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[Week Ending July 11th, 1925.]

EDITO

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YOUR OLD FAVOURITES OF ROOKWOOD SCHOOL APPEAR IN THIS
SPLENDID STORY!



Done In The Dark!

By
OWEN CONQUEST.

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

Mark Carthew is made to pay for
his bullying!

The 1st Chapter. Bend Over!

"Bend over!"
Carthew, of the Sixth Form, rapped out the order.
He stood in the doorway of the end study in the Classical Fourth passage at Rookwood, the official ashplant in his hand.

Jimmy Silver and Raby, Lovell and Newcome were standing in the study, their eyes on Mark Carthew.

They heard his command; but, like the celebrated Dying Gladiator, they heard it, but they heeded not. "Bend over!" repeated Carthew. "Do you hear me, Lovell?"

Arthur Edward Lovell nodded. "I'm not deaf!" he remarked. "Bend over, then!"

Carthew twirled the ashplant, evidently anxious to get to work with it. Still Arthur Edward Lovell, the member of the Fistical Four upon whose devoted head Carthew's wrath had fallen, made no movement to obey.

No doubt Lovell was wrong. Carthew, as a prefect of the Sixth Form, was invested with the power of the ashplant. At his command to bend over, a Lower School fellow was supposed to bend and to be caught bending. And, indeed, an order from Bulkeley or Neville or any other prefect of Rookwood never was disputed. But with Carthew it was different.

True it was that he was a Sixth Form prefect. True it was that Arthur Edward Lovell had descended the staircase an hour ago, not by the stairs according to rule, but by the banisters, with arms and legs wildly flying, to the imminent risk of the said arms and legs if not of his valuable neck. True it was that any junior doing the same was liable to a prefect's licking.

In fact, it is much to be regretted that Arthur Edward Lovell was in the wrong all along the line.

Still, there were extenuating circumstances.

Carthew had been hanging about in his silent, spying, stealthy-footed way and Lovell had not seen him till too late, so he felt that he had been unfairly caught out. And Carthew had an old grudge against the end study, and Jimmy Silver & Co. were all quite assured that he had seized upon that trivial incident as an excuse for administering punishment there.

So Arthur Edward Lovell, instead of bending over, gave Mark Carthew a glare of truculent defiance. And Jimmy Silver and Raby and Newcome joined in the glare and the defiance. The Fistical Four stood in a row in the study, facing the prefect in the doorway with the fairly evident intention of standing by one another and putting up resistance if the bully of the Sixth came too close with the ashplant.

Carthew waited. He was waiting for Lovell to bend over a chair. But he might have waited till he was an old, old man; Arthur Edward had no intention whatever of bending over.

There was a long pause. "Lovell!" rapped out Carthew at last. "I've ordered you to bend over!"

"You've ordered me!" agreed Lovell.

"Are you going to do it?"
"Not this afternoon!" said Lovell pleasantly. "Call another day, and we'll see what we can do for you."

And the Fistical Four grinned. "That's enough!" said Carthew; and he strode at Arthur Edward Lovell and grasped him by the collar with his left hand, the ashplant flourishing in his right.

Whack!
"Whoooooop!"
There was one hefty whack from the ashplant, one formidable roar from Arthur Edward Lovell as he struggled.

Then the Fistical Four closed on Mark Carthew as one man, and the bully of the Sixth was collared and swept over.

"Hands off!" yelled Carthew. But it was a case of "hands on." And Carthew, big Sixth-Former as he was, found himself not quite able to handle four of the Fourth. And Carthew, a funk at heart, weakened when a firm grasp was laid on him. He staggered back into the doorway with the Fistical Four clinging to him like cats, and in the doorway he reeled to and fro, gasping.

"Outside!" gasped Raby. "Chuck him out!"
Crash!

Carthew went flying. He landed on his back in the Fourth Form passage and lay there spluttering, almost foaming with rage.

Whizz!
His official ashplant came whirling out after him. It landed on Mark Carthew's nose, gently tapping that feature.

"Ha, ha, ha!"
There was a shout from a crowd of the Fourth, rushing out of their studies at the sound of the uproar. Carthew was not popular in the Fourth or in any other Form at Rookwood, even his own. The sight of Carthew of the Sixth sprawling breathlessly on his back in the Fourth Form passage was a quite agreeable one to the juniors.

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Putty of the Fourth, the first to arrive; and his roar was echoed by a swarm of Classical juniors.

Carthew sat up quite dazedly. He had been ejected from a junior study; he, a prefect of the Sixth Form. It was incredible; but it had happened. Only too assuredly it had happened. The ache in Carthew's bones was an indubitable proof that it had happened.

"Oh!" gasped Carthew. "Come back and have another?" asked Arthur Edward Lovell.

"Ow!"
"Ha, ha, ha!"

"What price dribblin' him along to the stairs?" said Valentine Mornington cheerily. "Let's make a job of it!"

"Hear, hear!"
"Hold on!" exclaimed Erroll. "Don't be an ass, Morny!"

"Bosh! Let's boot him out!"
"After all, he's a prefect," said Peele. "It means a frightful row with the Head! I wouldn't care to be in Jimmy Silver's shoes!"

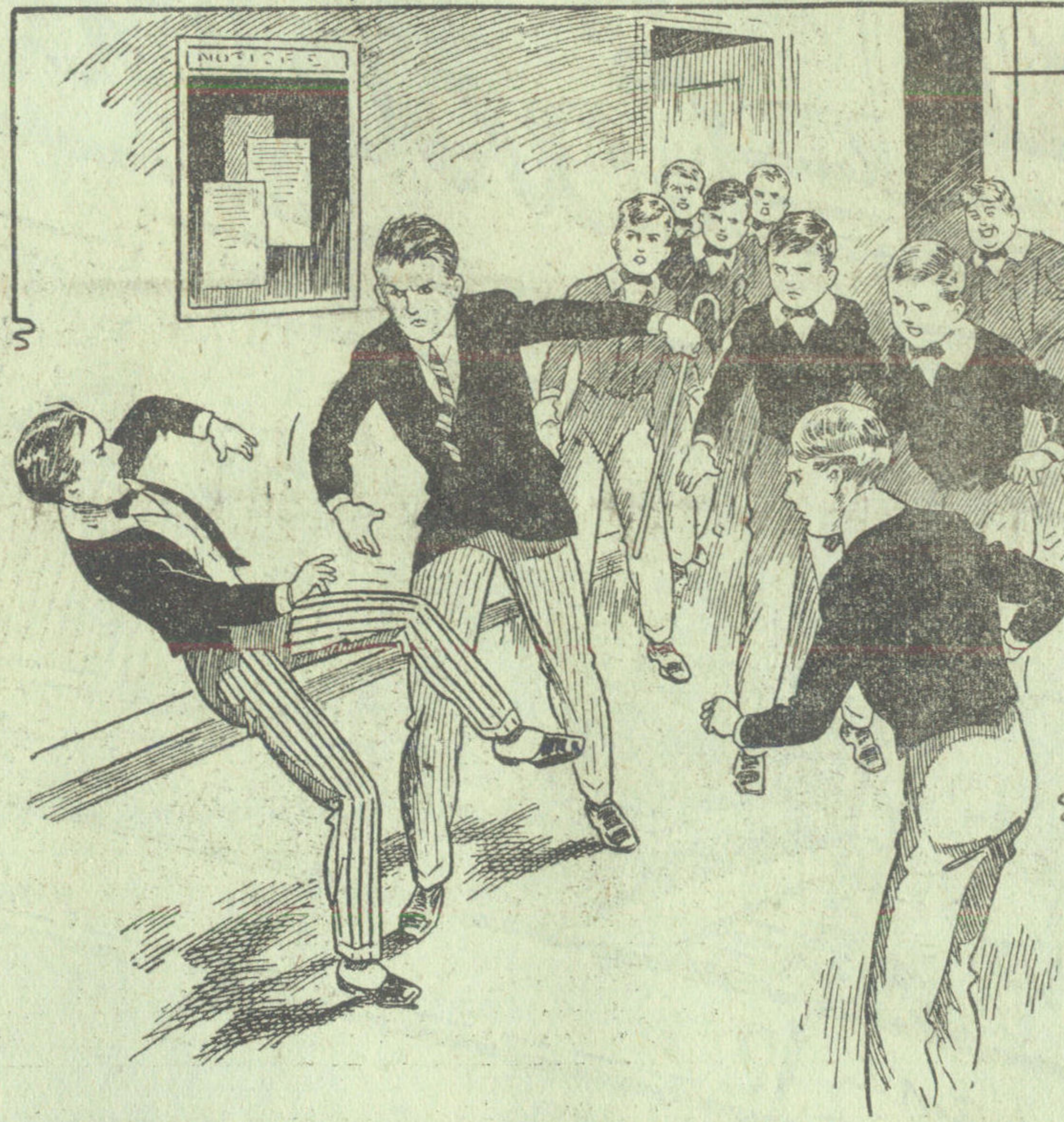
Carthew staggered to his feet. He gripped his ashplant and seemed for a moment about to make a fierce rush into the end study.

The juniors watched him breathlessly.

Jimmy Silver & Co. stood firm in their doorway, grimly defiant. They were ready to handle Carthew again if he came. Precisely for that reason he did not come.

"I shall report this to your Form master!" he gasped. "Report and be blown!" said Lovell.

"Go and eat coke!"



CARTHEW'S WAY! Carthew paused as he passed Mornington and caught the mocking grin on Morny's face. Smack! "Oh!" gasped Morny. He reeled away from a savage box on the ear and went sprawling along the floor.

"Rats!"
"Get out!"

Almost choking with rage, the discomfited prefect swung away towards the stairs. He had to pass through a grinning crowd of the Fourth. Certainly the prefect's report meant serious trouble for the end study; but Carthew himself was defeated and discomfited, and his defeat and discomfiture caused gleeful rejoicing in the Fourth.

"Ha, ha, ha!"
Carthew paused as he passed Mornington and caught the mocking grin on Morny's face.

Smack!
"Oh!" gasped Morny.

He reeled away from a savage box on the ear and went sprawling along the floor.

Carthew strode on to the stairs, rather quickening his pace. He disappeared down the staircase as Mornington staggered up, his face convulsed with rage.

Morny was speeding towards the stairs, when Erroll caught him by the arm.

"Let me go, you fool!" shouted Mornington.

"Stop!"
"I tell you—"

"Stop," said Erroll quietly. And, almost by force, Erroll led his excited chum into Study No. 4 and slammed the door.

The 2nd Chapter. For It!

"Well, this does it!"
Raby made that remark in the end study.

His chums nodded rather gloomy assent. It did, there was no mistake about that.

Even Arthur Edward Lovell was beginning to doubt whether he would not have done well, after all, to bend over at the prefect's command.

"He's gone to Dalton, of course," said Newcome.

"Of course."
"That means being up before Mr. Dalton or the Head," said Jimmy Silver. "Well, it can't be helped! Keep smiling!"

"He's a beastly bully!" said Lovell.

"He is—he are!"

"He didn't care a rap about my sliding down the banisters! He wouldn't have seen me, anyhow, if he hadn't been sneaking about like a cat! 'Tain't a prefect's bizney to spy on fellows!"

"True, O King!"

"We can explain to Mr. Dalton—"

As a matter of fact, there was nothing to explain, and he realised it. Mr. Dalton, master of the Fourth Form, had more than once checked Carthew's bullying proclivities, especially in the direction of the end study. He held the scales of justice with a firm and impartial hand.

Had Mark Carthew been bullying as usual, his report to the master of the

Mr. Richard Dalton was looking very stern.

He fixed his eyes on the four culprits as they came rather sheepishly into his study.

Carthew eyed them malevolently. As a rule, he had little sympathy to expect from Mr. Dalton; but in the present case he was sure of support from the master of the Fourth Form.

"I have sent for you on Carthew's report to me!" said Mr. Dalton sternly. "You have attacked a prefect of the Sixth Form!"

"Hem!"
"You laid hands on Carthew and ejected him from your study?"

"Hem!"

"Yes or no!" snapped Richard Dalton.

"Yes, sir!" said Jimmy Silver.

"What excuse have you to offer, if any?"

"Hem!"

"You have nothing to say?" asked Mr. Dalton.

"Carthew was going to lick me, sir!" mumbled Lovell. "He's down on our study, sir, and always looking for a chance against us."

"In the present instance, Lovell, Carthew informs me that he saw you sliding down the banisters, and that you ran off when he called to you. He came to your study later to deal with you. Do you deny this?"

"No, sir."

"Then why did you resist punishment, which you know very well was just?"

Lovell hung his head.

He had nothing to say—except that Carthew was a bully, and that he, Arthur Edward Lovell, disliked him, and was, personally, a rather hot-headed and unreflecting fellow. But it was not of much use saying that. So Arthur Edward was silent.

"It comes to this, then," said Mr. Dalton, taking up his cane. "That Lovell disobeyed a prefect who was exercising his proper authority, and that you others helped him in assaulting Carthew."

"Hem!"

It came to that, really, though that was not exactly how the Fistical Four looked at it.

"I doubt whether I ought not to report this matter to Dr. Chisholm and leave the Head to deal with it!" said Mr. Dalton sternly. "If, however, you apologise to Carthew at once, I will deal with the matter myself. You will, of course, be severely punished in any case."

"Oh!"

Carthew's eyes gleamed. He was hardly sorry by this time that he had been "chucked" out of the end study. He had his old enemies now just where he wanted them, as it were.

Jimmy Silver & Co. exchanged dismal glances.

Apologising to the bully of the Sixth was a bitter pill to swallow, even though they realised that for once they had been in the wrong in their contest with their old enemy.

"You hear me?" snapped Mr. Dalton. He was very angry, and it dawned upon the juniors that he was annoyed not only at their lawless action, but at having to admit that the bully of the Sixth had just cause for complaint against boys in his Form. They had, in fact, placed their Form master in a very uncomfortable position.

"Very well, sir," said Jimmy Silver, with an effort. "We were in the wrong, I suppose."

"I am glad you can see that, at all events," said Mr. Dalton dryly. Jimmy looked at the prefect.

"Sorry, Carthew!" he gasped.

"Sorry, Carthew!" stammered Raby and Newcome, with visible efforts.

Arthur Edward Lovell gulped. "Lovell!" said Mr. Dalton, in an ominous voice.

"I—I—"

"I am waiting!"

"Sorry, Carthew!" spluttered Lovell, with a face crimson with rage.

"Very good!" said Mr. Dalton. "Take this cane, Carthew, and cane these boys in my presence!"

"Certainly, sir!" said Carthew, unable to restrain a grin of triumph. He gripped the cane.

"Bend over!" he rapped out.

This time the order was not disobeyed. Under the keen, grim eye of Mr. Dalton, there was no question of disobedience.

Four hapless juniors bent over in turn, and each of them received six from the cane, well laid on by Carthew. The whacks of the cane rang through Mr. Dalton's study.

Carthew, perhaps, was a believer in the saying of that ancient king, that to spare the rod was to spoil the

child. Certainly he ran no risk of spoiling Jimmy Silver & Co. by sparing the rod. He laid it on with all the force of his arm, and it was fortunate for them that he was not an athlete like Bulkeley.

It was over at last. Four juniors stood wriggling with anguish, their faces quite pale. Mr. Dalton made a gesture of dismissal. "You may go!"

They went. They wriggled out of the study, they wriggled along the passage, they wriggled up the stairs, they wriggled to the end study. They seemed unable to do anything but wriggle.

In the end study Lovell threw himself into the armchair. He jumped up again as if the seat of the chair were red-hot.

"Ow!" "Oh dear!" Sympathetic Fourth - Formers looked into the study. They made sympathetic remarks. But sympathy, though doubtless grateful and comforting in its way, did not help the suffering four very much.

They groaned and grunted and wriggled dolorously.

"We'll make Carthew sit up for this!" gasped Lovell at last. "We'll jolly well scrag him!"

Jimmy Silver groaned.

"Oh, chuck it!" he said.

"Yes, chuck it, for goodness' sake!" mumbled Raby. "I'm fed-up with Carthew! We played the goat and asked for this."

"Look here—"

"Chuck it!" growled Newcome.

"Ow! Do you think we want any more of this, you silly owl? We asked for it and got it. We're not going to ask for any more. Wow!"

"I think—"

"No you don't! You can't! If you were able to think, you wouldn't have landed us in this! Wow!"

"Look here—"

"Chuck it!" howled the three, in chorus.

And Arthur Edward Lovell snorted and chuckled it.

The 3rd Chapter. Tooting the Line.

"What are you fellows going to do?"

"Nothing!"

It was the following day, after morning class.

Valentine Mornington joined the Fistical Four as the Fourth came out of their Form-room and walked out into the quadrangle with them. Morny's face was dark, and there was a glint in his eyes.

He had been rather troublesome in class that morning, being in one of his bitter tempers, and Mr. Dalton had given him lines. Mr. Dalton, however, was not the object of Morny's wrath. All the Fourth knew what was the matter with Morny; it was the box on the ear he had received from Carthew the previous day.

That box on the ear had hurt Morny, especially in his pride. He had been savage and sulky ever since, even with Erroll, his best chum. Erroll had prevented him seeking instant vengeance on the bully of the Sixth; rightly judging that "punching a prefect" was rather too risky a proceeding for a junior of the Fourth Form. Besides, Morny had given provocation. He had grinned mockingly at the discomfited prefect, which was not respectful and was very irritating to Carthew. Really, he had no reason to be surprised that Carthew had smacked his head on that occasion. But, undoubtedly, he was deeply incensed and vengeful.

Morny's lip curled sardonically as Jimmy answered his question. The Fistical Four had recovered from their licking now and were in their usual cheery spirits. They were thinking chiefly of cricket and not at all of vengeance, which certainly was a much healthier frame of mind than Morny's.

"So you're taking it lyin' down?" asked Mornington.

"We took it bending over!" grinned Newcome.

"You lettin' Carthew have the best of it?"

"Oh, rot!" said Jimmy Silver. "What's the good of that sort of talk, Morny? We played the goat, and got what we asked for. Carthew happened to be in the right for once."

"What a good little boy!" said Mornington admiringly. "Keep on like this, Jimmy, and you'll be a real shinin' light in the school!"

Jimmy Silver flushed angrily.

"Dry up, Morny!" he said.

"That's enough!"

"If you want to handle Carthew I'm willin' to help," said Mornington. "He smacked my head, and I'm not lettin' him off."

"Oh, rot!"

"You're lettin' it drop, then?"

"We've let it drop—or, rather, there's nothing to let drop," said Jimmy Silver impatiently. "Talk about something else, or don't talk at all!"

Valentine Mornington shrugged his shoulders.

"Go an' eat coke!" he said politely; and he walked away.

Lovell looked rather rebellious.

"That's all very well, Jimmy Silver!" he said.

"Of course it is," said Jimmy.

"But I think—"

"Don't begin thinking, old chap; you're not used to it, and goodness knows what might happen!"

"I think," roared Lovell—"I tell you, Jimmy Silver, I think it's up to us to make Carthew sit up."

"What's that?"

It was Carthew's voice. He stepped out from behind a big beech as the Fistical Four came along. They had not seen him there. Carthew had a way of appearing silently and unexpectedly.

"Well, what are you young rascals plotting?" he asked.

Jimmy compressed his lips.

"Nothing!" he answered.

"What did you say, Lovell?"

mined not to do the lines, reckless of consequences. Jimmy Silver took quite a different view, and impressed it on Lovell without being heeded. Lovell was in the wrong again, and it was useless to let the matter go before Mr. Dalton. But Arthur Edward declined to listen to reason, and, instead of settling down to write his lines before tea, he picked up his bat in the end study to go down to the nets.

Whereupon Jimmy Silver put his back to the study door.

"You haven't done your lines, Lovell!"

"I'm not going to do them!"

"Now, don't be an ass!" urged Raby.

"What's the good of telling Lovell that?" sighed Newcome. "Can he help it?"

"I'm not knuckling under to that cad Carthew!" roared Lovell. "You fellows can knuckle under if you like. I'm going down to the cricket."

"Not till you've done your lines," said Jimmy cheerily. "Put it to the vote of the study, if you like."

"Oh, rats!"

"Now, look here, Lovell, don't be a silly ass! We don't want another row with Mr. Dalton, and we jolly well don't want another licking! Get your lines done before tea!"

"Bosh!"

"Then it's a study ragging for you!" said Jimmy.

the eye one of these days!" hissed Lovell.

"Oh, never mind him! Let's get some cricket."

And the Fistical Four walked away to Little Side and soon forgot Carthew of the Sixth and all his works.

Carthew was feeling quite pleased with himself.

He had a bitter dislike of the end study, formed chiefly upon the cheery independence of Jimmy Silver & Co. He flattered himself that he was bringing the cheeky young sweeps to heel at last. He was quite prepared for some reckless attempt at vengeance on their part, and prepared to make the most of it to their detriment if it happened.

But he was not quite prepared for what was to happen to him, all the same.

Carthew of the Sixth crossed over to Mr. Manders' House that evening for a visit to his friend Frampton there. When he came back the quadrangle was dark; the Houses were closed for all, except masters and prefects. It was a dark night; scarcely a glimmer of stars in the sky. In the distance, as Carthew walked along under the beeches, there was a glimmer of lighted windows in the House.

Certainly no thought of danger crossed Carthew's mind, but the

The four chums of the end study, of course—Jimmy Silver and Lovell, Raby and Newcome! Carthew had not a doubt of it. This was the revenge of the Fistical Four—this was their retaliation, which he had been expecting more or less, though certainly not in this style.

Enraged, dazed, as he was, Carthew could not help wondering at the reckless temerity of the four. This was a terribly serious matter—an attack on a Sixth Form prefect in the dark. It would mean a Head's flogging at least, if not the "sack," for the fellows concerned. And they could not hope to conceal their action. Carthew was absolutely assured that he knew into whose hands he had fallen. Indeed, it did not cross his excited mind for a single moment that his assailants were any other than Jimmy Silver & Co.—though, as a matter of fact, he had enemies enough in all the Lower Forms of Rookwood School.

He lay gasping, half-choking, under the grasp of the unseen juniors. The hands over his mouth gripped hard; he was unable to utter a cry.

Suddenly the hands were withdrawn; but before Carthew could yell a cloth took their place, and it was wound round his face and head, not only gagging him, but blindfolding him as well.

He gasped helplessly.

Evidently his assailants had come prepared. This was no chance attack due to the juniors happening to see their opportunity. It was plain that he had been watched leaving the House, and that these young ruffians had watched and waited for him to return from Manders' House. It was an ambush that Carthew had blindly walked into.

But what did they mean? What did they intend to do with him?

A vague alarm crept over Carthew. They might intend to give him a licking, perhaps with a borrowed ashplant from a prefect's study. That would have been bad enough. But he was beginning to dread that something worse was intended.

He struggled; but as he did so his head was seized and banged on the ground, as a warning to cease.

He ceased at once.

He was no match for the four fellows who had him in their grasp, and they had him at too great a disadvantage, too. And that reckless banging of his head warned him that he was in ruthless hands.

He lay quivering and gurgling, by this time in a state of something like terror. What was their game?

His wrists were drawn together, and a cord was slid round them. The cord was securely knotted.

Then his ankles were tied together.

After that another cord was wound about the cloth that circled his face, and tied over his mouth.

His assailants were leaving nothing to chance.

All the time not a word had been spoken; the unseen enemy worked in a silence that had something terrifying in it. Since the two whispered words that had preluded the rush he had heard no word spoken even in a whisper. They did not want him to hear their voices, doubtless. As if he was in any doubt of their identity whether he heard their voices or not!

His heart was throbbing with rage and fear as he felt himself lifted from the ground.

The four were moving away with him in the darkness. Whither? He gasped under the gagging cloth as his head knocked on the trunk of a tree.

"Careful!"

It was a whisper, but he heard it, though it was impossible to recognise the whispering voice. But, assured as he was that he was in the hands of the Fistical Four, he was quite certain it was the voice of one of the Co., and he thought it was Jimmy Silver's.

He was swung on—whither he could not even guess, but he knew that it must be in a direction away from the House. They would never dare to carry him near the lighted windows.

A door opened; he heard the creak of a hinge.

Then he was dumped down. There was a sound of falling faggots, and two or three from the displaced heap knocked against him; and by that he knew that he was in the wood-shed. The wood-shed was locked up at night; apparently these young rascals had forced the padlock. Carthew palpitated.

Why had they brought him there?

(Continued overleaf.)



AT THE JUNIORS' MERCY! Cold and thick and clammy, the tar daubed on Carthew's face. He shuddered and wriggled. There was a suppressed chuckle, and several matches were struck one after another. No doubt Carthew's face, blackening under the tar, afforded entertainment to the young rascals who were tarring him.

"You heard what I said!" retorted Lovell. "You were listening!"

"So you are going to make me sit up, are you?"

Lovell did not answer.

"Is that the way to speak of a prefect, Lovell?"

No reply.

"You will take a hundred lines, Lovell!" said Carthew. "I'm going to teach you cheeky fags manners, or know the reason why. I shall expect those lines by tea-time!"

Lovell gasped with rage.

"You can expect!"

"If they're not handed in I shall look in at your study and bring my ashplant with me!" smiled Carthew.

He walked away airily.

"Do you think I'm going to stand this?" asked Arthur Edward Lovell, in a suppressed voice, glaring at his comrades.

"Don't be a goat!" said Jimmy Silver crossly. "You keep on putting us in the wrong. Any prefect would give you lines for talking like that!"

"Any other prefect wouldn't listen without letting a fellow see that he was there."

"I know that! But that doesn't alter the case. If you don't do the lines, you get a licking; if you don't take the licking, it means another row with Dicky Dalton. We've got to wait till Carthew puts himself in the wrong before we go for him."

"I'm not going to do the lines!"

"Oh, rats!"

There was rather a rift in the lute among the Fistical Four that day.

The hot-headed Lovell was deter-

danger was close at hand. There was a sudden rush of footsteps in the darkness and a whisper.

"Down him!"

And in the darkness hands closed suddenly and fiercely upon the bully of the Sixth, and he went with a crash to the ground.

The 4th Chapter. Carthew Catches It.

Carthew of the Sixth lay and gurgled.

He was taken utterly by surprise, and the crash on the hard earth dazed him a little. His unseen and unexpected captors were not handling him ceremoniously.

"Groogh! Oh! Ooooooh!"

Smack!

A hand came sharply over his mouth and closed there hard. Carthew was only spluttering for breath, but the unseen owner of the hand was taking precautions against a yell for help.

A knee was planted on Carthew's chest, pinning him down; another hand was added to that over his mouth, effectually silencing him; and his wrists were strongly grasped, on a right hand and a left. Someone was tramping on his struggling legs at the same time.

Four of them—Carthew could feel four separate assailants—and he had no doubt about the identity of the four, though he could see hardly an inch from his nose in the thick darkness under the wide-spreading branches of the beech-trees.

ANSWERS
EVERY MONDAY...PRICE 2!

"The Whip Hand!" is Owen Conquest's great story of Jimmy Silver & Co. of Rookwood School, for Monday next. Be sure you read it!



Done In The Dark!

(Continued from
previous page.)

The 5th Chapter.

The Fistical Four Are Wanted.

Jimmy Silver looked into Study No. 4 in the Classical Fourth passage. "Dorm!" he said. "We're going up! Hallo, isn't Morny here?" Erroll shook his head. There was a cloud on Kit Erroll's brow. "No," he answered. "All serene, I'll call him!" "Right-ho," said Jimmy, and he walked away and joined Lovell and Raby and Newcome.

Erroll, with a clouded face, went along the passage to the first study. That study belonged to Peele, Lattrey, and Gower, the three black sheep of the Rookwood Fourth. As a rule, Valentine Mornington kept clear of that study, but when he was annoyed with his chum he would drop in on Peele & Co., possibly because the wilful and reckless fellow knew that it troubled Erroll to know that he was in bad company.

A lonely and utterly deserted spot at night-time? A beating could have been administered under the beeches in the quad. Why was he taken there?

The cloth was drawn from his face. He opened his mouth for a yell, though it was very doubtful whether anyone was near enough to the wood-shed at that hour to hear him yell. But a crumpled handkerchief was stuffed into his mouth as it opened—his own handkerchief, taken from his pocket. It effectually gagged him, jammed between his open jaws, and unseen hands ran the cord round it and secured it there. He glared about him in the darkness of the interior of the wood-shed, but he could see nothing. He wondered savagely why his face had been uncovered. He was soon to learn.

The cloth—by its chalky smell he guessed that it was a duster annexed from a Form-room—was bandaged across his eyes. Then he heard a match strike, but still he could see nothing.

A familiar scent greeted his nostrils—the scent of tar. It reminded him of the fact that old Mack kept his tar-bucket in the wood-shed.

Carthew shuddered. He knew now what was coming, and he wriggled furiously in his bonds, but he wriggled in vain.

Cold and thick and clammy, the tar daubed on his face.

He shuddered and wriggled. There was a suppressed chuckle, and several matches were struck one after another. No doubt Carthew's face, blackening under the tar, afforded entertainment to the young rascals who were tarring him.

Thicker and thicker the tar was daubed on. It daubed on Carthew's hair, on the bandage over his eyes, on the stuffed handkerchief in his mouth, it oozed round his ears and down his neck, it trickled all over him.

And still it was daubed on thicker and thicker.

The chuckling was incessant, but no word was spoken. The tar-brush was stuck back into the bucket at last.

There was a rustling sound as the juniors groped away. Carthew heard them leaving the wood-shed; he heard the door close; he heard the clink of the padlock chain as it was replaced.

They were gone, and they had left him there.

He had expected, somehow, to be released when they had finished with him, but, obviously, they could not have ventured to let him loose till they were at a safe distance. Doubtless, they believed that they had kept their identity a secret; that, obviously, had been their intention. Carthew was left alone, wriggling in his bonds, clammy with tar, and mad with rage.

How long was he to remain there?

He felt a chill of horror at the thought that he might not be missed and might have to remain as he was till Mack or someone came along to the wood-shed in the morning. The four juniors, of course, had scuttled back into the House; they had to turn up for dorm, or be missed. But a prefect of the Sixth would not be missed after last roll unless somebody dropped into his room and noticed he was not there; after the House was locked up it would be supposed that he had gone to bed.

It was an unnerving thought. He struggled furiously in his bonds, but only succeeded in abrading his wrists and ankles. He was tied too securely to get loose. Then he concentrated on the stuffed handkerchief in his mouth, and bit and chewed at it, almost choking over the tar that oozed into his mouth as he did so. But it was a long, long time before he succeeded in getting partly rid of the gag and was able to yell.

Then he yelled, huskily and frantically, for help.

"You've been enjoying yourself with jolly old Euripides, what?"

"Yes, I've been putting in some Greek."

"Then you didn't want me," yawned Mornington.

"You're your own master," said Erroll. "You know I'm sorry to see you playing the goat again, but it's your own bizney."

Mornington laughed. "You think I've been playin' banker in Peele's study?" he asked.

"I know you have."

"Off-side!" chuckled Mornington. "I haven't touched or even seen a giddy card all the evenin'! You're caught out, old man! Ha, ha!"

Erroll looked at him.

"Well, I know what usually goes on in Peele's study when those fellows stay up after prep," he said. "Naturally, I supposed—"

"Naturally!" agreed Mornington. "Nevertheless, my beloved 'earers, you were wrong for once."

"I'm glad of it. But"—Erroll looked puzzled—"I can't imagine what you've been up to, then. An hour with that crew would bore me to tears—and you, too, without nap or banker to pass the time."

"Oh, they can be entertainin' at times," said Morny. "They're fellows I can ask to back me up in a stunt that you would turn down at once."

"I'd back you up in anything, and you know it, Morny—if it was anythin' a fellow ought to do."

"Yes, sir," said Jimmy.

"You and Lovell and Raby and Newcome will follow me. The rest of the Form will go to bed, as usual," said Mr. Dalton.

"Oh, my hat! I mean, yes, sir."

Bulkeley looked inquiringly at the Form master. Mr. Dalton gave no explanation, however.

He waited while the Fistical Four put on their boots, which they had already removed.

Then they followed him from the dormitory. A buzz of excited voices broke out after they were gone.

Bulkeley, in great astonishment at the unusual proceeding, stepped into the passage and glanced at the Form master and the four juniors following him to the stairs. He was quite in the dark as to what had happened.

"What on earth—" said Putty of the Fourth. "Anybody know what's up?"

"Goodness knows!" said Conroy. "Those chaps are for it, anyhow."

Those chaps are for it, anyhow," said Townsend. "I could see that in Dicky Dalton's face."

"They've been goin' for that cad Carthew, I'll bet my hat!" said Topham.

"Yaas, that's it," agreed Towny.

Erroll crossed over to Mornington, who was sitting on the side of his bed, taking his boots off in a leisurely way.

"Morny, do you know what's up?"

tory to the other ran an excited buzz of talk.

The 6th Chapter. Accused!

Horace Greely jumped.

It was enough to make any man jump, even a heavy-weight like Horace Greely, master of the Rookwood Fifth.

Mr. Greely was taking a little walk and smoking a cigar in the pleasant summer evening. The night was soft and still and dark. Only a whisper of a breeze stirred the leaves of the old beeches. And suddenly, from the silence, came a hoarse, husky howl.

"Help!"

"Bless my soul!" exclaimed Mr. Greely.

"Help! Help!"

"Upon my word!"

The Fifth Form master removed the cigar from his mouth and stared about him. The husky shout was repeated again and again, and then Mr. Greely got his bearings.

He rolled off towards the wood-shed, whence the husky shouting proceeded. Something had happened to somebody there, that was certain.

Mr. Greely had a vague idea that perhaps old Mack had had a fall, perhaps with a stack of logs tumbling over him, or something of the sort.

Anyhow, Horace Greely was prepared to render first aid.

He reached the wood-shed and struck a match. It was very dark.

The padlock appeared to be in order, and he was puzzled. But from the interior of the building came the husky shouting.

"Bless my soul! Who is calling?"

exclaimed Mr. Greely.

"Help! It's me—I—Carthew!"

"Carthew of the Sixth Form!" exclaimed the astonished Mr. Greely.

"Ow! Yes."

"Bless my soul! Are you hurt?"

"Groogh! I'm tied up. Help!"

"Tied up?" repeated Mr. Greely.

"How can you be tied up in the wood-shed, Carthew? This is absurd!"

"Wow! Help!"

"I am quite unable to enter, Carthew, as the door is padlocked. I will call Mack."

"It isn't locked!" howled Carthew.

"It appears to be locked."

"It isn't!" yelled Carthew. "It can't be, as those young scoundrels brought me in here. Try it!"

"I will try it, Carthew. But it certainly appears to be locked," said Mr. Greely.

He struck another match and examined the padlock. He discerned now, what had escaped his first glance, that the lock had been forced, and replaced to give it an appearance of being fastened. It was, however, easy to jerk open, and Mr. Greely jerked it open and threw back the door.

"Where are you, Carthew?"

"Here," hissed Carthew, wriggling painfully. "I'm tied hand and foot."

"Absurd! Who could have tied you hand and foot, Carthew?"

Carthew spluttered with rage. He recognised Mr. Greely's fruity voice, and he would have been glad to tell Mr. Greely what he thought of him.

Obviously, however, it was not a judicious moment for doing so.

"A gang of fags—Silver and his friends. I was rushed in the dark and brought here, tied up!" he gasped.

"Bless my soul!"

"Let me loose!"

"Certainly, Carthew! This is a most extraordinary occurrence—most extraordinary!" said Mr. Greely, in great astonishment. "A most lawless proceeding—extremely lawless! I am surprised and shocked."

"Will you let me loose?" hissed Carthew, not at all interested in the surprised and shocked state of Horace Greely.

"Certainly—certainly!"

Mr. Greely struck another match and blinked round for Carthew. He gave a jump as a black face stared at him, the eyes blindfolded.

"Who—who is that?" The match burned his fingers, and he dropped it with a sharp exclamation. "Ow! Oh! Oh dear! What—what is that? Is—is there a negro here, Carthew?"

"No!" shrieked Carthew.

"I—I saw a black face—a hideous black face!"

"They've tarred my face."

"Oh!"

Another match gleamed out, and the Fifth Form master stooped over Mark Carthew. He stooped over him very gingerly. In his present state, with clammy tar oozing all over him,

(Continued on page 32.)



MR. DALTON IS ASTONISHED! Carthew cast a tarry glare of fury round him. With a startled face Mr. Dalton came quickly out of his study. "Who is that?" he gasped. "What—what—is it possible that that is a Rookwood boy? What does this mean?"

Erroll knocked at the door, and heard a chuckle as he opened it. There was a whiff of smoke in the study, and Peele, Lattrey, and Gower grinned at him over cigarettes. Valentine Mornington was there, though he was not smoking like the three shady rascals with whom he consorted.

"Hallo, old Sobersides!" said Morny cheerfully. He had been ratty with his chum all day, and had wholly deserted him that evening; but he seemed to be restored to good-humour now.

"Looked in to join us in a smoke, what?" asked Peele, with a grin.

Erroll's lip curled. He was not likely to join the dingy trio in any of their delectable pursuits.

"I've looked in to mention that it's bed-time, Morny," he said, taking no notice of Cyril Peele. "Better not let a prefect come and look for you and find you here like this."

"What-ho!" chuckled Peele. "Thanks for the tip, Erroll! Blessed if I noticed it was so late. We've been rather busy this evenin'!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Valentine Mornington left the study with his chum, with a nod to Peele & Co., and followed more slowly.

Erroll's face was set and clouded. Morny grinned as he glanced at him. "Missed me this evenin'?" he asked.

"Not specially," answered Erroll shortly.

"Thanks!" grinned Mornington.

"It might be something a fellow oughtn't to do!" chuckled Morny.

"Depends on the point of view! Might be some awfully lawless proceedin', with the jolly old sack loomin' in the distance. Fancy you backin' me up in anythin' you might be bunked for."

"I don't quite follow. You haven't been out of school bounds during the evening, have you?"

"Oh, no! I've been applyin' some salve to my damaged ear."

"What?"

"Don't you remember Carthew smacked my ear yesterday? It hurt me fearfully—in my jolly old dignity. I had to apply a healin' salve; and that's what I've been doin' this evenin'. Those fellows helped me."

"I don't understand you in the least."

"No need," said Mornington coolly.

They arrived in the dormitory and nothing more was said. Erroll remaining very much puzzled. Bulkeley of the Sixth was there to turn out the lights for the Classical Fourth.

"Hallo, there's Dicky!" murmured Arthur Edward Lovell, as Mr. Dalton appeared in the doorway.

The Fourth Form master glanced in, and the juniors observed that his face was very grave.

Mornington started a little. Peele and Lattrey and Gower exchanged quick glances uneasily and avoided looking at the Form master.

Mr. Dalton stepped in.

"Silver!"

Valentine Mornington looked at him with a smile.

"How should I know?"

"You've been up to something with Peele's gang. They looked scared when Mr. Dalton showed up and—"

"Did they? What eyes you've got. Did I look scared?" smiled Morny.

"No. But—" Erroll breathed hard. "Morny, old man, if you've been playing some fool trick you can't leave others to take the blame of it."

Mornington shrugged his shoulders. "Am I the kind of fellow to hide behind other chaps?" he asked disdainfully.

"No; I'm sure not. But—"

"Leave it alone, old man! The less you know about it the better," said Morny coolly. "It's a bunkin' job if it comes out. I'm not exactly yearnin' to be sacked from the school. And for that jolly good reason I'm not goin' to open my mouth too wide. Catch on?"

"But—" muttered Erroll.

"Assez, mon cher!" grinned Mornington.

Bulkeley came back into the dormitory.

"Now, then, turn in, you kids!"

"What's up, Bulkeley?" asked a dozen voices.

"I don't know. Turn in!"

The Classical Fourth turned in, and Bulkeley put out the light and left the dormitory. But the juniors were not likely to settle down to sleep. From one end of the dormi-



Done In The Dark!

(Continued from page 20.)

the glimmer of a lantern broke into the darkness of the wood-shed. Old Mack came in grunting. "Cut me loose, Mack!" howled Carthew, glaring at him. "Mr. Greely, he says—" "Will you cut me loose?" "Just what I've come 'ere for, sir," said old Mack stolidly. "You ain't nice to touch, sir, but 'ere goes."

Mack set down the lantern and, with maddening slowness, opened an old horn-handled pocket-knife. Carthew looked at him as if he could bite him the while. But at last old Mack began to saw the cords.

There was a fiendish yell from Carthew. "Yaroooh!" "What's the matter, sir?" "You silly idiot!" shrieked Carthew. "You're sawing my skin." "P'r'aps you'd rather I didn't cut these 'ere cords, sir?" Carthew ground his teeth. "Get on with it, you fool!" Old Mack got on with it. He did not get on very fast, and perhaps by accident he sawed the hapless Carthew several times in the process. Possibly he did not like being called an idiot and a fool by the fellow he had come there to help. But Carthew was released at last. He squirmed to his feet, panting for breath, giving Mack a glare of rage in return for the grin that wrinkled old Mack's ancient countenance.

Then he rushed out of the wood-shed. Black and tarry, dishevelled and breathless, he rushed for the House. The door had been left ajar by Mr. Greely, and Carthew hurled it open and rushed in. There was a yell from Neville of the Sixth as he sighted him. "Who—what—what—who's that?" "Who's that dashed nigger?" yelled Hanson of the Fifth. A dozen senior fellows stared at Carthew blankly. "It's Carthew!" yelled Talboys of the Fifth suddenly. "I know his bags. I don't know his face. Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" Carthew cast a tarry glare of fury round him. Mr. Dalton came quickly out of his study with a startled face. "Who is that What—what— Is it possible that that is a Rookwood boy? What does this mean?" "I'm Carthew!" shrieked the tarry object. "I'm going to the Head. Your boys have done this, Mr. Dalton. Silver and Lovell and that lot. I'm going to the Head!" "Carthew, you accuse—" "I've been kidnapped, tied up, tarred!" Carthew choked with rage. "They'll jolly well be bunked for this! Grooogh! I'm going to the Head." "You had better not go to the Head in that state, Carthew." "I'm going!" Carthew rushed on. Mr. Dalton stared after him, and then quietly ascended the staircase to the Fourth Form dormitory, to call the accused juniors. The Classical Fourth had gone to bed, but this was a matter that would not wait. "Well, Carthew got it this time!" chuckled Hanson of the Fifth. "He's a beastly bully, anyhow. I dare say he asked for it." "But it's the sack for the johnnies who did it, all the same!" remarked Talboys. "Oh, no doubt about that! It's the sack for Silver of the Fourth and his pals!" agreed Hanson. And that remark greeted Jimmy Silver & Co. as they came down the staircase at the heels of Mr. Dalton. Jimmy Silver started. "What's that?" he exclaimed. "The jolly old sack for you!" grinned Hanson. "I suppose you knew what to expect when you handled Carthew like that?" "What do you mean? We haven't touched Carthew." "He says you have, and he seems to know!" chuckled Hanson. "Follow me, my boys!" broke in Mr. Dalton sternly. "Carthew is with Dr. Chisholm now, and you must see the Head at once." "But, sir—" exclaimed Arthur Edward Lovell. "Follow me!" And in a surprised and extremely unquiet frame of mind, Jimmy Silver & Co. followed their Form master to the Head's study.

THE END.

(Simply great — "The Whip Hand!" next Monday's long complete story of Jimmy Silver & Co. of Rookwood School. Be sure you read it, chums. Order your copy of the BOYS' FRIEND in advance, and thus make certain of obtaining it!)

IN YOUR EDITOR'S DEN.



Your Editor is always pleased to hear from his readers upon any subject. Address your letters to: Editor, "Boys' Friend," The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C. 4.

INTERESTING ANNOUNCEMENTS

Two great new serials of the most striking kind appear next week. They are "Knights of the Wheel!" a hair-raising motor-racing yarn, with experts driving and an expert author running the show; and "The Three Gold Feathers!" a mystery story full of curious, palpitating interest.

As a matter of plain, unvarnished fact, I have got so much to forecast this week that the job is to know where to begin. Of course, there will be a fresh A.B.C.'s Competition next Monday, with six "J. B. Hobbs" cricket bats as prizes, just as with this week's competition. Keep your eye on this nailing feature; No. 5 this week, No. 6 in the new issue. By the way, I have received magnificent letters from winners of these bats, and they are right down pleased to be able to take the field armed with a "Hobbs."

OUT OF WORK!

Such was the sad case of a pal in the Potteries. My correspondent writes from Stoke, the town which is now a city, and good luck to it! Things were very bad indeed, for money was urgently needed at home. So this reader put all his wits to work, and he suddenly remembered that one time he had been keen on engineering. The rest of the story brings to mind pushful Posh, for my informant tells me he pestered the manager of a garage until he got a cleaner's job. They soon found out he was capable, and now he is getting on hand over fist. The motoring business does offer lots of encouragement to a fellow who is keen on mechanics.

THE OLD ORDER CHANGES.

That is very much the idea of a Shropshire supporter, who writes to say that Jimmy Silver ought to remain at Manor House. There is no sympathy in this letter for Dr. Chisholm. Hasty and didactic the Rookwood Head may be, but he is a grand old gentleman—one of the best. I was glad to get the opinion from Salop, but it would not wash. Floreat Rookwood! Rookwood has splendid traditions. As a fact, the part played by Uncle James was just it. He stood loyal to the end.

NEXT MONDAY'S STORIES.

Our programme next week includes, in addition to long opening instalments of the two new serials, a Rookwood rouser called "The Whip Hand!" with Carthew making mischief; "The Lost Island!" which is all about the bright spirits of the Glory Hole Gang; "The Skipper's Return!" with Harold Marston and young Jim Gryce hard at it.

THE FINEST BOYS' PAPER!

A Staffordshire reader thus describes the BOYS' FRIEND. He will have even more reason to think thusly when he reads next Monday's issue of the old "Green 'Un." And this chum of the Midlands will not be the only one to enjoy the feast of great new stories contained in the coming number, for I am convinced that you will all relish them. There is no doubt that it is bad business to blow one's own trumpet, but I can honestly say that "Knights of the Wheel!" and "The Three Gold Feathers!" are the goods!

HARD HIT.

A letter just to hand from the West Country brings to light a real grievance. My correspondent tells me that he staked all in the interests of others who wanted help, and now he is left high and dry without so much as a word of thanks. It is one of those cases where the only thing is to grin and bear it. Of course, he feels such treatment pretty much, but, if he had not put all in, the consequences would have been disastrous. I think the same spirit which made him act in such a manly way will see him through to the end. And, besides all that, he has it to his credit that he played the game. A really fine action could not be adequately paid for by all the heaped-up cash in the world.

A TRAMP ROUND ENGLAND!

To perform this feat would take as long as it did to get the main buildings of Rome in proper trim. But such a walk is to be done, and is being done, by an ardent reader of the old "Green 'Un," who is sending me picture-postcards from all the principal points he reaches. He is having a great time, and a cheap holiday. I will refer to the champion hiker again. It will do for the present to say that he started from Grimsby, where he lives, and is coming south via Cromer and Walton. Good luck to him!

ANOTHER BAT WINNER!

From Leytonstone comes the following letter: "Dear Sir,—I received the cricket-bat quite O.K. today. It is really splendid! I am very grateful to you for awarding me such a ripping prize." Quite O.K.!

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