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[Week Ending May 16th, 1925.]



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HERE'S ANOTHER TIP-TOP STORY IN THE AMAZING NEW SERIES OF ROOKWOOD SCHOOL TALES!



The Fighting Fifth!

By OWEN CONQUEST.

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

Following the departure of Mr. Greely from Rookwood, the Fifth Form get out of hand!

The 1st Chapter.

Something Like a Send-Off!

"Hurrah!"
 "Good old Greely!"
 "Hip-hip-hurrah!"
 It was a roar in the old quadrangle at Rookwood.
 Dr. Chisholm started.
 He stood in the big doorway of the House, looking out into the sunny quadrangle.
 In the distance the portly figure of Mr. Greely was to be seen rolling along the gravel path to the gates.
 Mr. Greely, no longer master of the Fifth Form at Rookwood, was taking his departure, shaking the dust of Rookwood from his feet, so to speak.
 His brow was lofty, his stride even more majestic than usual as he went. There was, as the poet has described it, "pride in his port, defiance in his eye!"

And round Mr. Greely, as he headed, slow and stately, for the school gates, gathered a crowd of Fifth Form fellows.

There were a dozen at least, headed by Hansom of the Fifth, and right under the eyes of Dr. Chisholm, staring from the House, they cheered the dismissed Form master.

"Hurrah!"
 "Three cheers for Mr. Greely!" roared Hansom.

"Hip-hip-hurrah!"
 The Fifth did not care if the Head heard them. Rather, they wanted the Head to hear them.

They wanted Dr. Chisholm to know what they thought of his dismissal of their Form master.

From that enthusiastic roar the Head undoubtedly learned what they thought, and the knowledge did not seem to please him. His brow grew dark and darker as he stared at the procession going down to the gates. Mr. Greely, dismissed but undaunted, escorted by the cheering Fifth.

Dr. Chisholm made a step forward as if to descend into the quadrangle and interfere personally to put an end to this unusual scene. But he checked himself and glanced round at a group of Fourth Form juniors who were standing near the House steps.

"Silver!"
 "Yes, sir."
 "Go and tell Hansom of the Fifth Form to come to me at once!"

"Ye-es, sir," said Jimmy Silver. Jimmy hesitated, with a dubious glance at his comrades—Lovell and Raby and Newcome. As a matter of absolute fact, the sympathies of the Fourth Form quartette were rather with Horace Greely. Indeed, they had felt rather disposed to join the Fifth in cheering him. Still, he was not their Form master, so they let Hansom & Co. have the dismissed gentleman to themselves.

The Head's message to Hansom of the Fifth meant that there was trouble in store for that youth, the ringleader in this enthusiastic send-off. So Jimmy hesitated.
 Dr. Chisholm fixed his eyes on the junior. It really was not safe to hesitate when the headmaster of Rookwood gave a command.

"Silver, did you hear me?"
 "Oh, yes, sir!"
 There was no help for it. Jimmy Silver started at a trot for the crowd of Fifth-Formers who converged round their Form master on his slow and stately way to the gates.

"Hansom!" called out Jimmy. He was not heeded.

Mr. Greely, near the school gates, had paused, and was looking round on the cheering Fifth.

There was emotion in Mr. Greely's plump face.

This hearty demonstration from his Form moved him, touching him deeply. He had never dreamed that he was so popular in the Fifth.

As a matter of fact, his popularity was of rather sudden growth. He had done a plucky thing in rescuing Hansom's father from a couple of brutal footpads. His face showed severe signs of damage received in a desperate affray. And the Fifth considered that he had been treated with injustice. They wanted to let him know it, and they wanted to let the Head know it.

Had Mr. Greely remained at Rookwood it is probable that in a few days his sudden popularity would have petered out, and he would have been regarded once more, as of old, as "Don Pomposo," and "that priceless ass Greely."

But that did not occur to his majestic mind.
 He saw himself the hero and the idol of his Form, and he was deeply moved. He could not go without saying a few words.

"My boys."
 "Hurrah!"
 "Go it, sir! Speech!"

"My boys, I am touched to the heart—deeply touched. I feel that you will miss me when I am gone."

"Hear, hear!"
 "We're sorry we're losin' you, sir!" exclaimed Talboys.

"It's a shame, sir!" said Lumsden.
 "Shame!" roared Hansom, loud enough for the headmaster to hear across the quad.

"Hansom!" called out Jimmy again, wedged in the crowd of big seniors.

"Shut up, you cheeky fag!"
 "Kick that fag, somebody!"

"Go it, sir! Speech! Hear, hear!"

"Boys, I am going," said Mr. Greely. "Dr. Chisholm has been pleased to dismiss me from my post in this school."

"Shame!"
 "I make no complaint. I make no comment!" said Mr. Greely, with dignity.

"In justice to Dr. Chisholm I must tell you that he has offered this morning to reinstate me. I have refused."

"Oh!" ejaculated Hansom.

"I am bound to place my personal dignity even before my desire to serve Rookwood and to remain with the boys who are so attached to me," said Mr. Greely. "I am going. But I am not going far."

"Eh?"
 "I remain," said Mr. Greely, "at Coombe. Shortly, by the munificence of Sir George Hansom, a new school will be opened in this vicinity—Manor House School. I shall be the headmaster."

"Oh!"
 This was startling news to the Fifth.

"My boys who desire to keep in touch with me will, therefore, be able to do so," said Mr. Greely. "I trust that some of them, at least, will be sent to me by their parents."

"Hear, hear!"
 "I shall hope so," said Mr. Greely. "I shall trust so. And now, farewell! From the bottom of my heart I thank you, my boys, for this testimony of your high, your flattering opinion of me! I shall not forget you. I am sure you will not forget me. Farewell!"

Mr. Greely rolled majestically out of the gates, raising his hat to the

Fifth, who waved their hats and cheered vociferously as he went.

Jimmy Silver caught Hansom by the arm.

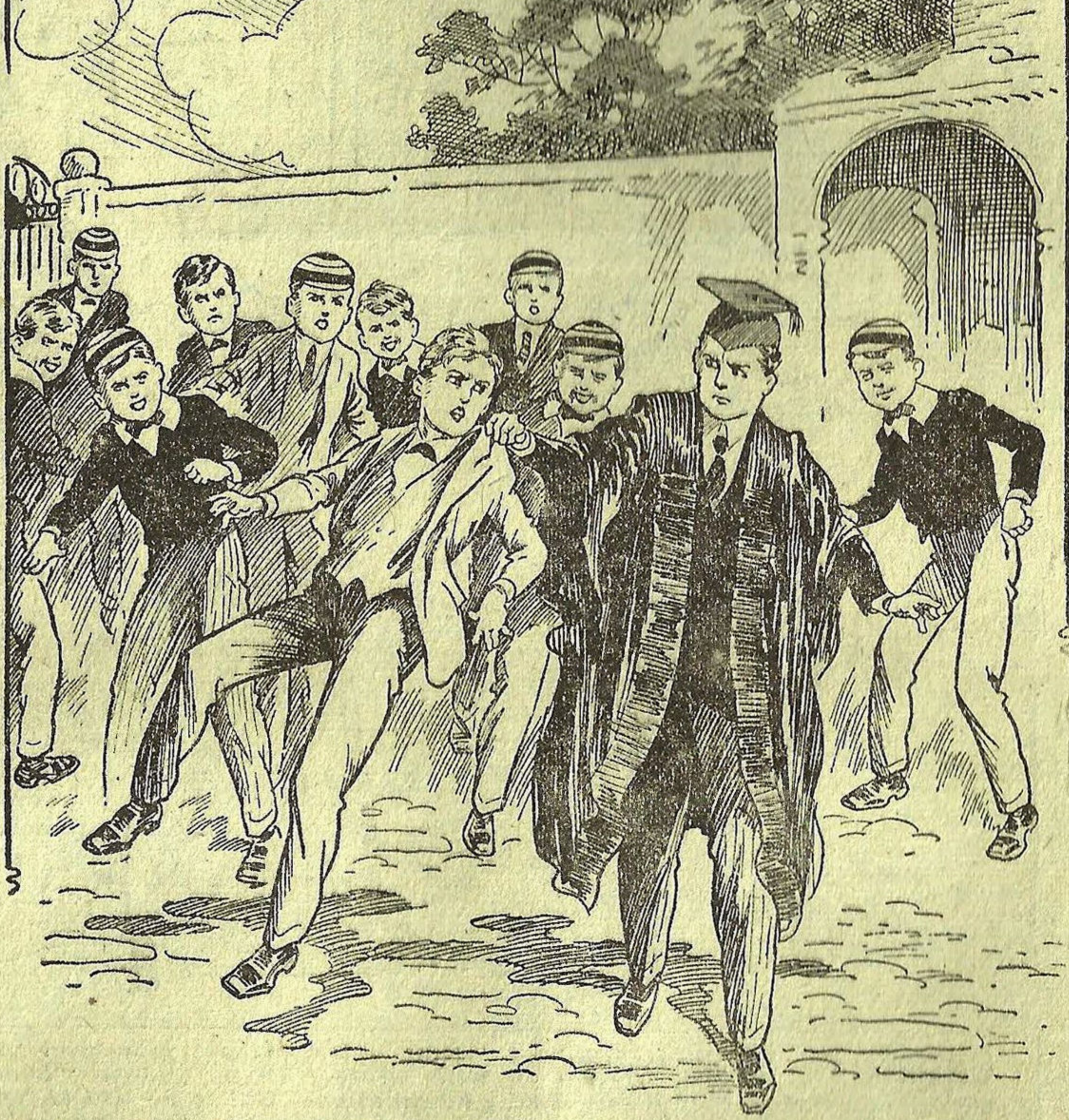
"Hansom, the Head's sent me—"

"Blow the Head!"
 "He wants you."

"Let him want!"
 Edward Hansom, captain of the Fifth, was evidently in a reckless and rather rebellious mood

and

was so. And most of the Fifth agreed with Hansom. In his resentment



MR. DALTON STANDS NO NONSENSE! "Stop this disturbance instantly!" thundered Mr. Dalton. "Go and eat coke!" roared Hansom. Hansom, caned and with his shins hacked, and his nose punched by a Fourth Form fist, was in a wildly wrathful mood and not disposed to obey a junior Form master. "What?" exclaimed Mr. Dalton. "You're not my Form master!" snorted Hansom. Mr. Dalton did not argue that point with the angry Fifth-Former. He grasped Hansom by the collar and, with a swing of his powerful arm, swept him off his feet.

"Well, I've told you," said Jimmy.
 "Go and eat coke!"

Jimmy Silver scudded off.

"Line up, you fellows!" shouted Hansom. "Once more!"

The Fifth crammed into the wide old gateway, and sent a thunderous cheer rolling after Mr. Greely down the road. The Fifth Form master glanced back, and raised his hat again, and the Fifth cheered once more. Leaving them at it, Jimmy Silver returned to the House.

Like a bronze image, the Head stood on the top step. He had not stirred, but the glinting of his eyes under his contracted brows showed how intense was his anger.

"Silver!"
 "Yes, sir!" murmured Jimmy.

"You gave Hansom my message?"

"Yes, sir. He's coming," said Jimmy diplomatically.

Certainly Jimmy had no intention of reporting Hansom's reply to the headmaster. Moreover, it was fairly certain that Hansom was coming, in spite of his reckless and rebellious words.

"Very good!" said the Head, compressing his lips.

And he waited, grimly. Jimmy

Silver & Co. waited, too, wondering what was going to happen to Edward Hansom when he came.

The 2nd Chapter.

Hansom Asks For It!

"It's simply rotten!" said Hansom. "Quite the limit!" agreed Talboys. "Too thick altogether!" said Lumsden.

And there was a murmur of assent from the other Fifth Form fellows.

Mr. Greely was gone.

Rookwood School was to know no more the portly form, the majestic brow, the deep, fruity voice of Horace Greely.

In other circumstances the Fifth would not, perhaps, have missed him very much. But in the present circumstances they felt resentful, especially Hansom. Mr. Greely was a hero—perhaps only a temporary hero—in the eyes of the Fifth. At the height of his popularity the Head had dismissed him. True, it seemed that he had offered to rescind the dismissal, and that it was Mr. Greely who had refused to compromise.

Nevertheless, the Head had been hasty, high-handed—in fact, tyrannical—in the opinion of Hansom & Co. Their Form master was bereft from them just when—for the first time in his history—they were thinking highly of him. It was rotten; it was too thick; it was the limit!

Hansom was emphatic that it was so. And most of the Fifth agreed with Hansom. In his resentment

and

was so. And most of the Fifth agreed with Hansom. In his resentment

and

was so. And most of the Fifth agreed with Hansom. In his resentment

The Fifth-Former did not answer. He was still feeling rebellious and exasperated; but undoubtedly there was something very subduing in the Head's cold, stern glance. Somehow, it was exceedingly difficult to "back up" against those icy eyes.

"You have been taking part in an absurd scene, Hansom," said Dr. Chisholm. "Indeed, almost a riot."

"We think a lot of Mr. Greely, sir," said Hansom sulkily.

"Indeed!"
 "Mr. Greely got damaged, sir, in helping my father. My father—"

"I have no intention of discussing that, Hansom. You will be detained on Saturday afternoon, as a punishment for your lack of respect. If there is any recurrence of this disorderly conduct I shall punish you more severely."

Edward Hansom breathed hard. "What disorderly conduct, sir?" he blurted out.

With the eyes of the Fifth, and of a crowd of juniors, upon him, Hansom felt that he was bound to speak up for himself. After all, why should he be called over the coals like this?

The Head was turning away. He turned back.

"What did you say, Hansom?"
 "I don't see that I've done anything, sir," said Hansom sturdily.

"We think a lot of Mr. Greely, and we're sorry he's gone."
 "Hansom!"

"We think he oughtn't to have gone, sir," said Hansom, growing bolder. "In fact, we think—"

"Silence!" said the Head in a deep voice. "Lovell!" He turned to the group of juniors. "Lovell, fetch the cane from the desk in my study!"

"Oh!" murmured Lovell.
 "At once!" snapped the Head.

Arthur Edward Lovell went into the House.

Hansom fairly trembled with indignation. He was to be caned—there, in open quad, before all the fellows, in the sight of all Rookwood! He, Edward Hansom, captain of the Fifth! And the Fifth never were caned, excepting in very exceptional circumstances indeed. The Head might as well have thought of caning a prefect of the Sixth Form—in Hansom's opinion.

There was a breathless hush. More and more Rookwood fellows were gathering round. They looked on in silence, at Hansom's crimson, angry face, and the Head's cold, impassive visage. Arthur Edward Lovell came back with the cane.

"Hansom, you have been impertinent, and I shall cane you!" said Dr. Chisholm.

"Sir!" gasped Hansom.
 "Hold out your hand!"

Hansom panted with wrath. To be told to "bend over" under the eyes of such a crowd would have been humiliating; but to be told to hold out his hand, like a fag, was even worse.

He stood with his hands at his sides, breathing hard, and his look showed that he was thinking of refusing to obey. Many of the fellows looked anxious. Hansom might think of disobedience; but, in reality, disobedience was impossible. A disobedient junior would be flogged; a disobedient senior would be expelled. Rebellion meant being "bunked" from Rookwood.

"You hear me, Hansom?"
 Slowly Edward Hansom's hand came out.

"Swish!"
 "Let that be a warning to you, Hansom!" said the Head.

And he tucked the cane under his arm, and walked into the House.

A murmur broke out as soon as he was gone. Hansom of the Fifth stood crimson and furious.

"Rotten!"
 "Check!"

"We're not standin' this, you fellows!" said Talboys, in rather a subdued voice, lest the Head should still be within hearing.

"Canin' the Fifth, by Jove!" said Lucas. "What's Rookwood comin' to, I'd like to know. Canin' the Fifth like fags!"

"Well, Hansom really asked for it, you know," said Lovell of the Fourth. Really, it would have been more judicious for a Fourth Form fellow to make no remark at all at that tense moment. But Arthur Edward Lovell never hesitated to make his opinion known. Doubtless he regarded it as worth knowing.

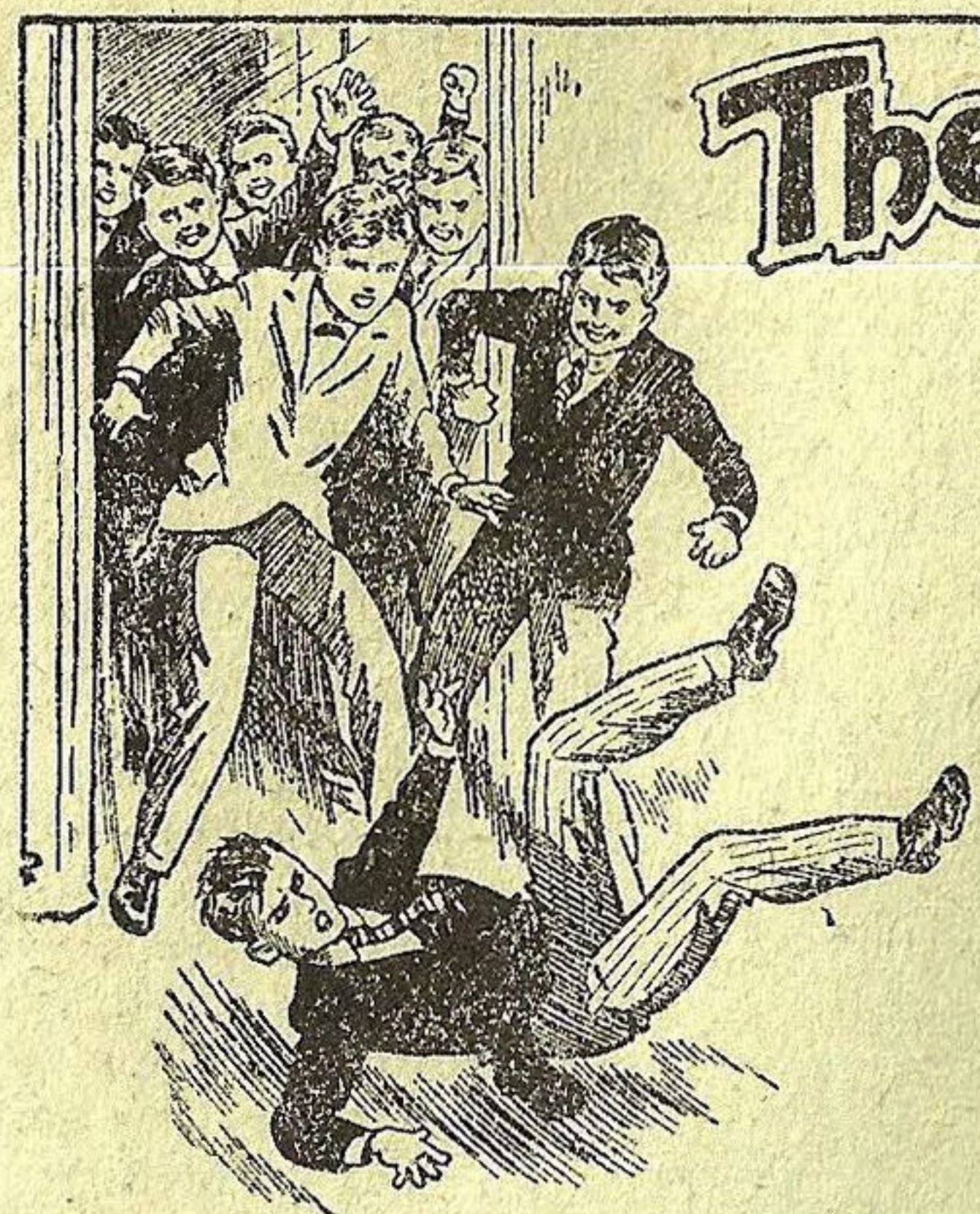
"Shut up, you cheeky fag!" snapped Lumsden.

"Kick that fag, somebody," said Hansom.

Two or three of the Fifth obliged. There was a roar from Arthur Edward Lovell.

(Continued overleaf.)

"By Order of the Head!" is the great new story of the boys of Rookwood School for Monday next. Be sure you read it!



The Fighting Fifth!

(Continued from previous page.)

the time being, the Fifth were without a Form master.

Something had to be done; the Form could not be left to their own devices, and they guessed that the headmaster had made some arrangements. What those arrangements were, the Fifth did not yet know; but they knew one thing with absolute certainty—that they were going to do their level best to make the arrangements a failure.

There was an excited discussion in the Fifth Form-room, without any master present so far. If a junior Form master came in to take them, the Fifth were agreed that they would make that junior master tired of life before they had done with him. And if the Head had the cheek, as Hansom expressed it, to put them under a prefect, they would make that prefect fairly hop.

They waited in a warlike mood for the new authority to put in an appearance.

"Not really, Carthew, surely?" jeered Lumsden.

"This is one of Carthew's little jokes!" declared Lucas. "He's come here to do a funny turn."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Hansom pointed to the door.

"You see that door, Carthew?" he asked.

"Eh! Yes."

"Will you oblige me by getting on the other side of it?" asked Hansom, with elaborate politeness.

"Now, look here, Hansom—"

"You see, we don't want any of the Sixth here," explained Hansom. "You specially, Carthew! Your face worries us."

"And your manners!" said Lucas.

"Get going while the going's good, old man," suggested Brown major.

Carthew set his lips.

"Look here, you fellows, I'm here to take the Fifth this morning," he said. "It's the Head's orders! I understand that he's making arrangements as quickly as possible for Mr. Greely to be replaced. You know as well as I do that you can't slack around till you get a new Form master. I've got to do my duty here, and you know it. Now, play up and be decent."

Hansom took out his watch.

"I give you one minute," he said.

"Look here—"

"Open the door for him, Lummy."

Lumsden grinned, and set the Form-room door wide open.

"Roll him out!"

"Dribble him back to the Head!"

"Hurrah!"

The Fifth were absolutely uproarious now. Carthew, dizzy and bewildered, hardly resisted as he was rolled and hustled to the door and pitched into the corridor.

"Outside!" roared Talboys.

"Dribble him back to the Sixth!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Kick him out!"

"Oh, crumbs!" gasped Carthew.

He picked himself up amid a forest of boots and fled for his life.

With a rush and a roar, the Fifth followed him down the corridor. Only Hansom got near enough for another kick; Carthew was putting on a really wonderful speed.

He headed for the Sixth Form-room as fast as his legs could go.

Hansom & Co. did not "dribble" him as far as that apartment. The Head was there with the Sixth, and prudence restrained them. They crowded back to the Fifth Form-room, excited and hilarious.

"That much for Carthew!" said Hansom.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I fancy the Sixth won't be keen on takin' us!" grinned Lumsden.

"If Bulkeley comes next, we'll serve Bulkeley the same."

"Hear, hear!"

"But the Head—" murmured Jobson.

"The Fifth!" gasped Carthew.

"They—they've turned me out!"

"Turned you out!" repeated the Head.

"Yes!" panted Carthew. "They—they've pitched me out of the Form-room! They—they refuse to be taken by me! They—they—" He broke off gasping for breath.

The Head's brow was like thunder. Most of the Sixth were grinning. The interruption annoyed the Head extremely, but it did not seem to annoy the Sixth Form. Possibly they found Carthew more entertaining than Q. Horatius Flaccus.

"Can I believe my ears?" exclaimed Dr. Chisholm.

Carthew did not answer that question. He expected the Head to take the matter in hand at once and proceed to the Fifth Form-room and visit condign punishment upon the offenders. But he did not know the Head.

"Carthew, you are a prefect of the Sixth Form!"

"Oh, yes, sir!" gasped Carthew.

"I have specially invested you with authority over the Fifth Form today!" exclaimed the Head. "Doubtless you did not make that clear to them!"

"I—I—"

"Return to the Fifth Form-room at once!"

"Eh?"

"Inform the Fifth that I have sent you, that you are in charge of the Form, and that any rebelliousness will be punished severely by me personally!"

"But, sir—" gasped Carthew.

"If you cannot make yourself respected as a prefect, Carthew, I shall have to consider very seriously whether to allow you to retain that rank in the school."

"But, sir—" stuttered the hapless Carthew.

Dr. Chisholm waved his hand impatiently. He was angry, and he was anxious to resume with Quintus Horatius Flaccus. Really it was intolerable for that ancient gentleman's sublime odes to be interrupted in this way.

"Enough, Carthew! You have heard my commands!"

"But, sir—"

"Go!"

Carthew almost groaned. But he had no choice but to obey. Dr. Chisholm was already getting under way with Horace again, taking no further notice of the unhappy prefect. Dr. Chisholm's view was that a Sixth Form prefect ought to be able to make his authority respected, especially when he had the special orders of the headmaster. He left it to Carthew, and that wretched senior was strongly tempted to throw up his prefectship on the spot rather than face the excited Fifth again.

He looked round at the Sixth. All of them were grinning. There was not even any sympathy for him in his parlous state.

Dr. Chisholm glanced round again.

"Are you not gone, Carthew?"

"Oh, I—I'm going, sir!" groaned Carthew.

And he went.

Dr. Chisholm promptly forgot his existence as he resumed with the Sixth. But it is probable that the Sixth Form of Rookwood bestowed less attention upon the sublime ode that was being dealt with than upon wondering how Carthew would be getting on among the Fifth.

Slowly, very slowly, Mark Carthew took his way back to the Fifth Form-room.

His steps lagged more and more as he approached the dreaded apartment.

The Fifth were there. The door was open. He could hear them talking and laughing. And he had the Head's strict orders to venture once more in among them—like Daniel going into the lions' den. It was a case of daring to be a Daniel, and Carthew really was not equal to the test. His knees knocked together as he stopped at the doorway and looked in.

The Fifth-Formers did not observe him for a minute or two. Carthew hesitated at the doorway.

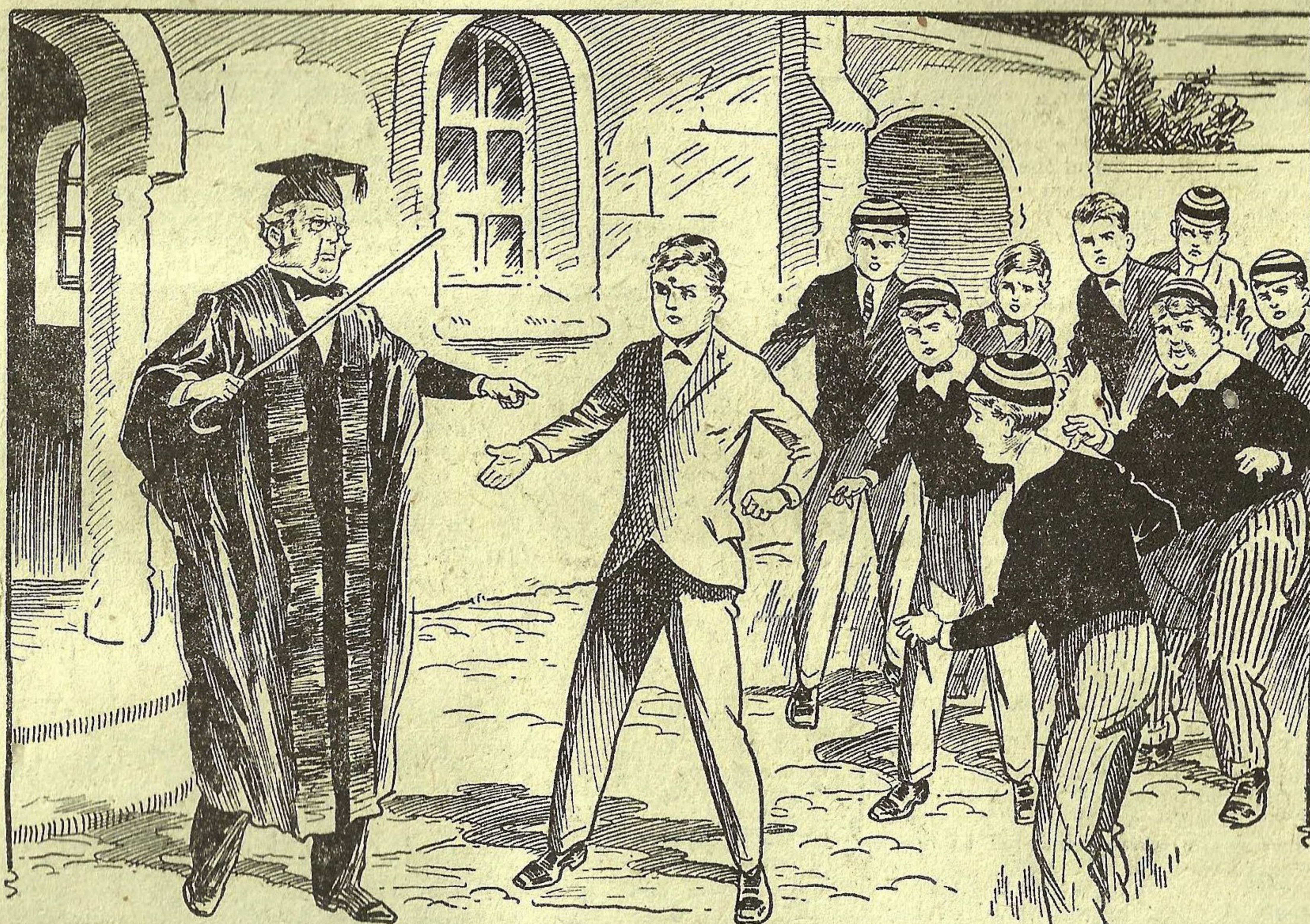
He had to go in. But he knew that the moment he was inside the Fifth would deal with him drastically. Sagely he decided to let the inevitable happen while he was still outside the Form-room, with space for running.

If the Head expected him to stand up to the Fifth in single combat, the Head was going to be disappointed. Really, it was asking too much.

Carthew coughed.

In a moment the eyes of Hansom & Co. were upon him.

"My hat! He's come back!" ejaculated Hansom.



CANED IN OPEN QUAD!

"Hold out your hand, Hansom!" said Dr. Chisholm. Hansom panted with wrath. To be told to "bend over" under the eyes of such a crowd would have been inexpressibly humiliating. But to be told to hold out his hand, like a fag, was even worse. He stood with his hands at his sides, breathing hard, and his look showed that he was thinking of refusing to obey. "You hear me, Hansom?" Slowly Edward Hansom's hand came out. Swish! "Let that be a warning to you, Hansom!" said the Head.

The Form-room door opened, and all eyes in the Fifth turned upon the newcomer.

It was Carthew of the Sixth Form—a prefect.

Carthew, the bully of the Sixth, was a terror to Second Form fags. He was no terror to Fifth Form fellows, and he realised that. His manner was quite conciliatory as he came into the Form-room.

"Well, here we are, you fellows," said Carthew, with an uneasy geniality. "I say, the Head's asked me to take charge here for a bit. I hope we shall get on all right."

Had Mark Carthew attempted to carry matters with a high hand, probably he would have failed. But he was absolutely certain to fail when he tried the propitiatory method.

The Fifth were not in a mood to be propitiated. Moreover, they despised Carthew; indeed, it was on record that Hansom of the Fifth had once actually licked him.

"The Head's asked you—what?" said Hansom.

"To take charge here, Hansom. Now, sit down, you fellows, and let's get going," said the prefect.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Hansom.

"Ha, ha, ha!" echoed the Fifth, taking their cue from their leader.

Nobody went to his place.

"Head's orders, you know," said Carthew feebly.

"Do you really think you can take a senior Form, Carthew?" asked Hansom banteringly. "Do you think we shall take any notice of you?"

"I tell you—" snapped Carthew.

"Twenty seconds gone!" said the captain of the Fifth, unheeding.

"If you lay a finger on me—"

"Thirty seconds."

"You'll have to answer to the Head!"

"Forty seconds!"

"Take your places at once!" exclaimed Carthew, with a desperate assumption of authority. "Do you hear? Every fellow here—"

"Fifty seconds!"

"If I have to report you—"

"Report and be blowed!" said Lumsden.

"I can tell you the Head will—"

"Sixty seconds!" said Hansom. He slipped the watch back into his pocket. "Time's up, Carthew! Are you going?"

"You cheeky ass, you know I'm not going!" howled Carthew in uneasy anger. "The Head's sent me to you—"

"Then we'll jolly well send you back to the Head."

"Hands off!" roared Carthew, as the Fifth-Formers closed round him.

"Outside!"

"Kick him out!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Carthew of the Sixth was collared on all sides. In an unlucky moment for himself he hit out.

Hansom gave a roar as he caught Carthew's knuckles with his nose. The next moment the Sixth-Former was swept off his feet, and he came down on the floor with a heavy bump and a yell.

"Oh, shut up, Jobson! Who's afraid of the Head?"

Nobody in the Fifth was afraid of the Head for the moment. They were rebellious, reckless, and defiant. And their rebelliousness, recklessness, and defiance were likely to last until the precise moment when the Head should appear in the doorway of the Fifth Form-room.

The 4th Chapter

A Fight with the Fifth.

Horace dropped from Dr. Chisholm's hand.

The Sixth had settled down to Q. Horatius Flaccus, when the door was hurled open and Carthew rushed in. He rushed in, breathless and panting.

The Fifth-Formers had chased him to within a dozen yards of the door, and Carthew's impression was that they were still at his heels.

The Sixth stared. The Head stared. Carthew stopped, pumping in breath and stared round to the doorway. It was not crammed with vengeful Fifth-Formers as he had expected. The Fifth were gone.

"What does this mean, Carthew?" exclaimed the Head angrily. "You have interrupted me, sir!"

"Oh!" gasped Carthew.

"Why have you come here? Why do you rush into the room in this unmannerly way? Explain yourself, sir!" thundered the Head.

"They—they—"

"Who—what? What?"

"He wants some more!" grinned Lumsden. "Trot in, Carthew!" "Waitin' for you, old bean!"

"Come in and have some more, dear man!" "Look here, you fellows," mumbled Carthew. "The Head's sent me back. He's sent special orders that you're to toe the line, and he will deal with you if there's any trouble. Now, look here, I'm not going to rag you. I'll give you an easy time in class. But I've got to take charge of you; the Head says so."

Hansom chuckled. "Well, come in and take control," he said; "we're waiting." "Waitin' and ready!" chuckled Talboys.

"Ha, ha, ha!" Carthew made a step into the Form-room. The Fifth waited for him, grinning gleefully. It was only too clear that if Carthew ventured into their hands his last state would be worse than his first, and he stopped. Yet it was impossible to return to the Sixth Form-room and face the stern glance of the headmaster with another tale of woe. Carthew had felt rather flattered when the Head had picked him out that morning to take the Fifth. It was really a compliment. Now he felt that he could have dispensed with the compliment gladly.

"Aren't you comin' in, old bean?" cooed Hansom. "Look here!" mumbled Carthew helplessly.

"If you're not coming in, we'll come out to you," said the captain of the Fifth, chuckling. "Come on, you fellows!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" Hansom led the rush. Carthew skipped backwards into the corridor, thankful that he had not ventured farther in, in spite of the Head's strict orders. "Collar him!"

"After him!" Carthew fled along the corridor. What the Head expected of him, in such circumstances, he really could not guess. He ran hard, with the hilarious Fifth whooping at his heels. Gladly Carthew would have escaped to his own study and locked himself in, but he had no time. Hansom, putting on a spurt, reached him before he had taken a dozen steps, and grasped him by the shoulder.

"Ow!" gasped Carthew. He wrenched himself loose, tore open the nearest door, and rushed into the Fourth Form room.

There was a yell of surprise from the Fourth, a startled exclamation from Mr. Dalton.

"Carthew!" "What?" "Great Scott!" "Oh, my hat!" yelled Lovell. "Silence!" exclaimed Mr. Dalton. "Carthew, what—Upon my word! Bless my soul! This—this—"

Carthew did not heed the Fourth or the Fourth Form master. He rushed frantically round behind Mr. Dalton's desk.

"Keep them off!" he yelled. "Come out of that!" roared Hansom, in the doorway.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the Fifth, crowding behind Edward Hansom. The doorway was crammed with them.

"Oh, gad! This is rippin'!" exclaimed Mornington of the Fourth. "Ha, ha, ha!"

All the Fourth were on their feet now, in a buzz of excitement. They had been doing English history; but history vanished from their minds now. This was better than history.

"Hansom," exclaimed Mr. Dalton, "what does this mean? What—" "Come out, Carthew!" shouted Hansom.

"We want Carthew, sir!" yelled Lumsden. "The Head's sent him to take the Fifth! We want him!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" "Carthew," exclaimed Mr. Dalton, angry and amazed, "I understood that you were in charge of the Fifth this morning! What does this disturbance mean? Why have you come here?"

"Pretty plain why he's come here!" murmured Mornington. "Ha, ha, ha!"

"Silence! Carthew, answer me! What does this mean?"

"We're waiting for Carthew to take us!" chortled Lucas of the Fifth.

"They—they—they're after me, sir!" gasped Carthew. "They've been ragging me! I—I—I—" "Will you come out?" roared Hansom.

"No, I won't!" gasped Carthew. "Then we'll jolly well fetch you!"

"Hansom, how dare you intrude in this Form-room?" exclaimed Mr. Dalton, in a voice of thunder. "Leave immediately!"

But the Fifth were quite out of hand now. Hansom strode in, evidently with the intention of collaring Carthew, cowering behind Mr. Dalton's desk. His excited comrades followed him. Mr. Dalton strode in the way, and, to his amazement and wrath, was hustled aside by three or four big Fifth Form fellows.

That was enough for the Fourth—more than enough. A row with the Fifth—a terrific scrap in the Form-room—was infinitely preferable to English history. And they were bound to stand up in defence of their Form master, actually hustled by Fifth Form fellows. At all events, they decided that they were so bound, though Mr. Dalton probably would have held a different opinion.

"Come on, you fellows!" shouted Jimmy Silver. "They're handling Dicky Dalton! Rescue!" "Rescue, the Fourth!" roared Lovell.

"Pile in!" "Hurrah!" "Boys," shrieked Mr. Dalton, "keep your seats! Keep your places! I command you! Bless my soul! I command—" His voice was lost in the terrific hubbub.

Carthew was already struggling in Hansom's grasp. Mr. Dalton

There was a sudden shout from Tubby Muffin. "Here comes the Head!" "Oh, my hat!" exclaimed Hansom. "Hook it!"

The Fifth swarmed out of the Form-room. Perhaps they had had enough, anyhow. Certainly they did not seem to want to wait for the Head's arrival. With a rush, they fled for their own Form-room, leaving the Fourth victorious, and the room in a state of wild disorder. And in that state it met the stern gaze of Dr. Chisholm as he arrived.

The 5th Chapter. Desperate Measures!

Dr. Chisholm stared into the Fourth Form room.

The rebellious Fifth had escaped just in time. In their own Form-room wild excitement reigned among the Fifth—mingled with well-founded apprehension now that they knew that the Head was on the war-path. In the Fourth Form room a mob of excited and dusty and breathless juniors met the gaze of the incensed headmaster.

"Mr. Dalton"—the Head's voice was deep and stern—"what does this mean? What is this riot? I have been disturbed—actually disturbed—in the Sixth Form room! What does this riot in your Form-room mean?"



THE SCRAP IN THE FOURTH FORM ROOM! "Kick them out!" shouted Raby. "Hurrah!" It was a terrific scrap. Size and weight were on the side of the Fifth, but the Fourth had the advantage of numbers. Moreover, many of the juniors had caught up books and inkpots, which they used freely in the fray. "Down with the Fifth!" "Kick them out!" roared Mr. Dalton, almost beside himself with wrath and dismay. "Boys! Cease this instantly! I command you!" Words were futile; the excitement was too great. Mr. Dalton proceeded to drastic action. He clutched up the cane from his desk, and lashed out on all sides, bestowing his attentions equally upon the Fourth and the Fifth.

grasped Hansom to force him to release his hold, and some of the Fifth shoved at Mr. Dalton to make him release Hansom. And then came the rush of the Fourth, nearly every fellow in the Form piling in.

"Down with the Fifth!" "Keep off, you fags!" "Kick them out!" shouted Raby. "Hurrah!"

It was a terrific scrap. Size and weight were on the side of the Fifth, but the Fourth had the advantage of numbers. Moreover, many of the juniors had caught up books and inkpots, which they used freely in the fray. In the midst of the wild and whirling combat, Carthew of the Sixth dodged out of the room and fled. He did not flee to the Sixth Form room, however; he ran for his own study, and locked himself in. His escape was hardly noticed in the wild excitement that reigned in the Fourth Form room.

"Down with the Fifth!" "Kick them out!" "Order!" roared Mr. Dalton, almost beside himself with wrath and dismay. "Boys, cease this instantly! I command you!"

Words were futile. The excitement was too great. Mr. Dalton proceeded to drastic action.

He clutched up the cane from his desk, and lashed out on all sides, bestowing his attentions equally upon the Fourth and the Fifth.

"The blame is not mine, sir," said Mr. Dalton quietly.

"This is not the state in which I expect to find a Rookwood Form-room, sir!" rapped out the Head.

"This Form-room has been invaded by the Fifth, apparently in chase of the prefect you placed in charge of them," answered Mr. Dalton.

"What—what! Where is Carthew?" "He is gone!"

"Bless my soul! Do you seriously tell me, Mr. Dalton, that the Fifth Form boys have chased—actually chased—Carthew?"

"Certainly!" "That is no reason why your Form-room should be in this state, Mr. Dalton." The Head glanced round the room, littered with books and inkpots. "Boys, go to your desks!"

The Fourth-Formers went back to their places like lambs.

"Mr. Dalton, I am surprised—I am bound to say that I am very much surprised—at this!" "Really, sir—" "You need say nothing, sir. I am surprised, very much surprised!"

Even if the Fifth Form have forgotten all sense of decorum in the absence of a Form master, that is no reason why your Form-room should be turned into a bear-garden! Your boys appear to have been engaged in a rough-and-tumble struggle. I repeat that I am very much surprised." "Sir, I—" "Enough, Mr. Dalton! I leave it to you to correct your Form. With the Fifth I shall deal personally!"

And the Head sailed majestically away.

Mr. Dalton looked at his Form. They looked at him. If they expected Richard Dalton to be grateful for the manifold assistance they had rendered him, the Fourth were doomed to disappointment.

"Silver, Lovell, Mornington, stand out before the class!" said Mr. Dalton. "You are the ringleaders in this riot. I shall cane you. Every boy in the Form will take two hundred lines!"

"Oh!" "We thought we ought to back you up, sir," said Mornington.

"If you thought so, Mornington, you were mistaken; and a caning will perhaps help you to avoid a similar error on another occasion," answered Mr. Dalton. "Bend over that chair."

Swish, swish, swish! "Lovell—"

certainly he did not seem much given to reflection. That the handling of Carthew would be followed by the personal intervention of the headmaster had been as certain as anything could well be; but Hansom evidently did not know how to deal with the situation now that it had taken the inevitable turn.

A rustle was heard outside; the rustle of the Head's gown as he came. Hansom made a jump to the door.

Slam! The Fifth Form door closed almost on the nose of the headmaster. A second more, and the key turned in the lock.

Hansom stood breathing hard. He had locked out the Head—and the inevitable was at least postponed.

"Oh, my hat!" murmured Talboys. "I—I say—" The knob turned.

The door did not open. The handle was shaken; and then shaken again, impatiently.

The Fifth-Formers stood watching the door as if fascinated. The Head was outside—looked out! Hansom, half scared at what he had done, stood silent, dismayed.

"Shake, shake!" "Bless my soul! The door is locked!"

It was the Head's voice, in tones of angry amazement.

Knock, knock! He was rapping on the panels now. The Fifth-Formers looked at one another, but no one spoke. They almost held their breath.

"Boys, this door is locked! Unlock it instantly!" No reply. "Boys! Hansom! Lumsden! Do you hear me?"

They heard; but, like the celebrated gladiator, they heard but they heeded not! Not a word was spoken.

"Open this door at once!" thundered the Head. "Am I to believe that I am deliberately locked out of a Rookwood Form-room?" "Oh dear!" murmured Talboys. "I—I say, Hansom—" "Shut up!" whispered Hansom.

"But—but I—I say—" Talboys was quite scared. "Cheese it!" said Hansom desperately.

"Will you obey me?" thundered the Head. "Will you admit me instantly to this Form-room?" His voice was formidable.

Jobson of the Fifth made a movement towards the door. Hansom did not speak to Jobson, but he kicked him—hard. There was a howl from Jobson, and he retreated among the desks.

"For the last time!" The Head's voice was deep and almost terrible. "Hansom, as head boy of the Fifth, I hold you responsible for this! I order you, personally, to unlock this door and admit me!"

Hansom made a movement. Then he stopped. All eyes were fixed on him. A dogged look came over Edward Hansom's face.

"Better do it, old man!" whispered Lumsden anxiously.

Hansom shook his head doggedly. "But we can't back up against the Head, you know," muttered Talboys. "All very well handling the Sixth. But the Head—" "He's going!" breathed Brown major.

The Head was heard to depart. His swishing gown was heard to rustle away. With what feelings he went the Fifth-Formers could guess.

"Well," said Lumsden, with a deep breath, "we've done it now!"

And the Rookwood Fifth realised that there was no doubt about that. They had!

The 6th Chapter. Toeing the Line!

Jimmy Silver & Co. heard the news when the Fourth came out of their Form-room.

It startled them. It startled the other fellows when they heard it. From the Sixth to the Second there was amazement and burning interest and curiosity as to what would happen next.

"The Fifth are locked in their Form-room! They've locked the Head out!"

It was incredible, but it was true. Fellows of all Forms congregated in the Form-room passage, by the Fifth Form door, which indubitably was locked. Other fellows crowded under the Form-room windows, where rather scared faces occasionally looked out.

"Cheek, you know!" Arthur Edward Lovell commented. "Fancy the Fifth backing up"

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ANSWERS EVERY MONDAY...PRICE 2:

THE FIGHTING FIFTH!

(Continued from page 727.)

against the Head because he's bunked their Form-master! They never thought much of old Greely, either, till just lately."

"I don't suppose they really want him back, either," said Mornington.

"From what he said, I fancy he doesn't want to come back," said Jimmy Silver. "He's got the offer of a headmaster-ship. Hansom and his crowd are simply playing the goat!"

Rookwood School was in a buzz of excitement.

Many of the fellows had expected the Fifth to give some trouble, left without a Form master, and excited by the dismissal of Mr. Greely. But nobody had expected this; not even the Fifth themselves. Indeed, most of the Fifth realised by this time that they were indeed, as Jimmy Silver expressed it, "playing the goat."

They had never intended their revolt to go to this unheard-of length; Hansom, their leader, had never intended it. One step had led to another, and the fellows had been too excited to stop to think. They were not sorry now that they had handled Carthew and ejected him; but that had led inevitably to collision with the headmaster—and now they were fairly up against it. Hansom, trying to think out the matter, found that it was difficult either to advance or to retreat—an extremely unpleasant position for any leader to be placed in.

Dinner was announced, and all Forms but the Fifth went in to dinner. The Fifth remained locked in their room.

After dinner Jimmy Silver & Co. walked along the Form-room passage, and heard excited voices from the other side of the Fifth Form door.

From what they could hear, it seemed that a good many of the Fifth were expressing their feelings by slanging their great leader.

"It's all rot!" came Lumsden's voice. "Look here, I'm jolly hungry! We can't stick here!"

"Of course we can't!"

"We've got to get a move on sooner or later. We've missed dinner now. I'm jolly well not going to miss tea! You're an ass, Hansom!"

"Locking out the Head won't bring Greely back! Besides, we know he doesn't mean to come back. And, besides, we don't really want him."

"It's all bosh!"

"Look here, Hansom—"

"As for a barring-out, don't talk out of your silly hat, Hansom! What are we going to bar out for?"

"Yes; drop that, for goodness' sake, Hansom! You don't seem to know what an ass you are!"

Jimmy Silver smiled at his chums. Lovell and Raby and Newcome chuckled.

"Hansom's getting it rather in the neck!" murmured Jimmy. "They all seem to see that they've gone too far now. Silly owls, you know!"

"Look here, Hansom, I'm fed up with this!" roared Brown major. "I'm jolly well not sticking here! What's the good?"

"Unlock the door, Hansom, you ass."

"I jolly well won't!" said Hansom. "We're for it now, I tell you! The Head's treated Greely badly. He's treated us badly. If we don't make terms, it means a flogging, and perhaps the sack. My idea is—"

keen as anybody on ragging the Sixth; but we can't rag the Head. I'm jolly well not going to be bunked from Rookwood."

"Here comes the Head," murmured Lovell.

The Fistical Four backed away as Dr. Chisholm came, sweeping along the Form-room passage. Taking no heed of the juniors, the Head tapped quietly at the Fifth Form door.

"Hansom!" His voice was quiet, dangerously quiet. "Hansom, I offer you a last opportunity to cease this reckless and foolish rebellion. If the door is immediately opened I shall cane every member of the Fifth Form. Otherwise, I shall send for the porter to force the door, and you will be expelled instantly from Rookwood. Decide at once."

There was a brief silence in the Fifth Form-room.

Jimmy Silver & Co. and a crowd of other fellows waited, wondering how the affair would terminate.

The silence was broken by the sound of a key being jammed into a lock. It turned.

The Fifth Form door opened. It opened wide, revealing the Fifth, grouped in the Form-room, with scared and anxious faces. There was still a trace of defiance in Hansom's face, but it vanished as the Head's glance fixed on him.

Dr. Chisholm gazed at the Fifth-Formers, and they gazed at anything but the Head. No one seemed to want to meet his steely eye.

The Head had a cane under his arm. He let it slip down into his hand.

"You first, Hansom."

For a brief second Hansom hesitated, then he advanced.

Swish!

Hansom passed on, caned.

One by one the Fifth left the Form-room as the Head called name after name. Each, as he passed, received a severe swish.

A crowd of fellows in the Form-room passage looked on in silence. Swish, swish, swish!

The last of the hapless Form passed out at last, and the cane was passed on to the next candidate, who was still. With flushed and gloomy faces, the Fifth-Formers disappeared from sight. Dr. Chisholm placed the cane under his arm, and walked away, his face expressionless. The crowd broke up in a buzz of excited comment.

"So much for the jolly old fighting Fifth!" murmured Mornington. "They're done!"

It seemed that Morny was right. That afternoon Bulkeley of the Sixth was appointed to carry on in the Fifth Form-room. Bulkeley, captain of Rookwood, was not a fellow to be handled like Carthew, at any time; but, as a matter of fact, the Fifth gave him no trouble at all.

But that evening, in the Fifth Form studies, there was deep discussion, murmurs not loud but deep. The trouble was over, for the time; and the Head undoubtedly believed that it was over for good—that he had finished with Mr. Greely, and brought Mr. Greely's Form to order. But there was to be a rude awakening for the Head of Rookwood.

THE END.

(You'll enjoy "By Order of the Head!"—near Monday's magnificent story of the boys of Rookwood School. Don't miss it, whatever you do! And don't forget to tell ALL your pals about Owen Conquest's amazing new series of yarns of your favourite school!)

THE LEMON!

(Continued from page 732.)

on the train, he gave a bellow like a wounded bull.

"Hey! Hey!" he roared, brandishing his arms like a windmill. "Hey! You there! Stop that train! You've left me behind!"

And then he stopped dead, to turn and gape like a dying duck. For someone was speaking to him—someone with a bland, childlike voice and a calm, deliberate manner of speaking.

"Go and tell Dave," said that voice, "how you lost the jolly train, Jim Craske!"

There stood the Lemon, blinking up at him from behind those big glasses.

The 5th Chapter.

A Great Triumph.

Half an hour before the Jubilee, Hartwell and Lije Lynch were talking earnestly in a corner of the crowded paddock at Kempton.

"Beggrrah!" said Lije. "Have ye heard them rumours about Ranger? There's a story he's not going to run. Now would ye believe it?" And he grinned impudently at his employer.

But though the baronet smiled, too, he was plainly anxious.

"I've laid against Ranger for all I'm worth," he said, "and backed Flyfast, too! Now, if anything should go wrong at the last moment!"

"Arrah, Sir Ralph, don't git on tinterhooks!" retorted Lije. "That Jim's done the thing O.K. Why, he'd be in Exeter by now!"

"Yes," frowned the other. "Yes, he should have got there an hour ago! Why hasn't he telegraphed as he was told?"

The arrival of an empty horsebox with "Tennant, Heath House, Newmarket" upon it, had created great consternation. And though Dave himself had arrived a little time ago and said his horse was a certain runner, the wisecracks shook their heads. Why had not Ranger come in the horsebox if he was going to run?

The saddling bell rang for the Jubilee. The big number board was hoisted into position, and Lije Lynch raised his glasses.

"I'll bit number thirteen ain't a starter," he chuckled.

Slowly the numbers were put into the frame.

"Wan, two, five, six, down to tin—that's Flyfast," read Lije. "Elvin, twelve. Howly saints! What's this?"

He turned white as a sheet, and the glasses dropped from his nerveless hands.

"Mother Macree!" he wailed. "Oh, sints diffid us! It's the work of ould Nick himself!"

And as he stuttered and spluttered Ralph Hartwell shook him like a ferrier shakes a rat.

"What's the matter, man? What's the matter?" he snarled. "What the dickens has come over you?"

"Just this, sorr. Just this!" gasped the terrified Lije. "That devil's own number of a thirteen's jest gone into the frame!"

of Phil Hallett—Hallett, the promising North-country apprentice.

Sir Ralph Hartwell saw his world tumbling about his shoulders. Had Jim Craske turned traitor and betrayed him? How else had Ranger got here? Suddenly there came roar upon roar of cheering that made him jump round.

What he saw made him shake like a leaf. A gallant thoroughbred had just been led into the paddock, his coat glistening like copper in the sun. Hartwell did not need to look twice to see that it was Ranger—Ranger, whom he thought so many miles away.

And yet it was not so much the sight of the horse that upset him as that of the lad who led the animal. A quaint figure, enshrouded in a heavy overcoat; an odd-looking lad who wore great, big goggles of glasses!

"It's that divil of a Limon," stammered Lije Lynch. "It's that Limon. An' by the powers, it's he that's been too many for us!"

Outwardly calm, but inwardly a seething mass of emotion, Hartwell determined to play his last card. North-country people he knew were partial to "t' brass," as they called it. Could he have one word with this Phil Hallett, he might bribe him to lose the race.

Carter and Dave Tennant were standing by their horse as Hartwell walked brazenly by.

"Glad yours turned up, Carter," he said with a false smile. "By the way," as Rex Carter nodded curtly, "where's that jockey of yours? I've heard of the promising North-country light-weight, but never as yet seen him."

Despite his detestation of the man, Carter's lips twitched in a smile.

"Not seen Hallett," he retorted. "Surely"—and he turned to Dave Tennant—"Sir Ralph has seen that jockey of ours?"

"Too often for his liking," said Dave dryly.

Hartwell flushed uneasily. He didn't like the way that Dave spoke. What in the dickens did he mean by too often for his liking?

"Never clapped eyes on him in my life!" he snapped.

"Then," said Rex Carter, "clap eyes on him now! For he's here!"

"Where?" cried Hartwell, looking about him wildly. "Where?"

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"Here!" said a quiet voice, "Here!"

And the Lemon opened his coat to show the riding breeches and silk jacket beneath, took off the big concealing glasses, and looked at the dumbfounded Sir Ralph with a pair of steady grey eyes.

"Phil Hallett, late the Lemon, at your service!" said the youngster quietly.

The Lemon rode the race of his life. Ranger won the Jubilee by an easy three lengths, and as the lad pushed his way through cheering crowds to the weighing-room, Ralph Hartwell, with a savage exclamation, tore his race card into shreds.

"Beaten!" he snarled. "Beaten! And by a goggle-eyed brat!"

And when the baronet felt a hand on his shoulder, and saw Jim Craske between two men whose appearance left no doubt that they were detectives, he knew that he was beaten indeed.

Jim Craske gave the game away completely. He told of the doped beans that Hartwell had bribed him to put in Ranger's feed. Of how when the Lemon had foiled that plot, he had exchanged boxes at Liverpool Street Station. Ranger had been put into an empty box of Lynch's that was going to Newton Abbott, in Devonshire, to bring back a hunter that Hartwell was putting into Brent Lodge stables. And as a result, both the baronet and the wily Lije got well-deserved terms of imprisonment.

Rex Carter explained that he was suspicious of Hartwell, who he knew was nearly on the financial rocks, and would stick at nothing to win the race. He knew, too, that Hartwell had wagered heavily against Ranger. So he and Phil had hit upon the idea of the lad entering the stable as a juggins whom none would suspect, and keep his eyes open. The lad had worn the big glasses in case any would recognise him. Carter had kept the ruse a secret from Dave.

For one thing, he did not want to add to his anxieties, and another, he knew Dave detested Hartwell, and being one of the downright sort, might out with his suspicions, and so give the game away.

Phil Hallett, or the Lemon, suspected that the rogues would have another shot at getting Ranger out of the way. Dave's illness gave them the chance. And when the youngster saw that the very next box on the train was Lynch's, and going to far-off Devon, he saw what an opportunity it gave the conspirators. And when he listened and could hear no sound of horse's feet drumming on the wooden boards, he knew the box was empty. It would be easy for Craske, could he get him out of the way, to change boxes. Lije Lynch caught the Lemon by surprise when he shouted that Tennant had come, and so the trick was done. But telling the trainer all, the lad got his authority to obtain the horse, journeyed to London, and by telephone heard that the horsebox was on the Cornish express. And the superintendent did the rest.

"What I say is this," declared Dave Tennant emphatically, when Phil had explained all. "This, Mr. Carter. You were right—plumb right! That Lemon you handed me was sharp! A deuced sight sharper than I ever dreamt!"

THE END.

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