

"FOES OF THE RANCH!" A Tip-Top Story of Jimmy Silver & Co.
Out West in This Issue!

The BOYS' FRIEND 2d

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ROPING IN A RASCAL! An amusing incident in our magnificent new story of the Boy with Fifty Millions.

ANOTHER THRILLER OF THE ROOKWOOD CHUMS OUT WEST!



The 1st Chapter.
Roped In!

Whiz!
"Oh!"
Bump!
It happened so quickly that Jimmy Silver hardly knew that it was happening.

A few seconds before Jimmy had been riding cheerily across the plain towards the Windy River Ranch. Then came the whiz of the hurtling lasso, the grip of the noose about his shoulders, and the bump on the hard prairie as he was plucked from the saddle.

Jimmy Silver sprawled on the ground, every bone in his body jarred by the heavy fall, half stunned by the shock.

His horse, Blazer, ran on at a gallop, with empty saddle, and reins and stirrups dangling.

It was a full minute before Jimmy Silver was able to sit up, and stare about him in a dazed way.

Jimmy was not often caught napping; but "roping in" on his Canadian cousin's ranch was about the last thing he would have looked for. Dazed as he was, he could guess that it was a trick of some cattelman; there were no enemies to be feared on the wide grasslands of the Windy River Ranch.

There was no pull on the lasso. The noose bound fast round Jimmy Silver, and he would have been helpless if there had been a pull on the rope. But it lay on the prairie, and a wrench of his arms unloosened the gripping noose, and he was free.

Jimmy staggered to his feet.

His head was still singing from the shock, and he had an ache all over him.

No one was to be seen. In the distant south the smoke from the chimney of the ranch cook-house curled against the blue Alberta sky. A dozen yards away a belt of pines and sassafras ran, and it was from the cover of the timber belt that the lasso-cast had come.

The lassoer did not show himself; and the fact that the rope lay idle on the ground showed that it had been abandoned by the cowpuncher who had made the cast.

He could not have recovered it without approaching Jimmy and betraying himself, and it was clear that the practical joker wished to keep his identity a secret.

Jimmy Silver gritted his teeth.

That rough tumble on the prairie was rather more than a practical joke, in Jimmy's opinion. He took a hard grip on his riding-whip, and ran towards the timber belt, with the intention of taking instant vengeance. In a minute more he was among the trees, searching for the man who had thrown the lariat.

But the lassoer was gone.

"Show yourself, you rotter!" shouted Jimmy Silver. "You skulking cad, come out and show yourself!"

There was no answer.

Jimmy Silver moved to and fro among the trees, his eyes glinting with anger. In the earth were traces of the heavy boots of the cowpuncher who had waited there, and Jimmy scanned them. But the "sign," which would have told much to a native plainsman, was useless to the schoolboy who, only a few weeks before, had been at school in England. Jimmy had learned much during his few weeks in Canada, but skill in

Foes of the Ranch!

By Owen Conquest.

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

Jimmy Silver & Co. prove equal to extricating themselves from a very tight corner!

scoutcraft was not to be picked up so soon.

"The rotter!" breathed Jimmy. It was useless to search for an experienced plainsman who chose to keep himself hidden in the cover; Jimmy might have searched for hours, if not for days, without success. He quitted the trees at last, and picked up the abandoned lasso that still lay on the ground.

Jimmy did not intend to let the matter end there.

The cowpuncher who had played that trick upon him had to answer for it; and the lasso was a clue.

Jimmy coiled the lasso, threw it over his arm, and started for the ranch on foot. His horse had already vanished from sight. Blazer, the buck-jumper that Jimmy had tamed, was now Jimmy's own horse; Rancher Smedley had handed him over to his English cousin—a very acceptable present to Jimmy Silver. But Blazer, though tamed, was not yet a reliable mount, and was liable to take advantages when his master's eye and hand were not upon him. Finding himself without a rider, Blazer had galloped home to the corrals, and Jimmy was left with a three-mile tramp before him.

No doubt the practical joker in the timber belt had counted upon that; it was part of his trick on the "tender-foot."

Tramping on the rough prairie was not pleasant, especially after a long ride. The cowboy on the vast grasslands is almost helpless without his horse. Jimmy Silver tramped on with tired legs over the rolling plain, with a frowning brow.

He turned over in his mind, as he tramped on, the question of his assailant's identity. He knew all the men on the Windy River Ranch, and he was friendly with all of them, from Pete Peters, the gigantic foreman, to Baldy, the cook, and Woo Sing, the chore-boy. Red Alf, Skitter Dick, Spike Thompson, and the rest—not one of them would have played that ill-natured trick, he was sure.

"Kentuck!" he muttered.

Kentuck, the youngest cowpuncher on the ranch, was only a year or two older than Jimmy—a sharp-featured youth from over the "Line." Jimmy Silver had had trouble with the Kentuckian already, though Hudson Smedley had chipped in to put a stop to it. As soon as the thought of Kentuck came into his mind Jimmy Silver had no further doubt as to who had attacked him.

He tramped on savagely.

Three riders loomed up ahead on the prairie, and he recognised Lovell and Raby and Newcome, his chums. They were riding towards him from the ranch.

"Hallo! Here he is!" shouted Lovell.

Jimmy stopped, and the three Rookwooders rode up. They grinned down at Jimmy.

"Your gee-gee came trotting in," said Lovell, with a grin. "We guessed he had given you the chuck, so we came out for you."

"Blazer isn't quite safe yet, Jimmy," remarked Raby.

"Bad luck, old thing!" said Newcome sympathetically.

Jimmy grunted.

"Blazer's all right when I'm in the saddle," he said.

"But not when you fall off," chuckled Lovell.

"Fathead! I've been lassoed." Jimmy Silver held up the captured lasso, and explained what had happened.

Arthur Edward Lovell whistled.

"Kentuck, of course!" he said. "That scowling cad came back from Mosquito yesterday. This is in return for the punch you gave him, Jimmy. I suppose he didn't care to punch his boss' cousin, so he's taken it out this way."



SHOOTING THE RAPIDS! Jimmy Silver & Co. cling desperately to the raft as it went whirling on through the rushing, tearing, roaring waters.

"I'm going to find out," said Jimmy Silver grimly. "If it turns out to be Kentuck he won't have any choice about the punching. You can give me a lift, Lovell."

"Jump on, old chap."

Jimmy Silver mounted behind his chum, and the Rookwooders rode on to the ranch.

The 2nd Chapter. Not Guilty!

Pete Peters, the foreman of the Windy River Ranch, was standing by the bunkhouse when the juniors rode up. He was grinning, and he grinned still more at the sight of Jimmy Silver riding double with Lovell. Jimmy jumped to the ground.

"Blazer too much for you, arter all, what?" grinned Mr. Peters.

"Not in your lifetime, Mr. Peters," answered Jimmy; and he explained once more what had happened, and exhibited the lasso. "I want to know to whom this rope belongs."

Peters became grave as he listened. "That was a dirty trick!" he said. "I guess the boss will come down heavy on a galoot playing a trick

like that on his guest. You'd better tell Boss Smedley."

Jimmy shook his head.

"I'm not going to bother Mr. Smedley about it," he said. "I can deal with the matter myself."

"Going to wallop a six-foot cowpuncher—what?" asked Mr. Peters humorously.

"If it turns out to be a six-foot cowpuncher, we'll see," said Jimmy. "I fancy it wasn't! Anyhow, I want to know who was the owner of this rope."

"Might not have been one of the ranch hands at all," suggested Mr. Peters. "Might have been a man belonging to the Sunset Ranch, or some galoot from up the river. Though it's queer for a cowpuncher to throw away his rope like that."

"He couldn't get the rope back without showing himself," said Jimmy; "and if it had been a stranger playing a rotten trick on a newcomer, he wouldn't have been afraid to show himself."

"Sure!" assented the foreman, after a moment's thought.

"Anyhow, I want to know who's lost this rope," said Jimmy. "Where is Kentuck just now?"

"Out on the prairie."

Pete Peters took the coiled lasso, and examined it attentively. His brows became knitted.

"This ain't Kentuck's rope," he said.

once or twice he had done so, but in a good-natured way, and Jimmy Silver & Co. had been quite friendly with him. It was a shock to discover that he was guilty of a treacherous trick like this.

Hudson Smedley was away from the ranch that afternoon on one of his frequent visits to the Sunset Ranch down the river, and Jimmy was glad that his Canadian cousin was out of the way. He did not want to involve the authority of the rancher in this affair—that savoured rather too much of "telling a master" in the old school days at Rookwood.

Jimmy meant to deal with the matter himself; though how he was to handle Skitter Dick on his own was rather a problem, for the young cowpuncher stood five-feet-ten, and there was twice as much of him in the way of muscle and sinew, as there was of Jimmy Silver, sturdy fellow as Jimmy was.

But Jimmy was quite resolute; it was not a matter that could be passed over and forgotten. After tea Jimmy visited the corrals, to make sure that Blazer was all right, and then he strolled with his chums towards the bunkhouse, the gathering-place of the cowboys when they came in from the ranges.

There he caught sight of Kentuck—the lanky and ill-natured youth from the States. Kentuck did not look at him, and did not seem to be aware of his existence, and Jimmy did not approach the fellow. Kentuck was the only cowpuncher on the ranch with whom Jimmy could not "pull," and he did his best to keep out of the Kentuckian's way and avoid further trouble.

One by one horsemen came in from the plains, and Baldy in the cook-house was very busy now.

Skitter Dick rode up at last.

He was a handsome, well-built young fellow, with a sunburnt face and white teeth. He wore his hair rather long, and brown curls escaped under the Stetson hat.

Jimmy Silver watched him as he dismounted and turned his horse into the corral. Skitter Dick came back towards the bunkhouse, and Jimmy stepped to meet him.

"Is that your lasso?" he asked, holding it up.

The young man glanced at it.

"I guess it looks like it," he said. "Let's see."

He took the rope and examined it.

"Sure, that's mine!" he said.

"That settles it!" said Lovell. Jimmy Silver's eyes glinted.

"I suppose you know where I picked it up?" he said.

"On the peg of the bunkhouse, I reckon," said Skitter Dick, staring at him. "What are you driving at? What are you handling my rope for, anyhow?"

"I picked it up three miles from the ranch, after it had been used to rope me off my horse."

"Hey?"

Skitter Dick looked astonished.

"You didn't expect me to bring it in and inquire as to whom it belonged, I suppose?" said Jimmy, with a curl of the lip.

"You pesky fool, Dick!" broke in Pete Peters. "What you want to play fool-tricks on the kid for? You're too big for him to handle, and he don't want to complain to Boss Smedley and get you fired from the ranch. You've got him there, and it's a cowardly trick, I tell you!"

"What's started you chewing the rag, old Peters?" asked Skitter Dick. "Who's been playing tricks on the kid?"

"You have!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver savagely. "And whether you're too big for me or not, I'm going to handle you for it, so you can put up your hands, you rotter!"

And Jimmy Silver advanced on the cowpuncher with his fists clenched and a blaze in his eyes.

Skitter Dick stepped back.

"Keep cool, young 'un!" he said, with a laugh. "Don't bite off more'n you can chew in too big a hurry."

"Will you put up your hands, or are you afraid to stand by what you've done?" shouted Jimmy Silver.

"I guess there's no man between Labrador and the Rockies that I'm afraid of, kid!" said the cowpuncher.

"Keep cool, I tell you! - If you was a foot taller, I guess I wouldn't waste time in chewing the rag; but afore I handle a kid of your size, I want to know, I guess. I left this hyer rope on the peg over my bunk this morning when I saddled up, and I ain't seen it again till this minute. If it's been used to rope you off your horse, it wasn't in my hands at the time."

Jimmy Silver checked himself.

(Continued overleaf.)

Don't Miss "Jimmy Silver's Enemy!" Next Monday's stunning story of the Rookwood Chums Out West!



Foes of the Ranch!

By Owen Conquest.

(Continued from previous page.)

The 3rd Chapter. On the Island.

Mr. Hudson Smedley heard nothing of the occurrence. Jimmy Silver was not likely to tell him, and the matter had been dropped. After careful reflection Jimmy realised that there was nothing to be done in the matter. Mr. Smedley had intervened in his first trouble with the Kentuckian, sending the latter away from the ranch with a draft of cattle for a week or more, and the trouble had dropped, so far as the rancher knew. Jimmy Silver would willingly have allowed it to drop for good; but it was clear enough now that Kentuck bore malice, and that on his side the enmity was continuing, and burning as fiercely as ever.

Jimmy would have been glad to dismiss the whole matter from his mind, and forget and forgive; but he could not help thinking that the malicious Kentuckian was only biding his time for another attack. Next time the ill-natured fellow showed his hand, Jimmy intended to be more upon his guard. But several days passed and he did not come into contact with the cowpuncher in any way, and the affair almost passed from his remembrance. He had a matter that was much more agreeable to think of. Mr. Hudson Smedley had had a Canadian bark canoe brought up from Mosquito town for the use of his distinguished guests, and Jimmy Silver & Co. were taking instruction in paddling the canoe from Skitter Dick, who was a skilled man on the river.

The Skitter had quite forgiven Jimmy for his suspicion, founded on the misleading clue of the lasso. He was on the best of terms with the schoolboys, and willingly taught them all he knew in the management of the river craft. The weather was glorious, and the Rookwood juniors thoroughly enjoyed days on the river in the canoe as soon as they knew how to handle it. There was an island in the Windy River about four miles from the ranch-house thickly wooded and tenanted only by wild birds and prairie rabbits, and as soon as they felt confidence in their management of the canoe the Rookwood juniors determined on a picnic on the island. It was just like one of their old stunts at Rookwood, as Arthur Edward Lovell remarked.

Early one morning the Fistical Four carried their bundles down to the river, placed them in the canoe, and launched it. They took provisions for the day and other camping necessities. Kentuck, the cowboy, came out of the bunkhouse as they were starting, and he glanced rather curiously at the juniors. He stood on the bank while they were launching the canoe, and gave the craft a push-off when they were on board—a little service they had hardly expected of him.

"You want to be careful going down stream," he called out to them. "You want to make a portage when you get to the rapids."

"We're going up stream," answered Jimmy.

"I guess there's a portage a mile up, too," said Kentuck. "Are you going as far as that?"

"We're going to picnic on Woody Island."

"Oh, gum! How are you going to get there?"

"Paddle, of course."

"Not in your lifetime," grinned Kentuck, and he turned away laughing.

"Cheeky ass!" growled Lovell. "We'll jolly well show him whether we can paddle as far as the island. I'd undertake to paddle as far as the Rockies if the water was deep enough."

And the juniors started. They were accustomed to the use of the paddles by this time, and they made good headway against the stream, swift as it was. Like most of the streams that flowed down from the slopes of the Rocky Mountains, the Windy River had sharp descents where the water ran in "rapids." They did not amount to cascades; but it was impossible to pull a boat or paddle a canoe up stream at such points. As soon as they neared the rapids the canoes had to land and carry the canoe to a

point higher up the river. This was a "portage," so-called from the French word for "carry."

The light Canadian bark canoe was easy enough to carry for four sturdy schoolboys.

They landed, drew their little craft ashore and lifted it, and bore it up the steep bank.

Well above the rapids they launched it again and floated off, and paddled up to the island.

Though only four miles from the ranch, the island in the Windy River seemed as solitary as in the dawn of Creation. Thick woods covered it down to the water's edge, and from the thickets the little bright eyes of prairie rabbits blinked at the juniors as they landed.

More experienced canoers would probably have lifted the craft ashore, but Lovell tied the painter to a sapling, mooring the canoe as he was accustomed to mooring a boat at home at Rookwood.

The juniors jumped ashore tossing out their bundles.

Overhead the sun blazed in the blue sky of Alberta; far to the west the great range of the Rocky Mountains blotted the sky; but the juniors

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were used to the Rockies by this time. They had thrilled at the first sight of the mighty mountains, beyond which lay British Columbia and the Pacific Ocean; now they did not give the snow-clad peaks even a glance.

"Topping here, isn't it?" remarked Raby. "I believe I'm getting hungry already."

"I know I am," remarked Newcome.

"I'll knock over one of these rabbits for lunch," said Lovell.

"We've brought the grub."

"Still, a rabbit-stew—"

"Let the little beggars alone," said Jimmy Silver. "We've got plenty of grub; no need to make even the rabbits sorry we've come here."

"You're an ass, Jimmy, old chap," said Lovell loftily. "Let's look for game, like real hunters."

"But we're not hunters."

"Oh, rats!"

Argument generally was wasted on Arthur Edward Lovell. It was one of his little ways to be confirmed in his views by opposition.

"You haven't brought a gun, I suppose," said Raby.

"No; Mr. Smedley doesn't like us handling firearms," grunted Lovell. "Seems to think something might happen."

"So it might," grinned Newcome. "Not to the rabbits, either, if you started in with a gun, Lovell."

"Rats!" roared Lovell, "don't be an ass. As for those bunnies, I'll jolly soon knock one over with a stick."

"Let them alone, ass," urged Jimmy Silver.

"Fathead!"

That was the only reply that Lovell condescended to make. He cut a stick in the wood and started. There seemed to be scores of the prairie rabbits on the island, and they were so unaccustomed to the sight of that exceedingly dangerous animal, the human being, that they scuttled about in full sight of the juniors, seeming little alarmed by the visitors. Knocking one of them on the head seemed to be an easy proposition; but when Lovell started in, the ease vanished. His first rush startled every rabbit on the island, and they vanished as if by magic. Lovell plunged after them furiously; the grinning faces of his chums spurred him on. He was going to catch a rabbit now, if it cost him a leg.

As it turned out, it very nearly did. Jimmy Silver & Co., getting the camp-fire ready, heard a loud yell from Lovell in the thickets.

"Help! Come and lend a hand, you silly idiots!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Raby. "There's Lovell cornered by a ferocious bunny!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Come and help me, can't you?" roared Lovell.

The three juniors ran quickly into the trees. Lovell's voice came in muffled tones as he yelled. The first Jimmy Silver & Co. saw of him was the soles of his boots sticking up through the tangled vegetation of a deep hollow. Evidently Lovell had not seen the hollow, and he had plunged in head-first in his pursuit of the elusive rabbits. He was quite unable to extricate himself, and he could only wriggle and yell.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the three juniors.

"Groooh! Help me out! Ow! Groooh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You silly owls! You chortling jabberwocks! You—" spluttered Lovell.

"All together!" grinned Jimmy Silver.

He seized Lovell's left ankle, Raby and Newcome seized the right. With a long pull, a strong pull, and a pull all together, the three juniors dragged Lovell out, a good deal like a cork from a bottle.

It was a flustered, crimson, and infuriated Lovell that came into view and sprawled on the ground.

"Ow! Oh! Groooh! Ooooh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"What are you cackling at?" roared Lovell.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the juniors.

"You silly chumps! You—you burbling idiots! Is this your thanks for a fellow getting you fresh meat for lunch?" howled Lovell.

"Where's the fresh meat?"

"O where and O where can it be?" sang Newcome.

"Yards down in the burrows by this time," chuckled Jimmy Silver.

"Lovell, old man, you weren't cut out for a Nimrod. Give it a miss."

Lovell staggered to his feet, gasping.

"I've had a slight accident—"

"You have!" agreed Raby.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You fellows get a fire going. I'll bring in a rabbit all right."

"Haden't we better follow you, to pull you out of the next hole?" asked Raby.

Lovell's reply to that question was not in words. He grasped his stick and made a rush at his grinning comrades, who scattered and fled, still chortling.

Jimmy Silver & Co. had the camp-fire ready and lunch prepared before Lovell returned. When he came back at last he was tired and grubby and flustered—and empty-handed.

"Rabbits out when you called?" asked Raby.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Grunt from Lovell.

"Too many giddy victims for you to carry home?" inquired Newcome.

"Shall we all go with the biggest bag?"

Lovell gave a more expressive grunt. Then his chums mercifully let the subject drop, and handed Lovell a helping of the lunch that had been brought from the ranch. And even Arthur Edward realised that it was fortunate that the party had not depended for their lunch upon his skill as a hunter.

The 4th Chapter.

By a Hidden Hand.

"What the merry thump!"

Jimmy Silver uttered that exclamation in tones of amazement. He sat up and stared.

After lunch the Rookwood juniors had been resting and chatting under

the trees on the island before going on a voyage of exploration. Jimmy Silver was seated with his back to a tree, facing the stream at the spot where the canoe had been moored to the sapling.

He was astounded to see the canoe in motion.

His glance fell upon it carelessly for a moment; but it became fixed as he discerned the motion in the floating craft.

Some hidden force seemed to be plucking at the canoe, pulling it away from its moorings. The cord Lovell had used to tie it to the sapling was stretched tight, at full length, as the canoe was drawn away by the stern. The light sapling bent over under the pull, arching towards the canoe.

"My only hat!" ejaculated Lovell. All eyes followed Jimmy's astounded stare.

In a South American river it might have been suspected that an alligator had seized upon the canoe, but in a Canadian river there was no such formidable creature to be feared. It was not the current that was sucking the canoe away—the pull was too steady and powerful for that. Something, somehow—unseen—had a grip on the stern of the canoe, and was tugging it away forcibly.

Jimmy Silver sprang to his feet. He had been so startled by the moment at the amazing sight that he could scarcely believe his eyes. But he saw that the light branch to which the canoe was tied was yielding under the strain, and might crack off at any instant. Once the canoe was loose on the river the juniors would have been in a serious plight. Jimmy dashed down towards the water, his chums at his heels.

Crack!

The branch parted, and the sapling shot up straight again. The canoe darted out from the island like an arrow from a bow, the cord trailing behind it with a fragment of branch attached. Under the force of the pull, and aided by the current, the canoe shot a good fifty yards away, in little more than a second.

Jimmy Silver & Co. were a full minute in reaching the water's edge from their camp. By that time the canoe was a dancing speck on the river, rocking on the current towards the southern shore.

The chums stared after it blankly. "What does it mean?" gasped Lovell.

Jimmy rubbed his eyes.

It had crossed his mind that perhaps some thievish Indian had swum off to steal the canoe, and was dragging it away from underneath; but that, of course, was an impossible theory in view of the sudden darting away of the released craft.

"Something's got hold of it somehow!" said Raby.

Jimmy watched breathlessly.

The canoe was drawing nearer and nearer to the southern bank of the Windy River, as if plucked and guided by an unseen hand. It came into contact with a mass of floating driftwood, and then the secret was revealed.

Over the water rose a stretched rope into view, extending from the stern of the canoe to the bank.

Hitherto, the rope had been floating or sunken, and had not caught the eyes of the juniors.

Now, as the canoe jammed on the driftwood, the pulling rope tautened, and was brought into plain view.

The jam lasted only a few moments, the driftwood floated clear, and the canoe swayed on towards the bank again, the rope sinking once more on the water.

Jimmy Silver gritted his teeth.

He understood now.

Someone, hidden on the rocky bank of the Windy River, had made a lasso-cast at the canoe moored off the island. The loop had settled over the stern of the canoe and fastened there. After that the lassoer had only to pull. Probably he had taken a turn of the lasso round a rock, to give him a greater purchase on the rope; that would account for the strength of the tug.

"Roped in!" said Lovell, understanding, too.

"Kentuck!" said Jimmy between his teeth. "I know now why he was so curious to know where we were going. He's stranded us."

The juniors strained their eyes towards the distant bank. Nothing was to be seen of the lassoer.

It was easy enough for him to keep in cover in the broken rocks of the bank. But that he was still there was quite evident, for the canoe was being pulled steadily shoreward.

The chums of Rookwood could only watch its progress in growing rage. They had no means of reaching the canoe.

Even if they had cared to trust

themselves to the rapid river, there was no time to swim to the canoe before it was landed by the unseen lassoer.

They watched in savage silence. The canoe bumped on the bank; and even then the lassoer did not show himself. The little craft of light bark was easily dragged up the bank on the rope, and it disappeared from sight in an opening between two high rocks.

Jimmy Silver clenched his hands. "The rotter! It's Kentuck, of course. He must have followed us up the river to play this dirty trick on us."

"No proof—same as before," said Lovell.

"He doesn't mean to let us see him," said Newcome. "Hudson Smedley would kick him out of the ranch for this, and he knows it. We can't accuse him unless we see him at it."

Jimmy set his teeth. "We'll make the rotter sit up for it, anyhow!" he said. "But, what the thump are we going to do? How are we getting off this dashed island now?"

"Hallo! There's the canoe again!" exclaimed Lovell.

"My hat!" From behind a big rock the canoe came into sight, its nose pushed out into the water. The big rock completely hid from the island the form of the man who was handling it. The canoe floated in the water again, and a powerful shove sent it spinning out almost into the centre of the stream. The current caught it, deflecting it downstream. It floated away, swift on the current, rocking and swaying, growing smaller and smaller in the distance as the hapless Rookwooders watched it.

They understood the manoeuvre easily enough. The lassoer had pulled it ashore in order to recover and detach his rope. The trickster was not abandoning the lasso this time as in the previous case; doubtless this time it was his own rope. Now the canoe was drifting downstream, hopelessly out of reach of the juniors on the island, drifting towards the rapids, over which it would go whirling. It was most likely that it would fill and sink in the rapids, if it was not dashed on a rock and wrecked. In any case, it was lost to the Rookwooders on Woody Island.

It disappeared from sight, floating away among the driftwood that dotted the river.

Jimmy Silver & Co. stood and looked at one another, their feelings almost too deep for words.

Once more Jimmy's malicious enemy had tricked him, and in a way that could never be brought home to the trickster. Indeed, if the chums had happened to be exploring the island, out of sight of the canoe, in those minutes, they would never have known themselves that a trick had been played. Finding the canoe gone on their return, they would have supposed, naturally, that it had fallen loose and floated away. Even as it was, they had no evidence that anyone belonging to the Windy River Ranch had played the trick; Kentuck, if it was Kentuck, had taken no chances, and they had not had the slightest glimpse of him.

"It's a rotten trick!" said Lovell at last. "But—the brute can't mean to leave us here—"

He broke off. It was only too clear that the "brute" meant to leave them there—for the night—and for a good many nights and days; as long in fact, as they were unable to escape. And that prospect was serious enough to make Jimmy Silver & Co. look very grave.

The 5th Chapter. Sink or Swim!

Exploring Woody Island was dropped—by tacit consent. The Rookwood juniors had more important matters to think about now.

It was still hours to sundown; they had plenty of time to act, if there was anything to be done. But what was to be done?

They were stranded on the island. Obviously the trickster, Kentuck or not, had no intention of helping them. No doubt he was already gone, grinning over his success, and utterly regardless of the results to the victims.

Jimmy Silver & Co. debated the possibility of swimming to the shore. The ranch was on the southern side of the Windy River, four miles or so downstream. But the branch of the river between the island and the southern bank was wide, and the current ran swift and strong, fed by the spring freshets up in the mountains. Jimmy Silver looked at it, and looked at it again, and shook his head. A strong swimmer like Jimmy might have tackled the crossing

successfully, but he could not feel sure of success. And it was fairly certain that his chums could not have come safely to land. Lovell's opinion was that he could have done it; but he was assured that his comrades could not. Jimmy did not argue the point—swimming ashore was out of the question, and there was an end.

The alternative was waiting to be rescued.

"After all, they'll come for us," said Raby. "If we don't turn up at dark, your cousin will know something has happened, Jimmy."

"Yes. But—Mr. Smedley was out at dawn, and we didn't see him before we started," said Jimmy Silver. "He doesn't know we were coming up to the island at all. He will know we went out in the canoe, and that's all."

"We mentioned it to Kentuck—"

"Who won't say a word, of course," said Jimmy. "Nobody knows we're on the island except that rotter, and he will keep mum. Anyhow, they wouldn't search till dark, and that means a night for us here."

"We can camp out," said Newcome.

Jimmy Silver nodded, but he was very thoughtful. Nights were cold and keen so early in the summer, and the juniors had no protection against it. They had had no intention, of course, of staying out for the night, and they

certainly that the island would not be visited in a search. If the canoe was found, it was fairly certain that the juniors would be supposed to have come to grief at the rapids. The search would be below the rapids—down the river to Mosquito, and across the river on the chance that the capsized juniors had landed there. Nobody was likely to think of penetrating four miles up-stream—two miles above the rapids.

"We shan't be looked for here!" said Newcome at last.

"It's not likely!"

"Oh crumbs!"

"We may be here for days and days, weeks perhaps," said Jimmy. "We may sight a cowpuncher on the plains and signal to him; but even that's not likely; and this part of the river, so high up the stream, is in a rocky country, where the cattle do not come. It will be an awful blow to my cousin to think we are dead—and—and goodness knows how long we shall be stranded here—till we starve, perhaps—"

"The rabbits—" began Lovell.

"We've got to get out of it, and get back to the ranch," said Jimmy Silver. "Of course, Kentuck couldn't have foreseen all this—he doesn't know that Mr. Smedley is ignorant of our whereabouts. He's stranded us worse than he supposed."

"He'll be jolly glad of it!" growled Lovell.

on the island in passing, and some were tangled in the thickets where the latter grew down to the water.

Jimmy Silver and Lovell waded into shallow water, and gathered in logs, while Raby and Newcome cut osiers in the wood, to fasten the raft together. The juniors worked hard and quickly, without wasting a minute; for the sun was setting westward now towards the far Pacific. The danger of shooting the rapids in daylight was great; but after darkness had fallen, the danger would have been a hundredfold greater. It was necessary to get away well before sundown.

Waist-deep in water, heedless of the wet and the damage to their clothes, the juniors worked at the raft. It was no time to think of such slight considerations.

Log after log was bound with strong osiers, strengthened by a rope the juniors had with them. After long and hard work, the rough raft floated on the water by the island, held by the rope.

A dozen logs had been bound together, forming a floating platform that was secure enough in calm water. What would happen to it on the rush down the rapids, the juniors preferred not to consider. They had made up their minds to take the chance, and it was useless to meet troubles half-way.

Four stout branches were cut in

The raft was already feeling the quickening of the current above the rapids. It was whirling on with increased momentum. It went yards down stream for every inch that it crept shoreward. And when the bank at last was near, it was steep and rugged, and the raft collided with a projecting point of rock, and whirled completely round with the shock, sending the four juniors sprawling. They sprawled on the logs, while the raft whirled and spun down the river, rocking and splashing.

"All here?" panted Jimmy Silver, gaining his knees.

The raft was almost in midstream again, rushing down.

"I'm here!" gasped Raby. "Here's Newcome—where's Lovell?"

"Lovell?"

"Lend a hand!" gasped Arthur Edward.

He was trailing in the water behind the raft, holding on to a stump. Jimmy crawled along to help him, and caught his hand. Raby and Newcome crowded to the other end, or the clumsy raft might have capsized as Lovell crawled on board again.

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Lovell. "I—I slipped off, you know. The blessed thing went round like a blessed humming-top! Jolly queer though that I should slip off when you fellows didn't!"

That seemed quite a problem to Lovell. In the midst of danger Arthur Edward was still Arthur Edward!

"We're in for it!" said Raby.

The roar of the rapids was in the ears of the juniors now. The raft, with a dozen drifting logs swaying and bobbing round it, was caught on-ward as if in the clutch of a giant's hand. There was no hope of resisting the force of the current now.

"Lie down, and hold on!" said Jimmy.

"It will be touch-and-go!" murmured Lovell. "Oh, won't I make that villain Kentuck sit up for this!"

The raft was close on the rapids now. Ahead of them, red in the sunset, the juniors could see the whirl of rushing water, and driftwood whirling out of sight in a sea of foam. Their hope now was that the raft would keep to midstream. On either side there were dangerous rocks, with driftwood jammed here and there—and a collision in that racing tide meant instant destruction. The strongest swimmer could never have hoped to come through alive.

Jimmy Silver's face was pale and set as the raft rushed on, in the grip of the rapids. He realised now that the danger was greater than he had dreamed, in his inexperience. At every moment it seemed as if the raft would be torn apart on the whirling waters; but the osiers and the rope held good. Lying on the raft, holding on with both hands, with their feet jammed into interstices of the logs, the Rookwood juniors rushed down upon their fate. The roar of rushing waters was a ceaseless din in their ears now.

Lovell was shouting in Jimmy's ear—but it was difficult to hear a word in the din. Jimmy moved his head nearer.

"Hold on!" he shouted.

"I'm holding on all right! But wasn't it queer—"

"What?"

"Wasn't it queer that I fell off when you fellows didn't?"

"What?" gasped Jimmy.

Lovell went on shouting; but Jimmy did not trouble to listen any more. It was evident at least that Arthur Edward Lovell was not under the influence of anything like fear.

The raft was gathering more and more momentum now. There came a crash, as a whirling log struck it on one side, and the raft rocked and plunged wildly, and a sheet of water rushed over the juniors.

For a second Jimmy thought it was the end; but he set his teeth and held on to the only chance of life, as did his chums. The raft held together, and floated on, whirling and tossing, with the four juniors still upon it, panting for breath.

They were going down now—down—in what seemed a slope of rushing, tearing, roaring waters.

"So this is shooting the rapids!" was Jimmy Silver's thought, which he could not utter. He had to keep his mouth closed against the splashing, dashing water, that flooded the raft.

Jimmy knew that the Indians sometimes "shoot the rapids" in a canoe; but even in a canoe skill and iron nerve are needed to come through safe. Shooting the rapids on a roughly constructed raft was a new thing—which probably no old hand on the Canadian rivers would have thought of attempting. In that wild moment of peril, Jimmy could

(Continued on page 620.)



LOVELL IN DIFFICULTIES! Seizing Lovell's legs, Jimmy Silver, Raby, and Newcome pulled together and dragged the hapless Rookwooder out of the hollow into which he had fallen head first!

had no rugs or blankets—not even their coats.

"We'll build up a jolly big fire, and snooze round it like jolly old Indians," said Lovell. "We can stand it, Jimmy."

"Looks as if we shall have to," said Newcome. "Well, we came to Canada to rough it. Here's our chance."

"The grub will run out to-day," remarked Lovell; "but you fellows can rely on me to knock over some rabbits, you know."

The juniors did not even smile; the situation was too serious for that. Jimmy Silver was thinking hard.

"We can't swim ashore—all of us," he said. "If we did, it's a tramp of four miles down the river to the ranch. We can rough it for to-night—though it will be rather hard cheese. But—Mr. Smedley will be alarmed. If the canoe's picked up below the rapids when they search for us—and they'll most likely find it—what will he think?"

Arthur Edward Lovell whistled.

"He will think we capsized, and that we're all drowned," he said.

"Sure to!" said Raby, looking very grave.

"That's it!" said Jimmy. "I—I don't want to worry Mr. Smedley like that. And—thinking the canoe was upset, and us in the water, they will never dream of searching four miles up-stream. They'll look for us below the rapids; in fact, down the river towards Mosquito, expecting to find our bodies."

"Oh, my hat!" said Lovell.

The juniors looked very grave indeed now. Apart from the alarm Mr. Smedley would feel, which was serious enough, there was the

"We've got to get out," said Jimmy quietly. "You fellows are game to take a risky chance?"

"You bet!"

Jimmy pointed to the river, wide and shining in the sun.

"If we could get together a stack of those drift-logs we could make a raft. That's the idea."

"Phew!"

"I know it's frightfully risky," said Jimmy. "We couldn't steer a clumsy raft ashore in this current. I'm afraid. We shall have to go down the rapids in it—shooting the rapids, as the Canadians call it. I know it's risky."

"The verdict at the inquest was 'Found drowned!'" said Lovell in a thoughtful sort of way. "But, as the novelists say, we must not anticipate."

"Oh, don't be an ass, old chap!" said Raby uneasily.

"I know it's risky," said Jimmy. "If you fellows would rather rough it here, and take the chance of being found—"

"Rot!"

"Or one of us could chance it, and send help, if he got through all right," said Jimmy slowly.

"Little me," said Lovell. "Fathead! Me, of course!"

"Ass!" said Lovell.

"All or none," said Newcome. "Sink or swim together."

And so it was settled. It was a desperate expedient, and the chums of Rookwood well understood the risk they were taking. But it was settled; and they lost no time in putting the plan into execution.

the wood, to serve as oars, or, rather, as sweeps. All the camping materials were left on the island, to be fetched away on another occasion.

"Ready?" said Jimmy at last.

"Go it!" said Lovell.

The four juniors stood on the rocking raft, at which the current was plucking greedily. Jimmy Silver drew a deep breath, and cast off.

In a moment the raft was whirled out into the stream, oscillating so violently that the juniors were thrown over instantly. But they clung on the logs—the stumps of broken branches gave plenty of hold for the hands. Kneeling on the raft, holding on, they floated down the middle of the Windy River.

The 6th Chapter. Shooting the Rapids!

Jimmy Silver rose cautiously to his feet at last, as the raft floated down midstream with a more level motion. So far, there was little danger, so long as the voyagers were careful. Holding his long branch in both hands, Jimmy swept it through the water, striving to steer the raft towards the southern shore. There was not much chance of making a successful landing on the high, rocky bank, but Jimmy would not leave a chance untried. His chums, as they saw his object, backed him up, steering as well as they could with the branches.

The raft was worked out of mid-stream, and slowly approached the southern bank. The hopes of the Rookwooders rose. A tramp across country to the ranch was infinitely preferable to the terrible peril of shooting the rapids on their frail craft. But it was not to be.



Foes of the Ranch!

By Owen Conquest

(Continued from page 611.)

"All's well that ends well," said Raby, with a shiver. "But if anybody talks to me about shooting the rapids again, I'm going to dot him in the eye! That's a tip, Jimmy."

Jimmy Silver laughed. He was feeling more like himself now, and he stood on the raft, watching the bank for the ranch landing-place. In the wide, calm river two miles below the rapids, it was easy enough to reach the bank, where the level grasslands were little above the water. The branches the juniors had brought on board had been swept away; and Jimmy Silver looked round in the hope of catching up some floating branch to steer the raft shoreward. There was a shout from the bank; the raft was almost opposite the ranch now. The tall, lanky figure of Pete Peters showed up in the sunset.

"Hi!" "Send us a rope!" Jimmy shouted back, waving his hand.

"Stand by!" The ranch foreman threw his lasso, and Jimmy caught it, and hooked the noose to a stump on the raft. Pete Peters grasped the rope with both hands, and rapidly drew them shoreward.

Gladly enough Jimmy Silver & Co. scrambled off the raft to the safety of terra firma. Pete Peters recovered his lasso, and then turned to the juniors, who were shaking and squeezing the water from their clothes.

"Upset the canoe?" he asked. "Somebody roped it away from the island, and left us stranded there," said Jimmy. "We had to build the raft to get away."

The ranch foreman jumped. "The island—above the rapids?" "Yes."

"You've shot the rapids on that raft!" roared Peters.

"Looks like it." "Well, carry me home to die!" ejaculated the foreman.

Jimmy Silver & Co. grinned, and started at a run for the ranch. They wanted to get out of their wet clothes. Pete Peters followed them, still in a state of amazement; while the raft went floating on towards the distant town of Mosquito, on the lower reaches of the Windy River.

Jimmy Silver and his comrades came at a brisk trot round the corner of the bunkhouse, heading for the ranch. Three or four cowpunchers, in from the ranges, were standing there, and among them was Kentuck. The latter was speaking, his back to the juniors as they came up.

"Them tenderfeet is in trouble, I guess. I reckon the boss will be searching for them down to Mosquito. Greenhorns like them thinking they could handle a canoe—"

The juniors paused. "What's happened to the kids?" drawled Skitter Dick.

"Ask me another!" grinned Kentuck. "Red Alf picked up their canoe a mile below the rapids an hour ago. I guess they didn't even know enough to make their portage—I reckon they rowed into the rapids—"

"Holy smoke!" said Skitter Dick. "Even tenderfoot duffers wouldn't be sich fools as that!"

"Well, Red Alf's picked up the canoe, and he's got to report to the boss, when Mr. Smedley comes in. I reckon about four dead tenderfeet are floating down to Mosquito this time."

"That ain't a joke, if it's true, Kentuck," said Spike Thompson gruffly.

Kentuck laughed, and shrugged his shoulders. Jimmy Silver & Co. had stopped, and they looked at one another. They were quite convinced that it was Kentuck who had stranded them on the island; and that he was talking in this strain to give a false impression to the cowpunchers—and also, probably, to keep the search away from the vicinity of the island if he could, in order to leave the tenderfeet stranded there as long as possible.

Jimmy Silver tiptoed towards the Kentuckian.

Spike Thompson and Skitter Dick saw him, and grinned. Kentuck, with his back to the juniors, had not seen them, or heard them. He grinned back at the two cowpunchers.

"I guess if those tenderfeet are ever found alive, the boss had better get a lady governess up from Calgary to look after them," he said. "I do calculate they've got wet this time. I guess I shan't worry if we don't see them around this hyer ranch agin—and as for young Silver—"

"Well, what about young Silver?" asked a quiet voice in Kentuck's ear. "Wha-a-at—"

The Kentuckian spun round. He stared blankly at the four Rookwooders, as if unable to believe his eyes.

"You!" he stuttered.

"Little us!" said Jimmy coolly. "Quite a surprise—what?—after you stranded us on Woody Island, and stole our canoe, you rascal!"

"I—I—I—" Kentuck stammered helplessly. He was so taken by surprise at the sudden appearance of the juniors that he hardly knew what he was saying. Their ghosts could scarcely have startled him more. "I—I—I never roped in any canoe—"

"Who said anything about roping it?" said Jimmy at once. "I said stole, myself. How do you know it was roped?"

"I—I guess—"

"Pretty clear now," said Jimmy quietly. "You'll hear from me about this, Kentuck. This is the second time you've played a dirty trick on me, and it's going to be the last. Come on, you fellows!"

The Rookwood chums trotted on towards the ranch-house. Kentuck stared after them blankly, still amazed and confused. He muttered an exclamation at last, and turned towards the cowpunchers. Skitter Dick and Spike Thompson, with cool deliberation, turned their backs on him, and walked away.

THE END.

"Jimmy Silver's Enemy!" is the title of next Monday's stunning story of the Rookwood Chums out West. On no account must you miss it. Order your BOYS' FRIEND in advance!

HEALTH AND SPORT!

Conducted by PERCY LONGHURST.

If you are in need of any information concerning health, sport or general fitness, write to Mr. Percy Longhurst, c/o The Editor, THE BOYS' FRIEND, The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C. 4, enclosing a stamped addressed envelope for a reply. All queries are a confidence between Mr. Longhurst and the sender, and are always answered by a personal letter and never in these columns. The information is entirely free, and is the best obtainable.

Resistance Exercises.

A reader has asked me if I will give some particulars of resistance exercises, not only for his benefit, but also for that of others who are interested in this most excellent method of giving increased strength, toughness, and endurance to the muscles.

I can best explain these exercises, which, by the way, are the foundation of ju-jitsu athletic training by saying that the performance of them means the working of one set of muscles against another. The muscles being under one's own control, the resistance offered must be likewise just what the individual exerciser likes to make it. Thus it is a system of muscular training which is just as well fitted for the very powerful as it is for the average fellow or even the weak one.

I am not going to tell you that these movements may be applied to every part of the body, but it is astonishing how many muscles and groups of muscles can be brought into play thus.

The Neck.

Exercise 1.—Sit or stand erect. Place both hands on back of head, one over the other, and press forward. Against this pressure force head back as far as it will go.

Exercise 2.—From this position force head forward until chin is on chest, neck strongly resisting.

Exercise 3.—As before, but hands on forehead and pressing back. Against the pressure, force head forward until chin touches chest.

Exercise 4.—From this position force head back, making stout resistance.

The Back.

Exercise 1.—Obtain a broomhandle or stout walking-stick, hold it forward, arms fully extended, knuckles up, stick a little higher than crown of head. Bending at hips but not at knees, and working as though you were actually trying to force the stick downwards against a strong resistance. Carry the stick as low as you can.

Exercise 2.—From finish of last movement, return the stick to starting point, working as if a heavy weight were hanging from the stick.

Sideways bending of body, also backwards, may be done in exactly the same manner, always remembering to work as though you were overcoming a strong resistance.

Do not hold breath during the movements, but take a very full breath in and out between each separate movement, which rule applies to all resistance exercises. Be satisfied with two or four movements to begin with, and until the muscles are accustomed to the work, do not make the resistance too severe. Work well within your strength.

The Thighs.

Exercise 1.—Sit forward on a chair with the legs bent and upright, and with feet close together and firmly on ground, knees together, hands on outside of knees and pressing strongly inwards. Against this pressure force the knees as widely apart as you can get them.

Exercise 2.—Return movement. Force knees together by pressure of the hands, making strong resistance with thigh muscles. Those on outside of thigh are affected.

Exercise 3.—Position as before, but hands on inside of knees, which are to be well apart. Press outwards with hands, and against such pressure, force thighs inwards until knees touch.

Exercise 4.—Return movement from finish of exercise 3. Muscles inside thigh resist the outward pressure of hands.

Later on I will give further examples of these exercises.

(Look out for another helpful article.)

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