had made all the difference. Without him Trotsky's task would have been a mere promenade.

"Slaughter him!" said Raby.

"Give him five hundred with a stump, and sling him into the ditch!" said Lovell.

"Yaroooh!"

"Lovell was going to eat anything we found in the cart that we could do without!" chuckled Newcome.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I think we can do without Muffin!" grinned Jimmy.

"I—I say, Jimmy, you can't, you know!" gasped Muffin. "Suppose—suppose you meet a gang of tramps. You'll want a chap with you who can put up a fight."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"The fact is, I'm not going to leave you," said Tubby. "I've refused a lot of invitations to come with you, and it's too late now. There's plenty of room in the cart for one passenger, so what have you got to grumble at. You fellows were going to walk, anyway."

"Oh, bump him!" growled Lovell.

"Hold on," said Jimmy Silver.

"Now Tubby's here, let's make the best of him."

"That's right," said Tubby. "You really can't do without me, you know. You want the excursion to be a success, don't you?"

"Look here—" began Lovell.

"Tubby's joined up," said Jimmy Silver. "We'll keep him as long as he likes to stay. Shut up, Lovell, old chap! I don't think he'll want to stay long. Let's get going again."

"But—" expostulated Lovell.

"Oh, cheese it, Lovell!" said Tubby briskly. "My old pal Jimmy is leader of this party. If you think there's too many, you can hop out!"

"What?" roared Lovell.

"You're not indispensable," said

the interval, so to speak; and Tubby Muffin blinked after them wrathfully. He finally decided that he would walk.

He rolled after the party with a frowning face.

Tubby was quite determined to bag a cheap holiday that vacation; and as walking was a sine qua non, Tubby walked. But he grunted and groaned and complained at every other step.

Jimmy Silver & Co. did not heed.

They tramped on cheerily; and Trotsky, with a lighter load, pulled cheerily too, and the Rookwooders made a good speed.

The speed was too good for Tubby Muffin. As a matter of fact, Jimmy Silver & Co. were putting on a speed they did not intend to keep up permanently, for the special benefit and behoof of Reginald Muffin. They covered the ground in great style, and Tubby's little fat legs went like machinery to keep pace.

"I—I say, when are you camping?" gasped Tubby at last. The perspiration was pouring down his fat face.

"Camping?" repeated Jimmy.

"Oh, about midnight, perhaps!"

"Midnight!" yelled the hapless Tubby.

"Feeling a bit fagged, Tubby?" asked Putty Grace sympathetically.

"Ow! Yes!"

"Why not sit down in the grass and rest?"

"You fellows will wait for me?"

"Oh, no."

"Why, you rotter, I should be left behind, then."

"Exactly."

"Yah!"

The 5th Chapter.

Tubby is Too Clever!

Tubby Muffin lay with his eyes closed. He opened one eye cautiously, but closed it again very quickly as he



THE STOWAWAY! The ground sheets were taken off and the tent unloaded, and then there came a sudden yell of astonishment from Jimmy Silver as a red face blinked up at the juniors. It was Tubby Muffin!

Tubby. "Now, I am. That's where the difference comes in, you know."

"Why, I—I'll—"

"You talk too much, old chap," said Tubby.

Jimmy Silver jerked his incensed chum away in time to prevent a serious case of assault and battery.

"Pack up!" he said.

Arthur Edward Lovell snorted emphatically, but he acquiesced. It dawned upon Arthur Edward's rather slow understanding that Jimmy was pulling the fat leg of Reginald Muffin.

Tubby sat on a knoll, while the juniors re-packed the baggage-cart. When the cart was drawn out into the road again Tubby prepared to mount.

He was jerked off.

"Walk!" said Jimmy Silver tersely. Tubby expostulated.

"Now, I told you that I wasn't going to walk, Jimmy," he said.

"If I'm to be a member of this party, I've got to ride. I told you so. I'm getting into the cart."

"I'll soon get you out again!" grunted Lovell.

"This is a walking party," explained Jimmy Silver. "You can walk in which direction you like, Tubby, but you're walking. Catch on?"

"Look here, Jimmy—"

"Start!" said Jimmy Silver.

"I'll jolly well go back to Rookwood and take the train home!" roared Tubby Muffin.

"Go hon!"

The Rookwooders re-started after

Tubby Muffin did not sit down to rest. He tramped on doggedly, determined that by hook or by crook he was going to be a member of the holiday party. But with every mile his fat little legs covered, Tubby found that prospect less and less attractive.

There was room in the cart for one, besides the baggage; and Tubby did not see why he should not be that one. He had quite made up his fat mind that he was going to be that one.

But if Jimmy Silver & Co. meant business, there was a prospect before Tubby of endless tramping up hill and down dale—a prospect that had no fascination for him whatever.

That was not Tubby's idea of a holiday. His idea of a holiday was to ride while other fellows walked, and to rest while other fellows worked. On those lines Tubby had intended to enjoy quite a happy time. But it was growing obvious that the affair was to be run on quite other lines.

Tubby's footsteps lagged more and more. He tried hanging on behind the cart by way of a rest, but he was jerked off by his fellow-travellers. It was Shanks' pony or nothing!

Tubby was not in a condition for strenuous exercise—and he hated exercise, anyway. His fat legs were developing an ache that was really stupendous.

Jimmy Silver & Co., in point of fact, were getting tired, and they

would have camped, but for Tubby Muffin! For Tubby's benefit, the march was prolonged, as the sun sank lower and lower in the west; and the cheery juniors carefully concealed all signs of fatigue, and chatted of the uncounted miles they were going to cover before morning.

The sight of a long stretch of road ahead, rising steeply for a couple of miles, finished Tubby.

It had rather a dismaying effect upon Jimmy Silver & Co., though they gave no sign.

"Going to camp now, Jimmy?" asked Tubby in an expiring voice.

"My dear chap, we've got miles before us—"

"You can't get over that hill this evening," urged Tubby.

"You never know what you can do till you try."

"I—I say, I've got a pain."

"That's all right, you'll get used to it."

"I—I think my ankle's sprained."

"Hop on the other foot, then."

"Yah!"

Tubby Muffin tramped on drearily. Then suddenly he gave a howl, and fell! Jimmy Silver & Co. stopped. On the dusty road Tubby Muffin lay, without a sign of life!

"He's fainted!" said Jimmy Silver gravely.

Gently and tenderly he was carried out of the dusty road into the shady wood by the roadside.

It was no light task, even for the sturdy juniors. Carrying Muffin made them comprehend even more clearly why Trotsky had found his load so heavy when the journey started.

But they managed it, and Tubby was laid gently in the grass a score of feet from the road in the shade of the trees.

"Now he'll be all right," said Jimmy Silver. "Leave him here for a bit, and he'll soon be recovered, I dare say by the time we come back for him."

And the juniors trotted lightly away.

Tubby Muffin opened one eye cautiously. Then he opened the other. He grinned as he had a view of the juniors' backs disappearing through the trees.

"Fairly diddled, by gum!" murmured Tubby Muffin. "He, he, he! I hope they won't be long getting supper. He, he, he!"

He sat up to look after the juniors. As Lovell glanced back, Tubby hastily laid down again.

For a moment he was oppressed by a dread that Lovell had observed him, and he half expected Arthur Edward to rush back, proclaiming that he had been spoofed. But Lovell didn't. Apparently, he had observed nothing.

Tubby breathed more freely as the minutes passed, and there were no returning footsteps. Evidently Jimmy Silver & Co. had been completely spoofed, and they were going to camp, and Tubby was going to be treated as an interesting invalid.

Meanwhile, Jimmy Silver & Co., screened from Tubby's view by the trees, were not selecting a spot for camping. Jimmy had said that Tubby would probably have recovered by the time they came back for him. It was highly probable, unless Tubby remained in a permanent state of shamming.

The five juniors trotted out softly into the road, and Trotsky was drawn on the grass beside the highway so that his departing footsteps would make no sound.

Then the Rookwooders marched on. They grinned, but they did not venture to laugh till they had covered quite a good distance. Then they chortled gleefully.

Jimmy Silver & Co. were still on the march, with the miles lengthening behind them, when Tubby Muffin "came to." He was growing surprised at being left so long, and he was growing hungry.

He decided at last that he had better recover without being called for, and he rose to his feet and started looking for the Rookwood camp. He did not find it.

For about an hour Tubby Muffin sought for the camp, and scanned the road for a sign of Trotsky and the Rookwooders.

Then it dawned upon his fat brain that he would not see Jimmy Silver & Co. again till the next term started at Rookwood School, and with feelings too deep for words Tubby rolled away to the railway-station, no longer rejoicing in his astuteness and presence of mind.

The train bore Tubby Muffin homeward, what time the last rays of the summer sun shone down on Trotsky and the Rookwooders on the road.

THE END.

(If you have enjoyed reading about Jimmy Silver & Co. on the road, you mustn't miss "Fortune Favours the Brave!"—next week's long complete Rookwood story.)