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The BOYS' FRIEND 2^d

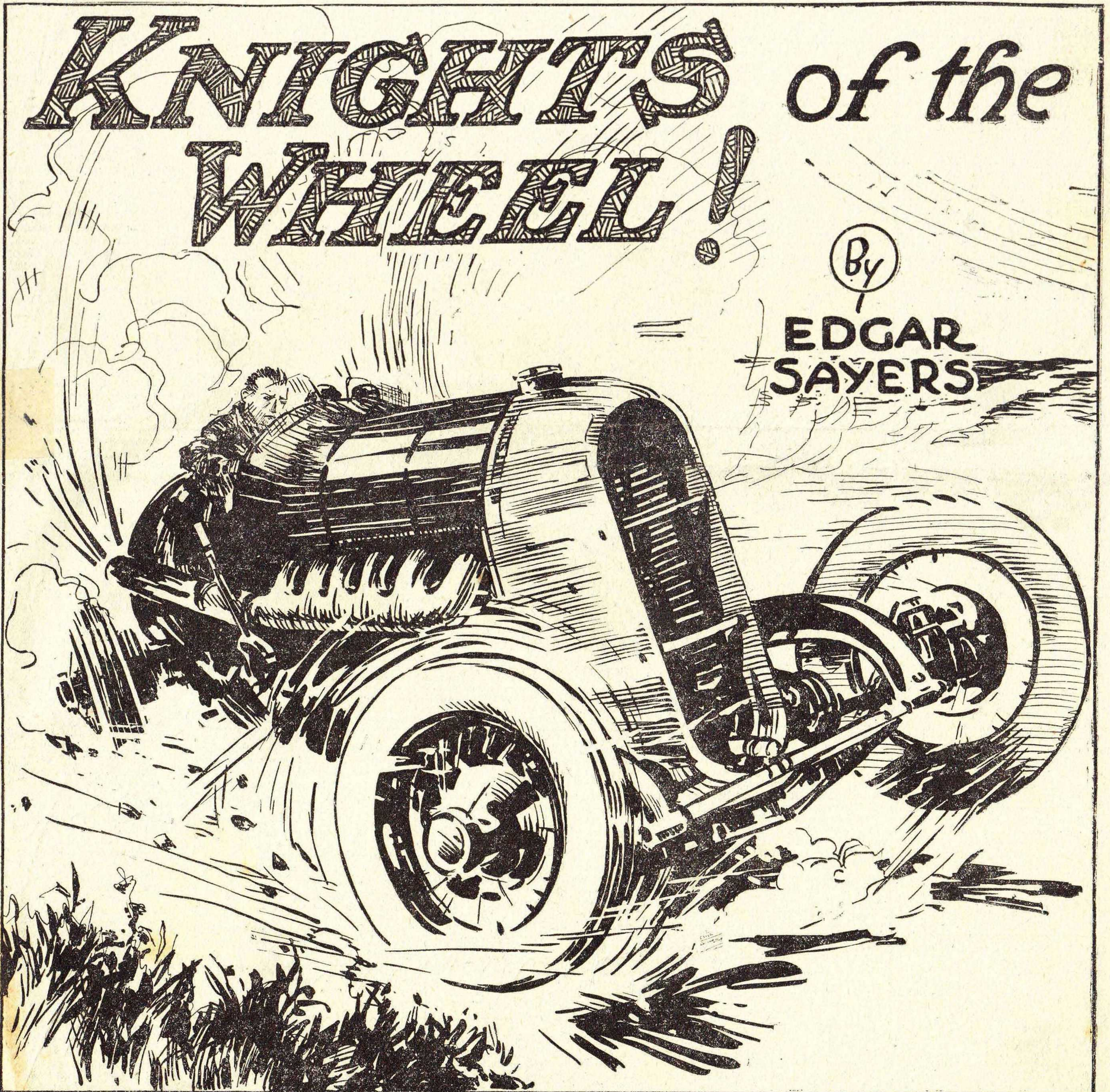
EVERY MONDAY.

SIXTEEN BIG PAGES!

No. 1,258. Vol. XXVI.—New Series.]

THE BEST BOYS' PAPER IN THE WORLD!

[Week Ending July 18th, 1925.]



KNIGHTS of the WHEEL!

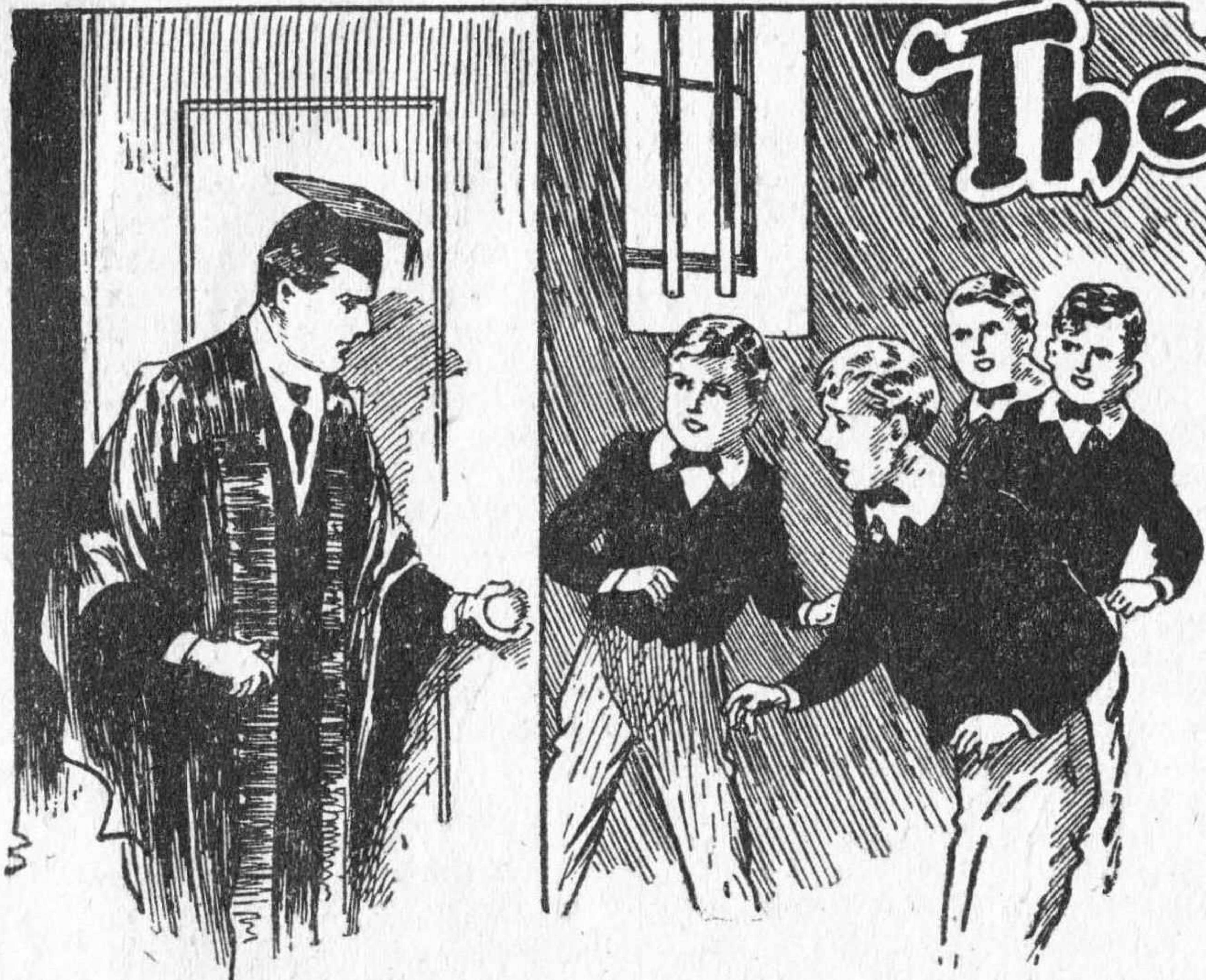
By

EDGAR
SAYERS

A PRACTICE SPIN! TRYING OUT THE NEW WILSON RACER!

(A thrilling incident from our great new motor-racing story in this issue.)

YOU'LL ENJOY THIS WEEK'S STORY OF JIMMY SILVER & CO., OF
ROOKWOOD SCHOOL!



The Whip Hand!

By
OWEN CONQUEST.

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

Carthew's rascally plot is
nipped in the bud by Valentine
Mornington!

The 1st Chapter. Carthew's Report!

"What—what—what—"

Dr. Chisholm started to his feet. He started so suddenly that he dropped his pen, scattering blots over the sheet of paper on his writing-table that was half-covered with Greek.

He was startled. It was enough to startle any old gentleman, to hear a sudden, piercing scream ring out in the corridor outside his study door.

The Head of Rookwood had been deep in a pleasant task—elucidating some of the little difficulties in one of the more obscure passages of Sophocles. This was the kind of occupation that made Dr. Chisholm really happy and contented, and helped him to realise that life really was worth living. But as that loud, terrified scream rang through the House he forgot even Sophocles.

"What—what— Bless my soul, what—"

There was a patter of flying feet in the corridor.

The Head's study door burst open. A female figure rushed in, still screaming.

"Janet!" gasped the Head.

It was the duty of Janet, the maid, to close the corridor windows in the evening. Apparently she had been occupied with that duty when something had happened.

Evidently something had happened!

Janet was pale with terror, and screaming, as she flew into the Head's study, the nearest refuge.

"Oh, save me!"

"What—what—"

"Save me!"

The Head came round from behind his writing-table. Sophocles lay unheeded; a dozen blots congealed on the Head's masterly elucidation of the obscurities of that great poet. A terrified housemaid was not really of much importance, in comparison with Sophocles; but the Head was a kind-hearted old gentleman. Moreover, he was startled and alarmed.

"Janet! What—what—"

Scream from Janet!

"Oh, save me!"

She flung herself into the protecting arms of the headmaster. She clutched him for support.

"Bless my soul!" gasped Dr. Chisholm. "Janet, calm yourself! Release me at once, my good girl! For goodness' sake—"

"Save me! Keep him off!"

"He— Who— What?"

"That dreadful negro— Save me!"

"Good heavens! Janet, I command you to release me! This is most—most embarrassing!" gasped the Head.

There were footsteps in the corridor. Someone was hurrying towards the Head's study. Apparently it was the dreadful apparition that Janet had seen, and that had so terrified her.

The Head stared at the open doorway.

It was impossible to get rid of Janet; the terrified girl was clinging to the Head for protection quite convulsively, and still screaming. Really it was a very embarrassing position for the old gentleman.

"What— Who— who—"

stuttered the Head, as a startling figure appeared in the doorway.

A black face—black as the ace of spades—glared into the study. For a second the Head was petrified.

Janet shrieked. "Keep him away! Save me!"

"Who— what— who are you?" shouted the Head.

His alarm was only momentary; it quickly changed to wrath. In the dimly-lit corridor Janet had taken that fearsome figure for a "dreadful negro"; but in the light of the study the Head saw, at the second glance, that the blackness of the face was caused by tar. Tar, thick and clammy, covered the face of the newcomer and oozed over his clothes. But his clothes were the ordinary garb of a Sixth-Form fellow of Rookwood.

"Sir—"

"Who are you?" thundered the Head. "What does this mean?"

"I'm Carthew—"

"Carthew! Are you Carthew of the Sixth Form?"

"Yes, sir! I—"

"How dare you? How dare you play these pranks, Carthew—you, a Sixth Form prefect?" exclaimed the Head passionately. "Upon my word! You have dared to blacken your face and frighten the maids, you—you utterly absurd and idiotic boy! Are you in your right senses, Carthew?"

"I—I—I—"

"Janet! Calm yourself! Release me instantly!" roared the Head.

"Cannot you see, you foolish girl, that this is not a negro at all? It is simply a foolish boy playing an absurd trick! Release me, I tell you!"

With more energy than courtesy, Dr. Chisholm jerked away Janet's clutching arms and fairly shoved her off.

His face was crimson with anger and mortification.

The situation was ridiculous; and the Head was keenly sensitive on the point of his dignity; ridicule and the Head of Rookwood ought to have been far as the poles asunder.

Janet tottered, and blinked uneasily and fearfully at the amazing figure in the doorway.

"I—I—I—was frightened!" she stammered.

"Naturally," said the Head. "I excuse you! It was natural! The blame is this foolish boy's! I shall punish him with the greatest severity!"

"I—I thought it was a burglar—"

"Yes, yes!"

"A dreadful negro—"

"Yes, yes, yes!"

"I was so frightened—"

"Yes, yes, yes, yes! Pray go now, Janet, and leave me to deal with this stupid, this reckless trickster!"

Janet tottered from the study, still very much upset. She was heard whimpering as she went down the corridor.

Dr. Chisholm fixed an almost deadly look on Carthew of the Sixth.

"I shall now deal with you, Carthew!" he said. "Your conduct is inexplicable—absolutely inexplicable. Such a trick in a junior boy of the Fourth Form would be inexcusable; but in a Sixth Form boy—a prefect—"

"It isn't a trick, sir!" stuttered Carthew. "Let me explain, sir."

"What do you mean?" thundered the Head.

"I've been attacked, sir—"

"What?"

"I was collared—"

"Collared?"

"Yes, sir!" gasped Carthew.

"What do you mean by 'collared'?"

"I—I mean, collared, sir—that is, seized."

"If you mean that you were seized, why do you not say that you were seized? Cannot you, a Sixth Form boy, speak English?"

"Yes, sir!" gasped Carthew. "I mean I was collared—that is, seized—"



AN EYE-OPENER FOR CARTHEW! "Bend over!" snapped Carthew. Mornington smiled. "Cut it out, old bean!" he said cheerily. "Bendin' over will be a thing of the past—a happy memory of Rookwood if I go this mornin'!" Carthew stared at him, cane in hand. "If you go! What do you mean? You're not sacked, I suppose?" "Bound to be, for 'attackin' a giddy prefect and tyn' him up and tarrin' him!" drawled Mornington.

suddenly in the quad, in the dark, and tied up—tied hand and foot, sir—"

"Nonsense!"

"I was, sir!" spluttered Carthew. "Four Fourth Form boys did it. They tied me up and yanked me—"

"They what?"

"I mean, dragged me, sir—dragged me away to the wood-shed, and smothered me with tar, sir—"

"Impossible!"

"They left me tied up, sir, and gagged, and—and I should be there now, only I managed to shout, and Mr. Greely heard me—"

"Incredible!"

"On my word, sir! I—I came at once to tell you, sir—to report what had happened. I thought I'd let you see me like this, sir, so that you would know—"

"Bless my soul!" exclaimed the Head aghast. "A Sixth Form prefect of Rookwood seized in the dark, tied up, tarred—impossible! I could never have believed that such a thing could happen at Rookwood! If matters are as you state, Carthew, of course you are not to blame, though it was very unfortunate that you frightened that foolish girl. Who were the boys that attacked you as you describe?"

"Silver, Lovell, Raby, and Newcome, of the Fourth Form, sir."

"I will send for them at once!"

And Carthew of the Sixth grinned under his coating of tar. At long last he had downed Jimmy Silver & Co.; this was a "bunking" matter, and it was the "long jump" for the end study; a very satisfactory ending to the feud, so far as Mark Carthew was concerned.

The 2nd Chapter.

The Chopper Comes Down!

Jimmy Silver & Co. followed Mr. Dalton, their Form master, to the Head's study, with grave and troubled faces.

It was past the bed-time of the juniors; all other fellows, of Forms below the Fifth, were in their dormitories. But behind the Fistical Four, as they followed Mr. Dalton, was a buzz of voices. The amazing appearance of Carthew, covered and smothered with tar, had caused a sensation in the House.

Janet was not the only person who had been startled.

Hansom & Co. of the Fifth were chuckling; they were greatly entertained by Carthew's misadventure. Most of the Sixth Form fellows had come out of their rooms; but these fellows took a more serious view of the matter than the Fifth did.

Carthew was not popular in his own Form; but he was a Sixth Form man and a prefect; so the affair seemed serious to the Sixth. When

Evidence of the identity of the assailants, therefore, did not exist, so far. But Carthew was quite certain. He had had a great deal of trouble with these four; only that day and the day before he had scored over them heavily, and had been expecting an attempt at retaliation; and it had come! That was all there was about it.

In the whispering voices he was assured that he had detected the tones of the juniors of the end study; he had, in fact, heard what he expected to hear!

And now they were going to get the "chopper." An affair like this would not be dealt with by a flogging! It was the "sack," short and sharp, for Lower boys who had handled a prefect in this manner.

This was the hour of Carthew's triumph; and it solaced him for the tar and for the long time he had spent tied up in the wood-shed.

The Head's face was, dark with anger.

In spite of the seriousness of the situation, Jimmy Silver & Co. could scarcely repress a grin at the sight of Carthew's extraordinary aspect.

The Head's deep voice boomed at them:

"This is not a laughing matter!"

The four juniors became serious at once.

It was not, indeed, a laughing matter, for the fellows who had handled Carthew! They were not the fellows, as it happened; but, obviously, they were going to be accused.

"Silver! Lovell! Raby! Newcome!" The Head rapped out the names like pistol-shots.

"Yes, sir!"

"Carthew accuses you of seizing him in the quadrangle, in the dark, and treating him in this disgraceful manner. You must be aware that if your guilt is proved, you will leave Rookwood School immediately! Have you anything to say?"

"We didn't do it, sir," said Jimmy Silver.

"You deny it?"

"Yes, sir!"

"We never knew anything had happened, sir, till Mr. Dalton came to the dormitory for us," said Arthur Edward Lovell.

"I shall not condemn you lightly," said the Head. "The matter will be dealt with at once, and you will be allowed to defend yourselves. You have no doubt, Carthew, as to the identity of your assailants?"

"None whatever, sir."

"You definitely accuse these boys?"

"Yes, sir."

Carthew glared at the four with contempt, as well as anger. Assured as he was of their guilt, he was taken aback by their prompt denial. He disliked Jimmy Silver & Co. intensely, but, somehow, he could not help respecting them; he had never expected to hear them tell falsehoods, even to avert the "sack."

Somehow or other, he had expected them to stand manfully by what they had done, in spite of the serious consequences.

But it was rather a satisfaction to him, than otherwise, to hear them utter false denials, as he supposed. It seemed to justify, to some extent, his dislike of them.

Carthew was a bad-hearted fellow; but he did not like to admit to himself that he disliked fellows for their good qualities.

There was a pause in the Head's study.

Mr. Dalton broke in:

"Dr. Chisholm, I am bound to say that I have always found these four boys truthful, and should have no hesitation in relying on their word."

"They are lying, sir!" said Carthew contemptuously.

"That must be proved!" said the Fourth Form master tartly.

"Undoubtedly!" said the Head. "The authors of this outrage will be expelled from the school without mercy. But the punishment must fall on the right shoulders. Carthew, tell me precisely what occurred."

"I'd been over to Mr. Manders' House, sir, to see Frampton about—about the cricket. I was coming back, when these four juniors rushed on me under the beeches, and knocked me over."

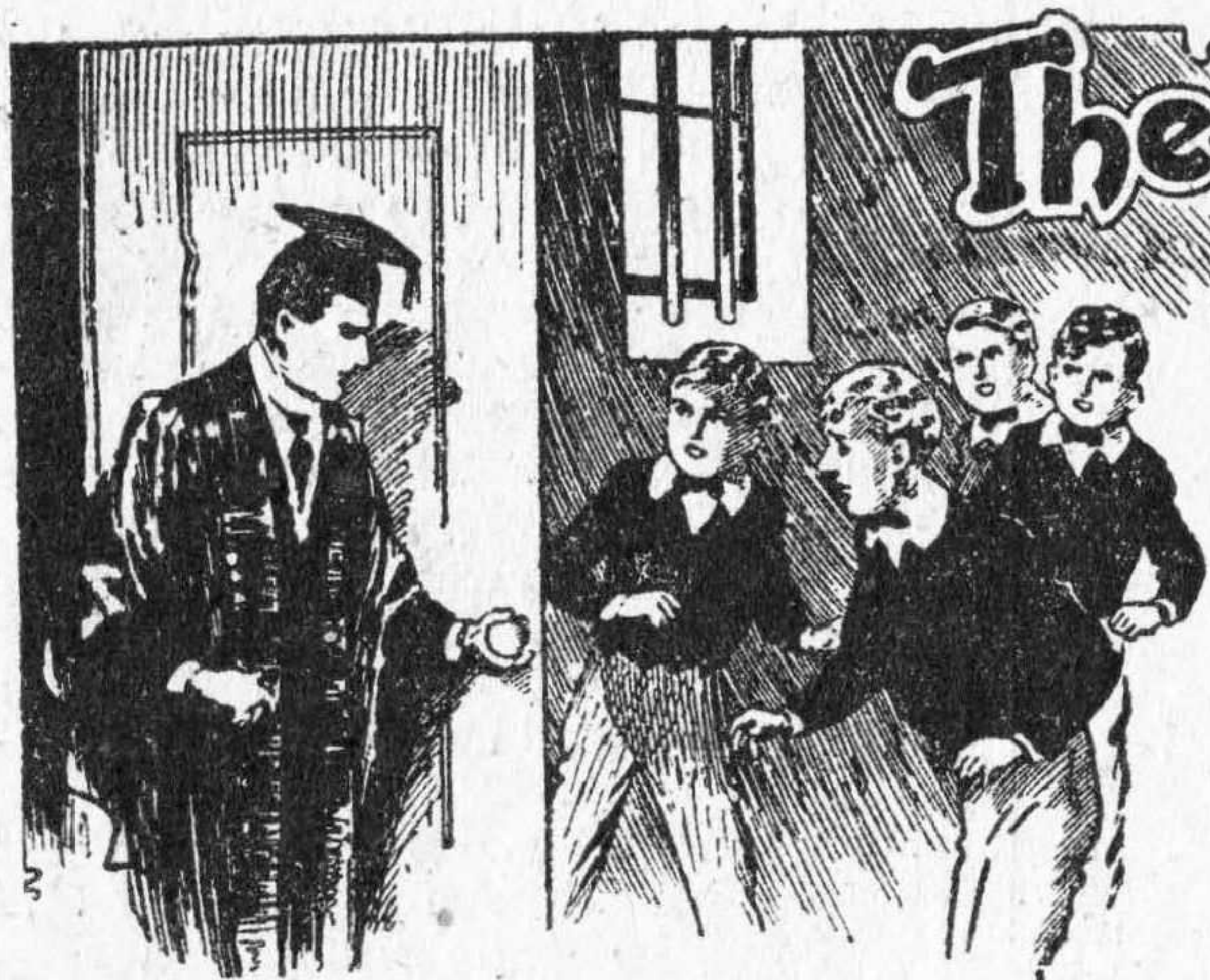
"You recognised them?"

"It was very dark, sir, under the trees."

"You did not recognise them?" asked Mr. Dalton coldly.

"I couldn't in the dark!" said Carthew savagely. "That is why they chose that place where the trees are thick over the path. But I jolly well

(Continued, overleaf.)



The Whip Hand!

(Continued from previous page.)

recognised their voices when they spoke!"

"And what occurred next?" asked the Head.

"I was tied up, sir, like a—a turkey, hand and foot, and carried away to the wood-shed. There they smothered me with tar, as you see me now, sir. I was left tied up, with a handkerchief stuffed in my mouth."

"Outrageous!"

"I think I must have been there hours—anyhow, it was a long time," said Carthew. "It seemed a jolly long time. But I got the handkerchief out of my mouth at last, and shouted, and Mr. Greely heard me, and came. I never expected them to deny it. They knew I knew them at the time."

"What have you to say now, Silver?"

"Only that we never touched Carthew, sir," said Jimmy.

"You have heard Carthew state that he recognised your voices."

"He must have been mistaken, sir."

"Have you had any trouble recently with these juniors, Carthew, to cause a desire for revenge?"

"Yes, sir. Mr. Dalton knows," said Carthew. "I had to punish Lovell yesterday for breaking the rule about sliding down the banisters. The four of them set on me—"

"Upon my word!"

"Mr. Dalton sent for them, and they were punished," said Carthew.

"That is correct," said the Fourth Form master.

"Only to-day, I heard Lovell uttering threats against me," went on Carthew. "I gave him a hundred lines for it."

"I did the lines!" growled Lovell.

Jimmy Silver and Raby and Newcome gave Arthur Edward expressive glances. Often and often they had told Arthur Edward that he opened his mouth too wide. Once more he had done so, with unfortunate results. They realised very clearly how much reckless talk would tell against them now, if the real culprits were not discovered.

"You threatened Carthew, Lovell?" said the Head grimly.

"Not exactly threatened him, sir!" stammered Lovell.

"What words did you use?"

"I—I said we'd make him sit up."

"Sit up!" repeated the Head. Apparently the headmaster of Rookwood was unacquainted with that slangy expression; or at least chose to appear unacquainted with it.

"What did you mean by that, Lovell?"

"I—I mean we'd make him squirm, sir!" said Lovell reddening.

"Squirm?"

"I—I mean—"

"Well, what do you mean?" snapped the Head. "Cannot the boys of your Form express themselves in their mother-tongue, Mr. Dalton?"

"I—I only meant we'd go for him. I mean I meant we'd—we'd retaliate!" gasped Lovell.

"I understand! You assaulted a prefect who was carrying out his duties, and your Form master very properly punished you; and then you threatened to retaliate on the prefect?"

Lovell was silent.

Put like that, it sounded serious enough; but, of course, it had never presented itself to Lovell's mind quite like that. But it was obviously useless to attempt to explain further.

"And your retaliation, it seems, has taken place," said the Head grimly. "It took the form of seizing upon Carthew and treating him in this disgraceful and disgusting manner?"

"No, sir!" gasped Lovell.

"You admit—"

"I—I said we'd make him sit up," groaned Lovell. "I—I never meant anything in particular, sir. I was waxy—I mean, wild—that is, annoyed."

"You are absolutely certain,

the guilty parties that he allowed himself to stretch a point to prove what he believed to be the truth.

Had Carthew been lying—had he simply taken this opportunity of "downing" his old enemies, regardless of the truth, doubtless the Head would have discerned some clue to it; he was an extremely keen old gentleman, and thirty years' experience with boys of all sorts and conditions had enabled him to sift the false from the true.

But the fact was that Carthew was not lying. He was mistaken; but he was saying what he believed to be true, and that was quite a different matter.

His words carried conviction. Not only in the Head's face but in that of Mr. Dalton the hapless four could read conviction.

There was a long, long pause, during which the hearts of the four juniors beat painfully.

The Head's face was hardening grimly.

"It comes to this!" he said at last, with the manner of a judge summing-up. "You four juniors assaulted Carthew, and were punished for it; you were heard uttering threats against him; and

this was followed by this outrage. And Carthew states explicitly that he recognised the voices of his assailants, and that the voices were yours. It is impossible for any doubt to exist in the matter. You agree with me, Mr. Dalton?"

"I can only assent, sir," said the master of the Fourth reluctantly. "If Carthew is absolutely certain that—"

"Absolutely, sir!"

Dr. Chisholm raised his hand.

"To-morrow morning you will leave Rookwood!" he said. "This matter is too serious for a mere flogging. Boys who are guilty of such an outrage as this cannot be suffered to remain in the school, or, indeed, to associate in any way with other Rookwood boys. Mr. Dalton, you will kindly see that the punishment-room is prepared, and that these boys are placed in it for the night; they are not to be allowed to return to their dormitory. They will leave by the first train in the morning!"

"Very well, sir!" said Richard Dalton heavily.

Jimmy Silver's heart thumped. The "chopper" had come down—come down so suddenly, so overwhelmingly, that it was bewildering.

"We did not do it, sir!" gasped Jimmy.

"That will do!"

"We never touched Carthew, sir!" exclaimed Raby.

"Falsehoods will not serve you now!" said the Head coldly.

"But we—we didn't, sir!" gasped Newcome, in bewildered dismay.

"You—you can't bunk us for something we never did, sir."

"Silence!"

"But, sir—"

"The matter is closed! Mr. Dalton, kindly take these boys to the punishment-room."

"But, sir—" stammered Jimmy Silver.

"Come, my boys!" said Mr. Dalton quietly.

And in overwhelming dismay, hardly able to believe in the reality of the catastrophe that had fallen on them, Jimmy Silver & Co. almost tottered from the Head's study.

The 3rd Chapter.

A Surprise for the Fourth.

Valentine Mornington sat up in bed as the rising-bell rang out in the summer morning, and yawned. Then he glanced along the row of white beds and started a little as he noted that four of them were vacant.

Morny whistled softly.

Jimmy Silver and Lovell, Raby and Newcome, were not in the dormitory. Their beds had not been slept in.

Mornington's careless face became rather grave. He met the glance of his chum Erroll as the latter sat up.

"The dear boys seem to have had a night out, Erroll!" Morny remarked lightly, with a gesture towards the empty beds.

"I knew they hadn't come back," said Erroll quietly. "I was awake rather late, and they hadn't come."

"I dropped off," said Morny, with another yawn. "Why the thump have they stayed out?"

"It's trouble, of course."

"Looks like it!" agreed Morny. And he turned lazily out of bed.

There was a buzz of excited comment in the Fourth Form dormitory as the other fellows turned out and all the Form became aware of the fact that Jimmy Silver & Co. had passed the night elsewhere.

It was an extraordinary happening; it was amazing. The four juniors had followed Mr. Dalton downstairs to see the Head the night before, and they had not returned. What had happened to them?

"The punishment-room, of course," said Conroy. "But what the thump are they there for?"

"Goodness knows!" yawned Morny.

"It's something jolly serious!" said Oswald. "It must be."

"No doubt about that!" agreed Putty of the Fourth. "But what?"

"They've been going for Carthew, you know," said Tubby Muffin.

"You fellows know that Lovell has been shouting out what he was going to do to Carthew. Well, he's done it, and he's got nailed."

"Likely enough," said Oswald.

"Looks like it, by gad!" remarked Cyril Peele, and he closed one eye at Valentine Mornington, who laughed.

Peele's chums, Gower and Lattrey, looked rather uneasy. They dressed in a disquieted silence. Peele was quite cool, however; and Mornington was even more airy and careless than was his wont. Kit Erroll, looking at the four many times with doubt and suspicion, wondered.

The Classical Fourth were soon down; even Tubby Muffin did not dawdle that morning. All the juniors were anxious to hear what had happened to Jimmy Silver & Co.

Erroll joined Morny, going down; and the dandy of the Fourth gave him a rather cynical, mocking look. Plainly, he expected Erroll to speak and question him; but Erroll said nothing, though his handsome face, always grave, was now much graver than usual.

The big door of the House was open and Mr. Dalton was standing there, looking out into the morning sunshine in the green old quad, with a puckered and troubled brow.

Erroll came up to the Form master, and some of the Fourth lingered at hand to hear what was said.

"Excuse me, sir!" began Erroll.

"May I ask whether anything has happened to Silver and his friends?"

Mr. Dalton nodded to him.

"Yes, Erroll! I am sorry to say that they are expelled from the school," he said.

"Expelled, sir!" exclaimed Erroll.

There was an excited buzz from the other juniors. Gower and Lattrey

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Lads, here is a topping new kind of competition which I know is going to please you all. A.B.C.'s will give you lots of amusement, and on top of that the winners will get splendid "J. B. Hobbs" Cricket Bats which I have chosen specially, and which will bear a replica of the autograph of the famous England and Surrey batsman.

It is all quite simple! Here you have a set of eight puzzle-pictures which you have to solve and send in without delay. Each puzzle-picture represents the name of some object or feature beginning with F. Thus, you will see that we have given you a start with No. 1, the solution of which is FROG, as you can clearly see. Remember that every solution must begin with the initial F.

In the same way you have to solve the other seven pictures. Write your solutions in the spaces underneath the pictures—one name only under each picture, remember—sign the coupon with your name and address, IN INK, and send the effort in an envelope addressed to:

"A. B. C.'s" COMPETITION No. 6,

c/o "Boys' Friend," Gough House,

Gough Square, London, E.C. 4 (Comp.)

The closing date is FRIDAY, JULY 24th, and no efforts arriving after that date will be considered.

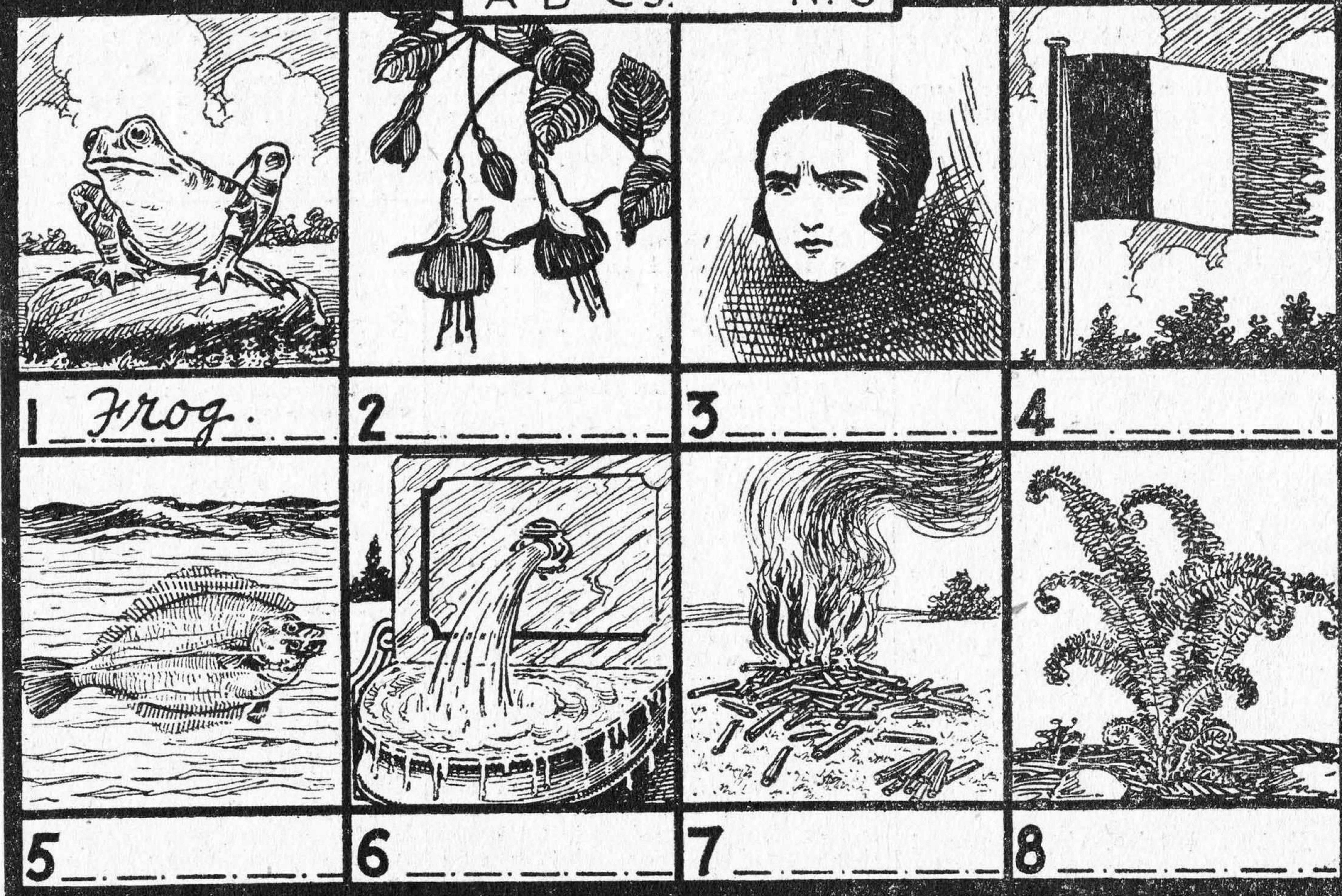
RULES WHICH MUST BE STRICTLY ADHERED TO:

The Six "J. B. Hobbs" Cricket Bats will be awarded to the six competitors whose solutions of the set of puzzle-pictures are correct or most nearly correct. The value of the prizes will be divided if necessary. Any number of efforts may be sent in, but each must be made out on a separate picture-set and coupon. All efforts must be written IN INK.

Efforts mutilated or containing alterations or alternative solutions will be disqualified.

The Editor's decision will be absolutely final. Employees of the proprietors of the BOYS' FRIEND may not compete.

"A. B. C.'s" — No. 6



I enter "A. B. C.'s" Competition No. 6, and agree to accept the Editor's decision as final.

NAME

ADDRESS

B.F.—Closing Date, Friday, July 24th.

The Result of "A. B. C.'s" Competition No. 1 will be found on page 42 of this issue, chums!

turned quite pale: Peele breathed deep and hard. Even Mornington started and bit his lip.

"Yes, Erroll! It is a heavy blow to me," said Mr. Dalton. "I am more sorry than I can say."

"But—but what—what—?" "What have they done, sir?" asked Mornington. "I suppose they've done somethin' to be bunked for."

Mr. Dalton glanced at him. Evidently he did not approve of Morn's light and bantering tone. But he answered quietly.

"Last night Carthew of the Sixth was attacked in the quadrangle. He was tied up, dragged to a shed, and covered with tar. Such an attack on a Sixth Form prefect is naturally followed by the expulsion of the offenders."

"Oh, gad!" murmured Peele. Peele moved away quickly, and went out into the quadrangle with Gower and Lattrey. The three black sheep of Rookwood were anxious, for reasons of their own, not to meet Richard Dalton's keen eye. But Mr. Dalton did not notice them.

"I say, that sounds awfully thick, sir!" said Mornington. "A Sixth Form prefect actually tied up and tarred!"

"Yes," said Mr. Dalton curtly. "And Jimmy Silver did it?"

"Yes; he and his friends." "Have they admitted it, sir?" exclaimed Erroll.

"I am sorry to say not. But there is no doubt on the subject." Erroll flushed.

"I am sure, sir, that there is doubt on the subject!" he exclaimed. "I am quite sure that if Jimmy Silver denies it, he is telling the truth."

"Yesterday, Erroll, I should have said the same," answered Mr. Dalton. "But this matter is clear."

"Silver's a friend of ours, sir," said Mornington, in his silkiest tone. "If a fellow may ask, sir, was there any evidence against Silver—apart from the fact that Carthew would like to see him, kicked out of Rookwood, which really isn't evidence?"

Erroll gave his chum a warning look.

"Kindly do not speak in that flippant tone, Mornington, upon such a very serious matter!" said Mr. Dalton sharply.

"My mistake, sir! I stand corrected!" said Morn meekly. "But still a fellow may ask why the Head has come down so heavy on these fellows, when they deny, as you say, having laid hands on Carthew."

"Carthew knew them," said Mr. Dalton briefly.

"Didn't you say he was collared at night, sir? Did he recognise the fellows in the dark?" asked Mornington. "I wasn't aware that Carthew had eyes like a cat."

"I repeat, Mornington, that I will not allow you to talk in this flippant tone!" exclaimed Mr. Dalton angrily. "Take a hundred lines!"

"Oh, very well, sir! But, with the greatest respect, sir, a fellow may be allowed to point out that nobody would dream of takin' Carthew's word that he recognised fellows in the dark."

"Carthew has not stated that he recognised the boys, Mornington. He has stated that he recognised their voices."

Mr. Dalton turned his back, and walked away. Morn glanced after him with a smile.

Erroll hurried after the Form master.

"One moment, sir! Can I speak to Jimmy Silver?"

"It is forbidden, Erroll! The four boys are in the punishment-room, and they will breakfast there."

"But just a word, sir."

"The Head has forbidden any communication between them and the rest of the Fourth Form, Erroll."

"I am quite sure there is some mistake, sir," said Erroll, in great distress. "Jimmy Silver would not tell a lie about it if he had done it!"

Mr. Dalton made no reply to that; and Erroll, deeply troubled, went out into the quadrangle with Mornington. In the quad the Classical Fourth were in a buzz of excitement over the startling news, and it soon spread to the Modern Fourth, and Tommy Dodd & Co. discussed it breathlessly.

Fellows of other Forms heard the news, and jumped when they learned that Jimmy Silver & Co. of the Classical Fourth were "bunked" from Rookwood. The news really seemed too startling to be true.

"The silly asses!" said Smythe of the Shell. "All very well tarring a

prefect—serve him jolly well right! But what silly asses to get bagged!" "It's not really like Jimmy Silver!" Tommy Dodd remarked to his chums, Cook and Doyle. "Carthew's a cad; but smothering a chap with tar is rather too thick. And what chumps! Lettin' him hear their voices, you know, and recognise them! Just like Classical chaps!" "Oh, just!" agreed the other two Moderns.

And both Houses at Rookwood went in to breakfast in a state of great excitement. One expulsion in the school was rare enough to cause a sensation; four in one day was catastrophic. Rookwood, from the Sixth Form to the Second, could talk about nothing else.

The 4th Chapter. Up to Morn!

"Careful, for goodness sake!" "Mind what you're up to, Morn!" Lattrey and Gower spoke together in low, anxious tones. It was after breakfast, and the two black sheep had got Valentine Mornington by himself in a quiet corner of the quad.

Morn was smiling jeeringly.

"What's the trouble?" he asked. "Well, you're such an uncertain blighter," said Gower uneasily.

"We backed you up last night—" "Shush!" whispered Lattrey, with an uneasy glance round. "For good-

voices belonged to that gang—of course, he would think of them first of all. They were up against him, and Lovell has been yellin' out what he was goin' to do."

Gower eyed Morn very dubiously. "I hate to let those chaps get the chopper for nothin'," he said. "I don't like the fellows; but it's thick—it's too thick. But, of course, we've got to take care of ourselves first."

"Our precious selves!" chuckled Mornington.

"Well, we can't be bunked, I suppose. But—but it's rotten! I—I wish we'd never laid a finger on Carthew."

"Too late, old scout!" smiled Mornington. "You don't feel inclined to own up, to save the jolly old innocent parties?"

Gower almost gasped.

"You idiot, Morn! That's just what I was afraid of—that you'd get some potty idea like that into your head! A fellow never knows how to take you!"

"For goodness sake, Morn—" breathed Lattrey.

Cyril Peele laughed.

"Leave Morn alone," he said. "Morn doesn't want to be bunked, any more than we do, and, with Jimmy Silver gone, he's got a good chance of gettin' in as captain of the Fourth. This is a bit unexpected, but it doesn't work out so badly from our point of view."

Gower and Lattrey panted, and Peele's cynical coolness suddenly forsook him. The three glared at Mornington in sheer terror.

"You—you rotter!" hissed Peele. "We backed you up. You don't dare to give us away!"

"Morn!" gasped Gower.

"You wouldn't?" panted Lattrey. Mornington shrugged his shoulders.

"Pull yourselves together!" he said scornfully. "Anybody seein' your faces now would jolly soon guess what's worryin' you! I'm not givin' you away. I had to get level with Carthew for smackin' my head, and I've done it; but I'm not seein' Jimmy Silver booted for it. If it all comes out, I sha'n't mention your names. I led you into it, and I'm the man to stand the racket!"

"Oh!" gasped Gower.

"If the Head gets hold of the ringleader he won't want to sift Rookwood for the others," yawned Mornington. "You'll be safe if you don't give yourselves away by goin' round lookin' like frightened chickens."

"You're goin' to own up?" breathed Peele.

"I haven't said so."

"You said—"

"I said I'd own up and take the gruel rather than land it on another chap, and so I would!" sneered Mornington. "That's where we differ, you see. I don't happen to be a

said Erroll, in deep distress. "The Head must be satisfied, or he wouldn't go so far. He takes Carthew's word. But—but, I can't believe that Carthew would lie in such an awfully serious matter. But was he mistaken? Morn, old man, I thought last night that you had been up to something—against Carthew—"

"And you think so still more this morning?" grinned the dandy of the Fourth.

"I can't help it, Morn. If I'm wrong, I'm sorry. But—but—"

Erroll searched his chum's mocking face in deep distress.

"Give it a name!" smiled Morn. "You believe that I handled Carthew last night with the help of Peele & Co., and that I ought to own up and take the sack instead of those merchants now roostin' in the jolly old punishment-room?"

"If you did it, Morn, you ought to own up," said Erroll earnestly.

"Little me for the long jump, what?" said Mornington banteringly. Erroll caught his breath.

"I suppose it would come to that. The Head would never forgive such an outrage. He couldn't. He would be bound to expel you. But—but—"

"Wouldn't you miss me, old top?" "You know I would. I don't suppose you understand what a blow it would be to me, Morn. But there is such a thing as honour, such a thing as common decency. Morn, if you did it you can't let Jimmy Silver and his friends suffer for it."

"Can't I?"

"Morn!"

"Fancy me, up before the beak, ownin' up like a good little Georgie!" chuckled Mornington.

"Fancy me goin' home by the mornin' train and my kind old guardian meetin' me on the doorstep at home—the jolly old guardian who can't stand me even in the hols—greetin' me in the middle of the term! What a prospect!"

"You knew the risk you were taking, Morn, when you played the awful fool like this last night."

"My dear chap, there was no risk. I'm in no danger so long as I don't open my mouth too wide."

"You can't keep silent."

"Dear man!" said Morn. Erroll drew a hard breath.

"Morn, Bulkeley of the Sixth is to take those fellows to the station at Coombe when we go into the Form-room for first lesson," he said. "You can't let them go. You can't!"

"How well you know me, old top!" yawned Mornington. "Only pullin' your simple old leg, old bean. They're not goin'."

"You're going to own up?"

"Not little me!"

"Then how—"

"I'm goin' to see Carthew," smiled Mornington. "Carthew's a tough customer—a hard old nut to crack, but I'm goin' to appeal to his tender feelin's. I can be eloquent when I like."

"I'm afraid that's not much use," said Erroll, with a sigh.

"Oh, you never can tell. I'll tell you what, Erroll. You sneak up to the punishment-room and tell those chaps, through the keyhole, that it's all serene. May as well relieve their minds. It is all serene so far as they're concerned, you know. It's up to little me."

Mornington went into the House, leaving his chum deep in troubled thought.

The 5th Chapter. The Whip Hand.

Bulkeley of the Sixth stopped at the door of Carthew's study in the Sixth Form passage and glanced in. Mark Carthew was there, sorting out books for class, and he glanced round and smiled in a sneering way at the sight of the Rookwood captain's troubled face. George Bulkeley was booked for the task of taking four expelled juniors to the railway-station, and it was a task he disliked extremely; and, moreover, Bulkeley was not quite satisfied in his mind. To question the Head's decision was impossible even for the head prefect and captain of the school. But Bulkeley was troubled and for that reason he had dropped in to speak to Carthew before it was too late.

"Just off?" asked Carthew, with a grin. "You'll get out of some of the Greek, Bulkeley. You're the lucky man. If you like, and if you can fix it with the Head, I'll take the fags to the station."

"I want to speak about that, Carthew," said the Rookwood

(Continued on page 48.)



A STARTLING APPARITION! Dr. Chisholm stared at the open doorway. It was impossible to get rid of Janet; the terrified girl was clinging to the Head for protection, quite convulsively, and still screaming. "What—who—who—" stuttered the Head as a startling figure appeared in the doorway. A black face—black as the ace of spades—glared into the study. For a second the Head was petrified. Janet shrieked. "Keep him away! Save me!" "Who—what—who are you?" shouted the Head.

ness sake, don't jaw about it; it's a sacking matter."

"Morn won't jaw!" broke in Cyril Peele, with a shrug of the shoulders. "It's the sack for him if he does, you duffers."

"Well, it's rather thick those chaps gettin' it in the neck," mumbled Gower. "I never expected anythin' of the kind, or I'm dashed if I'd have had a hand in it! Carthew's a rotter, and I was glad to down him; but—but Morn said it was all safe."

"So it was all safe!" yawned Valentine Mornington carelessly. "Can you see any danger now?"

"No—not so long as we keep it dark, of course."

"We're keepin' it dark," said Peele, with a laugh. "We're not likely to change places with Jimmy Silver and his gang."

"It's thick, though," muttered Gower. "I say, Carthew was lyn' when he said he recognised their voices. How could he, when it was us—"

"Hush!" whispered Lattrey. Mornington laughed.

"Carthew jumped" to the conclusion that it was that gang," he remarked. "He felt quite certain of it, and invented evidence to suit."

"Well, I wouldn't have thought that even of Carthew!"

"Dash it all, he couldn't have recognised voices at all. We only whispered a few words, and he was in a blue funk all the time," said Peele. "I dare say he fancies the

"You awful rotter!" said Mornington.

"What?"

"Precious seedy crew, aren't you?" said Mornington, surveying the three with a curling lip. "Frightened out of your wits, and ready to let other chaps get the chopper? You're worried because you think I mayn't be such a worm as to let them get it in the neck, when they've done nothin'. Well, I can tell you that I'm not standin' by and seein' Jimmy Silver bunked from Rookwood for somethin' that I've done."

"That's so!" agreed Lattrey. And Cyril Peele nodded assent.

Valentine Mornington walked away towards the House, with a thoughtful pucker in his brow. He came on Erroll in the quadrangle; he knew that his chum was seeking him, and he knew the meaning of the dark and sombre expression on Erroll's face.

"Well, old man?" said Mornington lightly.

"Morn," said Erroll earnestly, "I can't help believing that you know something about this—this affair of Carthew. The other day he smacked your face, and you were brooding over it. I was afraid you were thinking of something rash—and then you joined up with Peele & Co. last night. Look here, Morn—"

"Well!" said Mornington mockingly, as his chum paused.

"Those four fellows are bunked,"

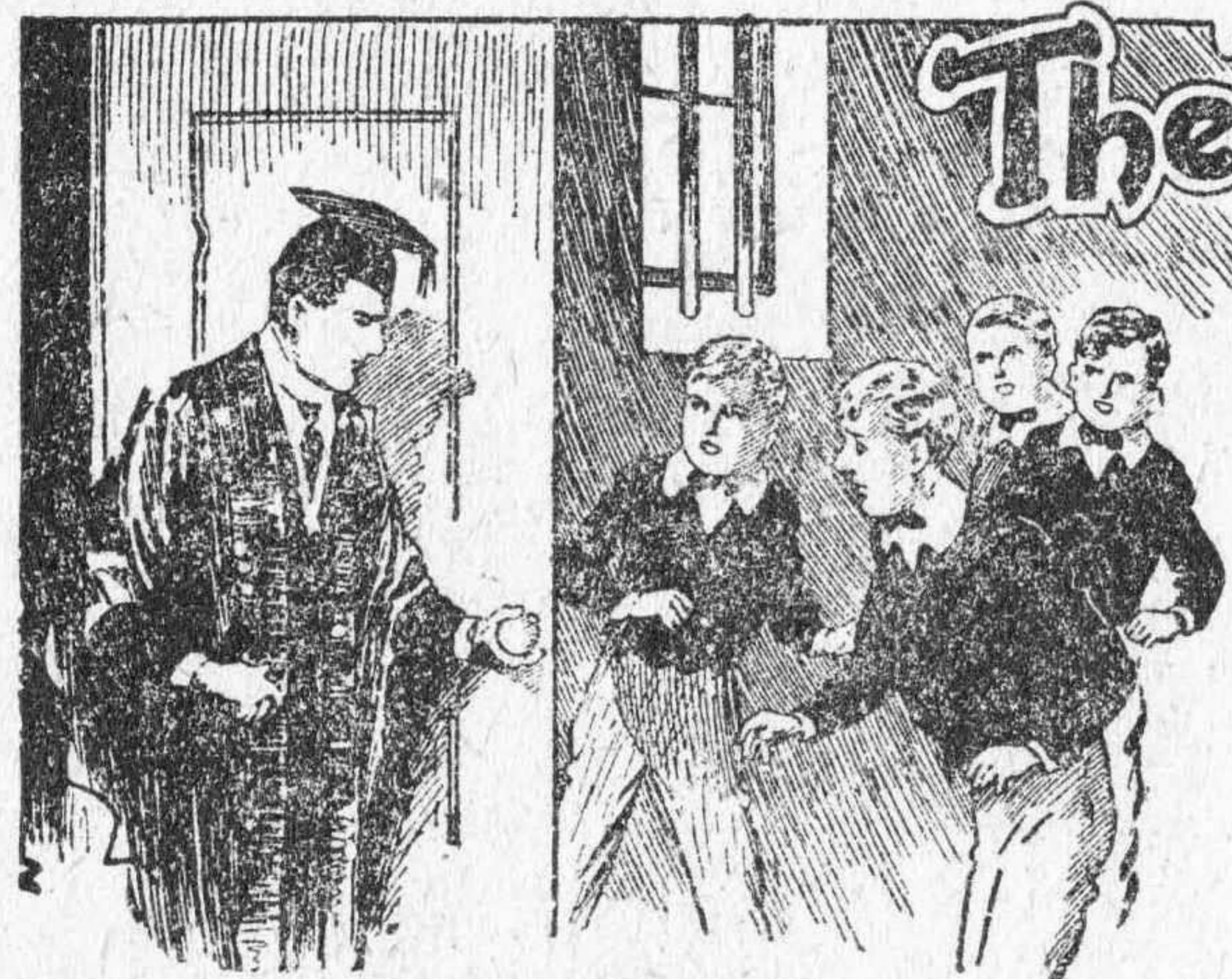
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The Whip Hand!

(Continued from page 39.)

captain abruptly. "Look here. Are you quite sure? I suppose you know what a serious matter this is for those fags?"

"Oh, quite!" smiled Carthew. "They should have thought of that when they collared me last night and tarred me."

"Are you quite sure they did?"

"Oh, quite!"

"They deny it."

"They would," smiled Carthew.

"Lying young rascals!"

"Well, I've never found them lying young rascals," said the captain of Rookwood. "I suppose the Head knows what he's about. But I don't feel easy about this, Carthew. It seems that it was all done in the dark. You saw nothing. It's only a question of recognising their voices."

Carthew laughed.

"I know what you're getting at," he said. "You know I've never liked those cheeky young sweeps, and you think I've taken a chance of downing them. Well, you can keep your opinion, George Bulkeley. I think I'm capable of a dirty trick like that, think so and be hanged to you!"

"I don't think so," said Bulkeley quietly. "I couldn't! I know that you believe they did it. But you've got a lot of enemies among the Lower boys, Carthew. You can't imagine that you're popular among the fags, I suppose? What I want you to think out, before it's too late, is this. Is it possible you've made a mistake and fixed this on the wrong parties?"

"No, it isn't."

"If you're quite sure, the matter ends," said Bulkeley.

"I'm quite sure."

And the Rookwood captain went. Carthew bit his lip uneasily as he stood staring at the open doorway, a book in his hand. He was feeling disquieted. Carthew had a conscience, though it was a fairly tough one. He would not have hesitated to stretch a point or two to deliver up a fellow he disliked to a flogging. But the "sack" was so terribly serious a thing that Carthew would never have dreamed of going to that length unjustly. Even Carthew would not have cared to have such a thing on his conscience. Bulkeley's words had awakened a vague uneasiness in his heart.

He was certain—absolutely certain—that it was Jimmy Silver & Co. who had handled him the previous night. But he could not deny to himself that he had exaggerated, at least, in his statement that he had recognised their voices. He had been sure that the whispering voices were those of the Co. But in his heart of hearts he knew that he was only sure of that because he had been sure of their identity before they had whispered at all.

He had, in fact, borne false witness, and that was a discomfiting reflection—at least, if there was the remotest possibility that a mistake had been made. After all, it was true that he had other enemies. There was Putty of the Fourth, whom he had licked; Peele & Co., whom he had reported for smoking in their study; Conroy and Pons, to whom he had recently given lines without due cause; Mornington, whose ears he had boxed; fellows in the Shell, too, whom he had bullied. Plenty of juniors at Rookwood undoubtedly would have liked to handle Carthew had they dared to risk it.

"Oh, rot!" muttered Carthew, at

last. He threw aside the uneasy misgiving Bulkeley's words had caused him.

The fellows were guilty right enough. He had stretched a point to prove guilt otherwise not provable, that was all.

There was a tap at the half-open door, and Valentine Mornington stepped into the study. Carthew gave him a frown.

"What the thump do you want, Mornington?"

"Mayn't a fellow speak?"

"Well, what is it?" snapped Carthew.

"About Jimmy Silver and his pals," said Mornington cheerily. "It seems that they're bunked and goin' this mornin'. I don't want them to go, Carthew."

"You young ass! It's got nothing to do with you or with me either, now."

"That's where you're in error, old bean. It's got lots. I want you to get them out of this."

"What?"

"You're the man that can do it, you know," said Morny. "I want you to. I'm makin' an appeal to your tender heart, Carthew."

Carthew looked at him blackly and stepped to the table on which his ashplant lay. He picked up the cane.

"Bend over!"

Mornington smiled.

"Cut it out, old bean!" he said cheerily. "Bendin' over will be a thing of the past—a happy memory of Rookwood—if I go this mornin'."

Carthew stared at him, cane in hand.

"If you go! What do you mean? You're not sacked, I suppose?"

"Bound to be for attackin' a giddy prefect and tyin' him up and tarrin' him," drawled Mornington.

Carthew started violently.

"What?"

"Guessin' it," smiled Morny.

"You?" gasped Carthew.

"Little me!"

Carthew laid the cane on the table. His hand was trembling. That cool, nonchalant confession took him utterly by surprise, but his alarm was as great as his surprise. He stared blankly at Mornington. It was the reckless Morny who had done it, and Carthew felt that he might have guessed as much had he

not been obsessed by his dislike of Jimmy Silver & Co. The wild escapade was much more in keeping with Morny's reckless character than with Jimmy Silver's. And he had told the Head—he had borne evidence—that he had recognised Jimmy Silver's voice, the voices of his comrades, and on that evidence the Fistical Four were "sacked." It came into Carthew's mind in a flash what position he would be placed in by Mornington's confession.

Morny stood with his hands in his pockets, regarding the bully of the Sixth with an amused smile.

"Startled you, what?" he asked.

"You young scoundrel!"

"You smacked my head, you know," explained Morny. "You're rather given to smackin' fellows' heads, Carthew. But there's some heads you mustn't smack. Mine's one of them. I had to make you sorry for it, and I did. I never expected anythin' to come out. How was I to guess that you'd jump on Jimmy Silver and tell lies to fix it on him? A fellow couldn't be expected to foresee all that, could he?"

Carthew breathed hard.

"If you hadn't jumped on them I should have said nothin', of course. I'm not anxious for the long jump. But as matters stand I'm bound to speak out. Can't see another fellow sacked for what I've done."

"Who helped you?" panted Carthew.

"There were four—"

"I'm keepin' that dark. Can't give pals away. But it wasn't any of that jolly old party now roostin' in the punishment-room. I was leader, anyhow, and the Head will have to be satisfied with sackin' the ringleader. Sorry I can't oblige you by bendin' over, Carthew. I shall get enough from the Head, you know."

Mornington moved towards the door.

"Stop!" panted Carthew.

Morny glanced back.

"Well, what?"

"It's a lie—a trick to get those fellows off!"

Morny laughed.

"It's the sack for me when I own up to the Head. I don't think Dr. Chisholm will believe that I'm gettin' the chopper for nothin'. You can tell him so if you like."

Carthew gnawed his lip. He knew that the Head would believe Morny's confession. It was true on the face of it. A fellow would not ask for the "sack" if he could help it. The Head would know that Mornington was only owning up because it was the sole thing that a fellow with a rag of honour could do in the circumstances.

And then—then what became of Carthew's statement that he had recognised the voices of the Fistical Four when he was attacked? Even Carthew did not believe now that Jimmy Silver & Co. had had a hand in the affair. Morny had found help among his own friends. That was fairly clear. Probably they would be found out when Mornington had confessed. And Carthew

had caused the Head to sentence four innocent fellows to expulsion by a statement that was now palpably a false one. He had borne false witness, and the falsity would be brought home to him beyond the shadow of a doubt.

His mind whirled as he thought of it. Morny's confession was ruin to him. Certainly he would lose his prefectship; that was certain; and it was likely enough that he would be sent away from Rookwood himself.

Mornington watched him, easily reading the tormented thoughts in the mind of the Sixth Form bully.

"Look here, Mornington"—Carthew's voice was husky—"don't be a fool! I'll let you off for what you've done. Keep your mouth shut!"

"I'll mention that suggestion of yours to the Head," grinned Morny. Carthew shivered.

"You really mean to go to the Head, asking for the sack?"

"Unless those fellows are got off some other way."

"Oh!"

"Not much more time to lose," said Mornington airily. "Look here, Carthew. Let's come down to brass tacks. You've lied about those fellows, and the Head will jump on you like thunder when he knows you've made him sack four fellows for nothin'. I shall get kicked out of Rookwood, and I fancy you won't be long in followin' in my footsteps. There's time still. If you speak before I do you can still make out that it was a mistake. Make out anythin' you jolly well like so long as Jimmy Silver and his pals are cleared. But you've got no time to lose. After all, even you can't want to see them bunked, now that you know they had nothin' to do with it. I dare say you want to see me bunked for tarrin' you."

Mornington chuckled. "But you'll have to deny yourself that pleasure, old bean, unless you want to be bunked along with me."

Carthew gritted his teeth.

"Hold your tongue and leave it to me," he muttered.

"With pleasure, old scout."

Carthew of the Sixth hurried from the study.

The 6th Chapter. All Clear!

Richard Dalton unlocked the door of the punishment-room.

Four juniors rose to their feet and looked at him.

"I have good news for you, my boys," said Mr. Dalton gravely and kindly. "I am sorry—deeply sorry—that you have been put to such a trial. You will not leave Rookwood, you will go to your Form-room as usual."

"Oh!" ejaculated Arthur Edward Lovell.

Four faces brightened up wonderfully.

"But what—" asked Jimmy Silver.

"It seems that Carthew has reflected since making his statement to

the Head last night," said Mr. Dalton quietly. "He has seen Dr. Chisholm this morning and informed him that upon reflection he fears that he made a mistake in supposing he recognised your voices last night when he was attacked in the quadrangle by some unknown persons."

"My hat!" ejaculated Raby.

"It appears that he felt quite certain at the time. But reflection has convinced him that he could not be sure that he was able to recognise whispering voices," said Mr. Dalton. "He has told the Head so, in time to prevent a possible injustice being done. He goes further and states that he is personally prepared to take your word that you had no hand in the attack on him."

"Oh!"

"The Head is naturally very much surprised and very much annoyed at Carthew's recklessness," said Mr. Dalton. "But it is very fortunate that he has had the moral courage to speak out and admit his mistake. Naturally, you boys must feel some resentment. But you must remember that it must have required considerable moral courage on Carthew's part to admit himself in the wrong so amply. The matter is now over so far as you boys are concerned, and I cannot say how glad and relieved I am. You will now go to your Form-room."

And the Fistical Four went, quite dazed by this sudden turn of fortune.

There was quite a sensation in the Fourth Form room when Jimmy Silver & Co. walked in and took their places as usual.

Mornington gave them a nod and a grin. Erroll's face was bright and smiling. His faith in his chum had been justified. Even Peele & Co. were pleased.

It was not till after class that Jimmy Silver & Co. learned from Morny what had happened.

"You see, you never were in any danger, really," drawled Morny. "I should have owned up like a shot if it had been needed. As it happens it isn't."

"But you?" said Jimmy Silver.

"Now Carthew knows—"

Mornington grinned cheerily.

"Now Carthew knows, he's keepin' the giddy knowledge to himself," he said. "I fancy he's rather keen to let the whole matter drop. He doesn't want me to go up before the beak and tell the whole jolly story of my interview with him. The Head's pretty ratty with him now, but he believes that Carthew owned up to a mistake of his own accord. If he knew that I frightened Carthew into doin' it, it would be a gee-gee of quite another colour."

"My hat, that's so!" agreed Lovell. "Carthew will have to take it lying down, for his own sake."

"Just that," smiled Mornington. "My idea is that Carthew will let the whole thing drop like a hot brick. And the sooner the better. If it all comes out, it will come out what I said to him before he saw the Beak this mornin', and the dear man doesn't want that—not a little bit. I fancy we've heard the end of the story."

Mornington was right.

Carthew of the Sixth was only too anxious to let the whole matter drop and to let nothing more be heard of it. By whose hand the bully of the Sixth had been tarred in the wood-shed remained undiscovered by the Head. But most of the Classical Fourth knew, and they chuckled over it. The bully of the Sixth indemnified himself, so far as he could, by making things generally as warm as he could for Valentine Mornington and Jimmy Silver & Co. But he found those cheery youths, as usual, pretty well able to take care of themselves, though they were glad when the summer holidays came along and they had a long rest from their old enemy.

THE END.

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