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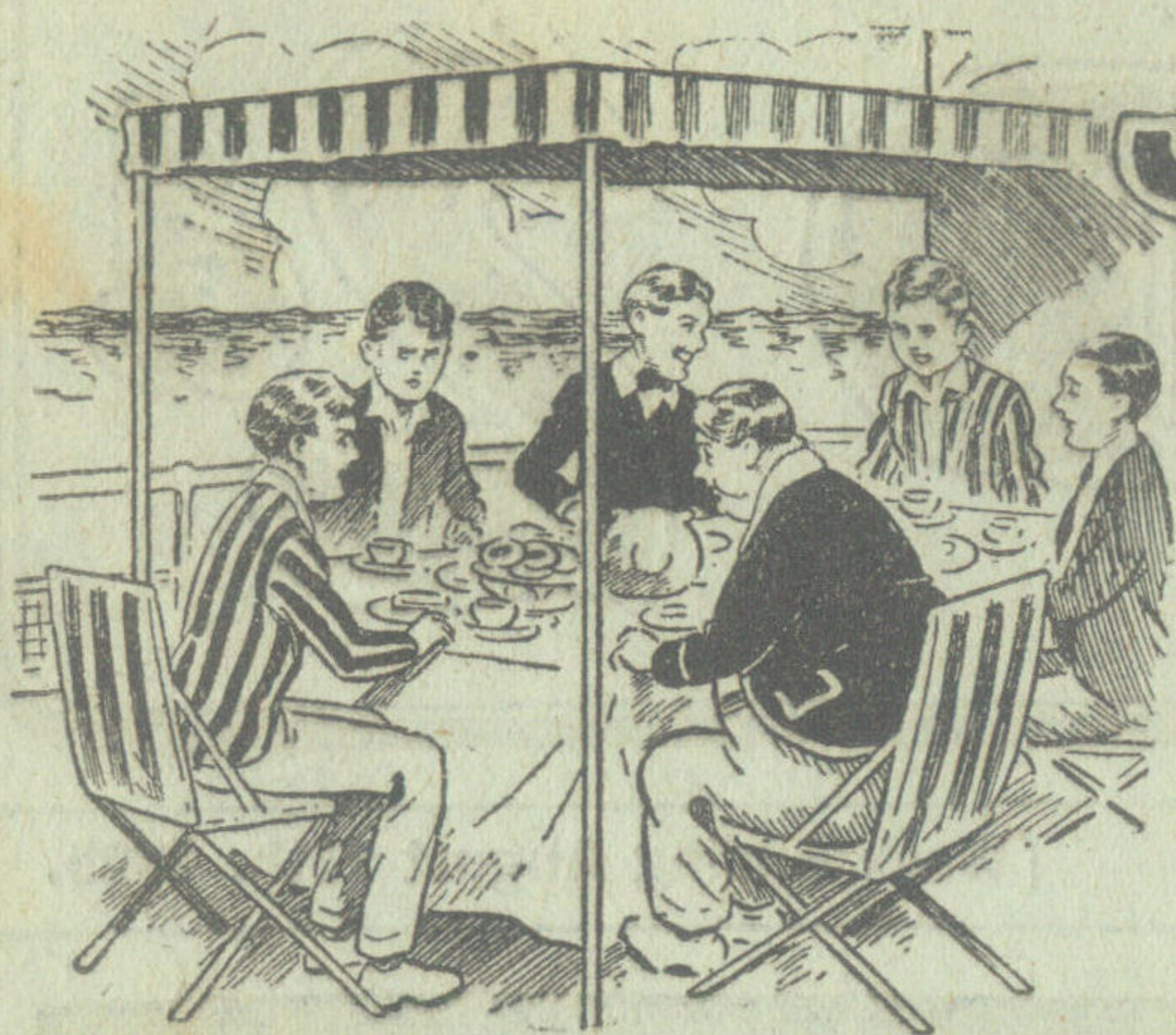
[Week Ending August 15th, 1925.



ARTHUR EDWARD LOVELL GETS IT IN THE NECK!

(An exciting incident from the grand holiday story of the chums of Rookwood School in this issue.)

HERE'S ANOTHER RIPPING STORY OF THE CHUMS OF ROOKWOOD SCHOOL ON HOLIDAY!



Jimmy Silver & Co. At Sea!

By OWEN CONQUEST.

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

Lovell gets into trouble when the Fistical
Four go ashore at Appledore!

The 1st Chapter. Exciting!

"Westward Ho,
With a rumbelow!"
Arthur Edward Lovell, of the Rookwood Fourth, lifted up his voice in song.

At all events, he lifted up his voice. Jimmy Silver and Raby and Newcome did not seem to realise that he was singing. They looked at him inquiringly.

It was a sudden outburst of tune-fulness—more or less—on Lovell's part. The scene inspired him.

The yacht, Silver Cloud, was ranging up to Appledore, in the west of glorious Devon, with the white town of Bideford ahead, and rocky Clovelly on the starboard quarter.

Lundy Island speckled the sea astern, amid the Atlantic rollers. It was a glorious August day. Jimmy Silver & Co. were looking merry and bright, as they stood on the deck of the Silver Cloud, and gazed at the hills, and the sea, and the Appledore shipping. Even Tubby Muffin looked merry and bright, though it was past dinner-time, and not yet tea-time.

Smythe and Howard and Tracy of the Rookwood Shell, condescended to glance at the scenery, keeping on their own side of the little deck, not being on the best of terms with the Fourth-Formers of Rookwood. Adolphus Smythe told his ratty pals that it was "toppin'"; a remark that ought to have made any Devonian who heard it proud of himself and his county. Praise from Adolphus was praise indeed.

The white town of Bideford, and glimpses of Taw and Torridge, naturally recalled to the minds of the Rookwood juniors thoughts of ancient seafaring days, of Elizabethan mariners and rovers of the Spanish Main. Hence Lovell's tuneful outburst.

"Westward Ho,
And hurrah for the Spanish Main,
oh!"

"What's a rumbelow?" asked Newcome.

Lovell disdained to answer that question.

"Westward Ho—" he recommended.

"We're not going westward!" remarked Raby. "Unless Captain Muffin's compass is awry, we're going east."

"Fathead!" said Lovell.

"What's the course, captain?" called out Newcome.

"East by south!" answered Tubby Muffin's uncle, the skipper of the Silver Cloud. "We're going into Appledore to pick up some more passengers there."

"There you are, Lovell!" said Raby. "It's Eastward Ho! with a rumbelow—whatever a rumbelow may be."

"What's a rumbelow, captain?" inquired Newcome.

Captain Muffin stared.

"Eh? I suppose a rum below is much the same as a rum on deck," he answered. "Not that there's any rum on board this craft."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"If you've got any rum below, Lovell—" began Jimmy Silver, with an air of great seriousness.

"I haven't, you silly owl!" hooted Lovell.

"I should imagine you had, by what you've been saying," said Raby.

"You're talking about Westward-ho, when we're going east by south. As for the Spanish Main, that's nowhere in these parts."

"You unpoetical ass!" howled Lovell. "It's an old chanty—"

"A which?"

"A sea song, you duffer. I was singing—"

"Oh, were you?" exclaimed Raby, in great surprise. "My mistake—of course I couldn't guess that."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You silly chump—"

"It's all right, you fellows," said Raby. "Lovell hasn't a pain or anything, and he hasn't any rum below. He was only singing."

Arthur Edward Lovell breathed hard.

It entertained Arthur Edward sometimes to pull the legs of his comrades. But somehow he did not like his own leg being pulled. It was a very special leg, as it were, not to be pulled.

"You're a lot of silly, unpoetical, frabjous asses," he said. "A set of silly, burbling jabberwocks, if you ask me."

"Nobody asked you, sir, she said!" sang Newcome softly.

"These waters are historic," said Lovell. "They used to sail from here in their jolly old wooden tubs to fight the Spaniards. I should think even you dunderheads would feel sort of romantic, sailing the historic waters of Bideford Bay."

"We're not sailing—we're steaming," murmured Raby.

"And this is Barnstaple Bay, isn't it?" asked Newcome.

"It's Bideford Bay, fathead."

"It's Barnstaple Bay on the map," remarked Raby. "But I suppose Lovell is above maps."

"It's Bideford Bay!" hooted Lovell.

"Barnstaple Bay—"

"Bideford Bay—"

"Barnstaple—"

"Bideford—"

"What jolly old bay is this, captain?" called out Jimmy Silver. "Is it Bideford or Barnstaple?"

"Both," answered Captain Muffin.

"You can call it whichever you like."

"You pays your money and you takes your choice!" grinned Raby.

"I'll call it Barnstaple Bay, if you don't mind, Lovell."

"It's what a crass, fatheaded, dunderheaded, burbling sort of bandersnatch would do," said Lovell.

"I call it Bideford Bay. If you chaps had any poetry about you, you'd feel thrilled at sailing the waters of Bideford Bay, where the men of Devon went down to the sea in ships—"

"Naturally they went in ships. They couldn't have gone in hansom cabs," argued Raby.

A steamer coming out of Appledore hooted her siren with a loud, but far from romantic or poetical hoot, before Lovell could reply. The sunny air was filled with sound, not musical.

"Dry up, you chaps," said Raby. "Lovell's singing again!"

As a matter of fact, Arthur Edward Lovell had opened his mouth for another edition of his chanty, when the steamer's siren forestalled him. But really Raby could not have made such a mistake; Lovell's voice was not perhaps tuneful, but it was an exaggeration to compare it with the steamer's siren.

Jimmy Silver and Newcome chuckled; the expression on Arthur Edward's face quite entertained them.

The yell of the siren died away in a throaty howl.

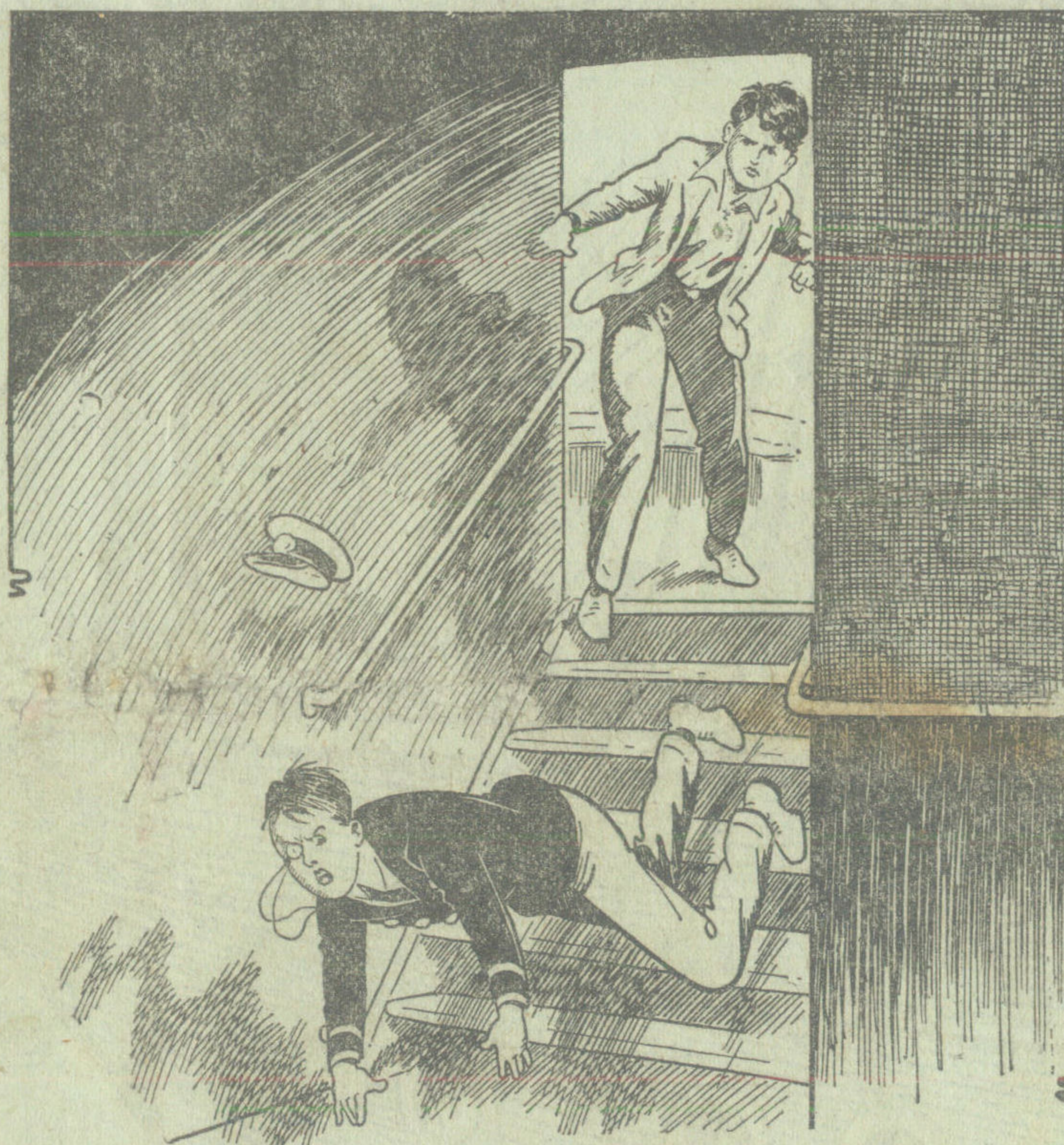
"Go on, Lovell!" said Raby encouragingly.

"What?"

"Go it! I didn't catch any of the words that time—go it!"

Arthur Edward Lovell did not answer. He seemed to feel that it

was a time for action, not for words. He made a jump at George Raby. At the same moment the yacht gave one of her familiar rolls on the swell from the passing big steamer. The yacht rolled, and Lovell rolled, and instead of grasping Raby, and executing summary vengeance upon that over-facetious youth, Lovell went



HELPED ON BY LOVELL! Lovell overtook Adolphus Smythe just as he was vanishing, and let out a vengeful boot. "Yaroooh!" Crash! Bump! Adolphus went down the cabin steps without counting them.

bowling along a slanting deck, head-long.

Fortunately—or unfortunately, according to the point of view—Smythe & Co. were in the way. They saved Lovell from bowling right across the Silver Cloud. He came against their legs with a crash, and there was a sudden outbreak of fiendish yells as Smythe and Howard and Tracy mixed themselves up with Arthur Edward Lovell on the deck.

"Oh gad!"

"Yaroooh!"

"You clumsy ass! Ow-wow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Jimmy Silver & Co.

Lovell sat up dazedly.

He hardly knew what had happened, it had happened so suddenly. He sat up dizzily on something that wriggled and howled.

"Gerroff! Ow!"

"Oh!" gasped Lovell.

"Gerroff my face, you villain!" shrieked Adolphus Smythe.

Howard and Tracy staggered up. Adolphus Smythe would have been glad to follow their example; but with Arthur Edward Lovell sitting on his face it was impossible. Adolphus howled muffled howls, and clutched at Lovell and wriggled and struggled.

"Oh!" gasped Lovell again. He was too dazed to move quickly.

Then he moved all of a sudden.

If Smythe's face had suddenly become red-hot, Arthur Edward Lovell could not have leaped from it with greater suddenness and celerity.

"Ow! Wow! Yow!" he roared, and leaped.

"What on earth—" began Jimmy Silver.

"Ow! Wow!"

"What's the matter with you?" yelled Jimmy.

"Ow! Wow! I'm bitten! Ow!"

"Oh, my hat! Ha, ha, ha!"

"Whoo-hoooh—ow! That villain Smythe! I—I—I—I—I'm bitten! I'm hurt! I'll—I'll—"

Arthur Edward Lovell, quite forgetful of the fact that Raby was the original object of his wrath, rushed at Adolphus Smythe. That elegant youth was grinning now; but as Lovell rushed at him he ceased to grin, and bolted for the companion-way. Lovell bolted after him.

"Hi! Stop that game!" shouted Captain Muffin.

"Stop it, Lovell!"

"Chuck it!"

"Lovell, old man—"

Arthur Edward Lovell did not heed.

Smythe of the Shell bolted down the cabin steps like a rabbit seeking his burrow with a dog behind. Lovell overtook him just as he was vanishing, and let out a vengeful boot.

"Yaroooh!"

Crash!

Bump!

Adolphus Smythe went down the steps without counting them.

on fighting terms with some others of his paying guests. Captain Muffin expected them, however, to keep the peace on board his yacht, as he would have expected the same in his boarding-house on shore. He had a right to expect that much, of course. Sometimes, however, his expectations were not fulfilled.

Smythe & Co. simply couldn't help putting on airs of superior swank; and Lovell's temper, at least, could not always be relied upon. So the Rookwooders' life on the ocean wave was occasionally enlivened by Rookwood rags, just as if the juniors had been back in the old school.

Adolphus, indeed, had appealed to the skipper more than once to keep those "dashed fags" in better order.

But Captain Muffin, in point of fact, liked Jimmy Silver & Co. much better than he liked the lofty Adolphus, and his opinion was that Smythe asked for all he got, and needed a little more.

Adolphus regarded his skipper as a "dashed boarding-house keeper"; and, in fact, so he was. But even dashed boarding-house keepers have their personal feelings; and Captain Muffin, in yachting rig and a yachting cap, liked to fancy himself a sea-going mariner; and, excepting when bills were due, he liked to keep the boarding-house keeper part of the business in the background. Jimmy Silver & Co., being accommodating, good-natured fellows, played up, as it were, willing to give the captain his head; and Valentine Mornington, though a rather lofty youth, conducted himself like an unpaying, rather than a paying, guest. But that was not good enough for Adolphus Smythe. His view was that he was paying the man, and that that fact had better be kept in the man's mind.

So Adolphus was not exactly popular, and had he not been a "paying" guest, his stay on the Silver Cloud would not have been a long one. But Captain Muffin was earning his daily bread by running the Silver Cloud, and he could not afford to quarrel with his bread and butter.

Nevertheless, he derived a certain amount of satisfaction from seeing Adolphus' lofty swank sometimes sat upon heavily by the Fourth Form fellows, and Adolphus' bitter complaints fell on deaf ears.

Adolphus & Co. had intended to go up to Bideford to give that ancient town a patronising glance or two; but they decided not when Jimmy Silver & Co. started in that direction with Morny.

"Keep clear of those dashed fags," said Adolphus.

"Oh, yes, rather!" assented Howard.

"Rotten, havin' that crew on the yacht at all!" said Tracy. "What we really ought to do is to give 'em a lickin' all round!"

"I've thought of that," said Adolphus. "But—"

"But—" murmured Howard.

"A fellow can't mix up in scraps with Lower School fags," said Smythe. "A fellow has his dignity to consider."

"Oh, quite!" murmured Howard. Perhaps he wondered whether Smythe's dignity was not already a little impaired by being kicked down the hatchway. But Adolphus was "standing" that yachting holiday to his pals, so Howard did not give utterance to his reflections.

"Besides, we can't lick them," said Tracy. "May as well own up; they're too hefty for us."

Adolphus frowned.

It was the fact, and the nutty party all knew it. Nevertheless, Adolphus did not like to acknowledge it.

"Nothin' of the kind," he said.

"Well, anyhow, we don't want to scrap with them," said Tracy. "But I've got an idea. That chap Ponsonby, of Highcliffe, is rather hefty in the scrappin' line, I believe. He's a friend of ours, and we're pickin' him up here with his friends. I'd like to see him handle Lovell."

Adolphus face brightened.

"Oh, good!" he exclaimed. "I don't want to soil my own hands on the fellow, but, really, I should like to see that ruffian Lovell jolly well licked! You see, it's what he wants."

"He does!" agreed Howard.

"And it's what he jolly well is goin' to get, if I can work it with the Highcliffe chaps!" muttered Tracy.

And that happy prospect quite cheered up Smythe & Co. as they strolled about Appledore that afternoon.

The 2nd Chapter. Weary Willy to the Rescue!

Arthur Edward Lovell had quite recovered his good-humour when later in the golden afternoon the chums of the Rookwood Fourth strolled into Bideford. Whether Adolphus Smythe had recovered his, the chums of the Fourth did not know; neither did they stop to inquire. A kick more or less for Adolphus was a matter of small moment in the estimation of the Fistical Four of Rookwood, though doubtless it loomed large in Adolphus' own eyes.

Smythe and Howard and Tracy loafed about Appledore when the Fourth-Formers walked up to Bideford. The two Rookwood parties on the Silver Cloud generally kept out of one another's way when they could. No doubt Captain Muffin, when he started running a yacht for the summer with "paying guests" on board, had not foreseen that some of his paying guests might be

Arthur Edward Lovell, quite unconscious of the kind arrangements the Shell fellows were planning for his behoof, walked up to Bideford with his chums in great good-humour. He had a book under his arm, which his comrades had observed to be a pocket edition of "Westward Ho!"

"We'll sit down somewhere, and I'll read this out to you fellows," said Lovell generously.

"Will you?" murmured Raby. "It's a ripping book," said Lovell. "Of course, it's long-winded in places, and rather nabby-pamby in parts, but the stuff about the Spanish galleons and so on is tip-top. I'll read it out presently."

"We've read it," murmured Newcome.

"It will do you good to hear it again in this historic place where some of it happened, or was supposed to happen," said Lovell. "There's a jolly old inn at Bideford, and they'll let you see the room where What's-his-name and the other chaps met and founded the Brotherhood of the Thingummy. We'll have a pleasant hour or two while I read it out."

Jimmy Silver & Co. smiled. It was just like Lovell to make a kind arrangement like that for his chums—he had a kind heart.

But, as a matter of fact, the Rookwood juniors intended to walk about the old Devonshire town and see what was to be seen, and had no desire whatever to sit down in some quiet corner while Arthur Edward read books to them.

However, they made no remark. They were not without hopes that Lovell might drop the book and lose it before they reached Bideford.

They walked cheerily into the town, and Lovell stopped at an old stone wall in sight of the ancient Ship Inn. "Sit down here," he said.

"May as well take a rest," agreed Jimmy Silver.

The Fistical Four sat in a cheery row on the stone wall, and three of them gazed with interest on the ancient town, with its old houses and steep streets.

The fourth member of the Co. opened the book.

"Where shall I begin?" he asked.

"Hem!"

"Better begin at the beginning—what?" asked Lovell.

"Why not try the end?" murmured Raby.

"Eh? How can I begin at the end?" asked Lovell. "There wouldn't be anything to read then, you ass, would there?"

"Quite so!"

Lovell began to glare.

"If you fellows don't want me to read this out to you—" he began.

Jimmy Silver sighed. Arthur Edward Lovell was a good chap, and his comrades liked him, and would not have taken their holiday without him for any consideration. But undoubtedly he was trying at times.

Mornington had not sat down. He strolled on with his hands in his pockets, oblivious to the fascinations of "Westward-Ho!" read aloud by Arthur Edward Lovell.

"Morny!" called out Lovell.

Mornington did not turn his head.

"Morny!"

No reply.

"Is that chap deaf?" exclaimed Lovell testily.

Mornington seemed deaf; or perhaps he was too deeply interested in the sights of Bideford to hear Lovell. He strolled onward.

Lovell laid the book on the stone wall and slipped down. He sprinted after Morny to call him back. He did not want the dandy of the Fourth to miss the treat.

Jimmy Silver & Co. exchanged a glance. They could not help grinning. It really amazed them that Lovell did not perceive that Morny was fleeing from a bore.

"Shall we chuck it into the river?" asked Raby, with a nod towards the book lying on the old stones.

"Row with Lovell if we do!" grunted Newcome.

Jimmy Silver shook his head.

"Let the old fellow rip," he said.

"He means well."

A dusty gentleman came "mooching" by, and paused as he saw the Rookwood juniors on the wall. He was a tramp from the country, and was evidently considering whether the three cheery juniors were good to "touch" for a few coppers. Doubtless the dusty gentleman was anxious to sample the liquor at the historic Ship.

A sudden idea occurred to Raby—quite a brain-wave. He beckoned to the dusty gentleman, who came up eagerly.

"Sixpence any good to you?" asked Raby.

"Thank you kindly, sir!" said the tramp. "It's a dry day, sir."

"You'll have to earn it."

"Oh!" The dusty gentleman's enthusiasm faded out at once. Obviously the prospect of earning anything had a dismaying effect on him.

"Take that book away and shove it somewhere where it will never be found again, and quick about it!" said Raby. "Here's your tanner."

The tramp looked astonished—as well he might. But he had no objection to earning sixpence on those easy lines.

"You don't want that there book, sir?"

"No; only want to see the last of it!"

"I could get a few coppers for it, sir, if you don't want it."

"Get as many as you can," said Raby. "Take it and clear!"

"Thank you, sir!"

The volume and the sixpence disappeared among the tramp's rags, and the tramp himself disappeared very quickly.

"Saved!" murmured Newcome.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Jimmy Silver & Co. chuckled. But they composed their faces to an expression of proper seriousness as Arthur Edward Lovell came back—without Mornington.

The 3rd Chapter.

"Westward-Ho!" is Missing!

"The silly ass!"
Thus Arthur Edward Lovell.



IN COLLISION! Lovell made a jump at George Raby. At the same moment the yacht gave one of her familiar rolls on the swell from the passing big steamer. The yacht rolled, and Lovell rolled, and, instead of grasping Raby, Lovell went bowling along a slanting deck, headlong. Smythe & Co. were in the way!

"Eh? Who?"

"The crass duffer! Cheeky, too!"

"Who, what, and which?" inquired Newcome.

"That dummy Mornington!" said Lovell.

"I thought he couldn't hear me when I called him, and I had to follow him as far as Bridge Street. And what do you think the cheeky ass said?"

"Hem!"

"He said that if I was going to bore anybody, I could bore my own pals and let him off!" said Lovell wrathfully.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"What are you cackling at?" roared Lovell. "I don't see anything funny in Morny's cheek and bad manners."

"Nunno! Of—of course not!" said Jimmy Silver hastily. "Hem!"

"Perhaps you fellows don't want me to read 'Westward-Ho!' to you," said Lovell morosely. "Perhaps you'd rather go rooting about staring at houses and things, rather than have your minds improved. If that's what you want, say so!"

"We're waiting for you to begin," said Raby meekly.

"Ready and waiting," said Newcome.

"Go it, old fellow!" said Jimmy Silver encouragingly. "Begin at the beginning, and let's have all you can give us till it's time to walk down to Appledore."

Lovell looked mollified.

"Oh, all right!" he said. "I gave

three-and-six for that book, and I bought it specially to read to you fellows when we came along here. I knew it would interest you, though you've read it before. We can put in a good couple of hours at it, anyhow."

If Jimmy Silver & Co. had felt any remorse for handing over the volume to the dusty gentleman, that would have banished it. To sit on the stone wall for two hours while Lovell improved their minds was a little too much—as it was their only day at Bideford.

They sat with unconscious faces while Lovell glanced round for the volume. He looked puzzled.

"I say, where's that book?"

"What book?" asked Raby innocently.

"'Westward-Ho!'" said Lovell.

"Didn't I lay it down here when I went after that ass Morny?"

"Did you?"

"Well, I'm sure I did," said Lovell. "One of you fellows sitting on it?"

"No; we haven't shifted since you went," said Jimmy Silver.

"Sure you left it here?" asked Newcome, his features composed to the gravity of an owl.

"Well, yes, I'm sure," said Lovell. "I couldn't have shoved it into my pocket without noticing it—not very well."

"You ran off in rather a hurry," said Raby. "Feel in your pockets."

"Well, the book's rather bulky for

as a rule; but he could not help feeling that these circumstances were extremely suspicious.

"Well?" said Raby.

"If this is a lark you just own up!" grunted Lovell. "Have you fellows done anything with my book?"

"Haven't touched it, old man!"

"Haven't touched it, Lovell!"

"Not with a little finger!" said Jimmy Silver.

"Honest injun?" asked Lovell.

"Honest injun."

It was absolutely certain that the three juniors had not touched the book. They had been very careful indeed not to touch it. Only the dusty gentleman had touched it during their brief transaction with him.

"Well, it's jolly mysterious!" said Lovell, quite puzzled. "Makes a fellow almost believe in spooks and things. The dashed book seems to have been spirited away!"

"Oh, my hat!"

Jimmy Silver slipped from the wall.

"Well, let's take a walk round," he said. "No good staying here, as—

as Lovell's not going to read to us after all."

"That's so," agreed Raby.

"Really, old man, you might have been a bit more careful with that book, after saying you were going to read it to us."

"What a chap Lovell is for losing things!" remarked Newcome.

Lovell snorted.

"Then he had it!" he growled. "You fellows were half-asleep, of course, and he pinched it right under your eyes. Let's get on; no good hanging about here doing nothing."

"Let's!" assented Lovell's comrades.

And they got on.

Jimmy Silver & Co. had quite an agreeable stroll that sunny afternoon, round about the ancient town of Bideford. They had lost an opportunity of having their minds improved, but did not seem to miss it very much. They strolled by the old streets, they looked at the old Ship, they surveyed the gleaming Torridge and the shining Taw, and the great estuary rolling seaward. And while they enjoyed that pleasant saunter, three members of the Co. felt that the dusty gentleman had earned his sixpence and really wished that they had made it a shilling.

When the August sun was sinking to the wide Atlantic in a blaze of crimson and gold, they turned their steps in the direction of Appledore to return to the yacht.

And then the unexpected happened.

They sighted Mornington at a little distance, and three members of the Co. started to join him. Lovell did not.

"Come on, Lovell!" called out Jimmy Silver. "There's Morny!"

"Blow Morny!" was Lovell's answer.

"Oh, don't be an ass, old chap! We're all walking back to Appledore together," said the captain of the Fourth. "Come on!"

"Rats!"

"Well, hang on a minute while we fetch him," said Jimmy.

"I'll wait just one minute!" grunted Lovell.

Jimmy and Raby and Newcome crossed over to gather up Morny on the other side of the street. They were coming back with him to rejoin Lovell, when a terrific din smote their ears.

Arthur Edward Lovell was mixed up with a dusty tramp, with arms and legs wildly flying.

"Oh, my hat!" exclaimed Raby.

"Lovell in a row—as usual! Can't leave him for a minute without trouble!"

The juniors ran up.

"Leggo, you young cub!" the dusty man was roaring. "Leggo! Pitching into a bloke for nothink! 'And off!"

"Oh, crumbs!" ejaculated Jimmy Silver.

He recognised the dusty gentleman who was struggling in the hefty grasp of Arthur Edward Lovell. So did his comrades.

"Lend a hand here!" panted Lovell.

"But what—"

"I've found the thief!"

"The—the—the what?"

"The rotter who stole my book!" gasped Lovell. "Actually offered it to me—offered to sell it to me for ninepence—my own book, you know. Lend a hand; we'll hand him over to the police."

"Great pip!"

Jimmy Silver & Co. stared blankly.

There was a heavy bump as the dusty gentleman came down on the ground. And Arthur Edward Lovell sat on him to make sure of him.

The 4th Chapter. A Rift in the Lute!

Lovell panted.

It was a triumph for him, and he was greatly satisfied. He sat on the tramp's chest and pinned him down, and the hapless man wriggled under him uncomfortably, with many ejaculations.

"Got him!" panted Lovell.

"Oh, dear!"

Jimmy Silver & Co. gazed on in dismay. Two or three people stopped to stare at the scene, and the Co. could only hope that a policeman would not arrive.

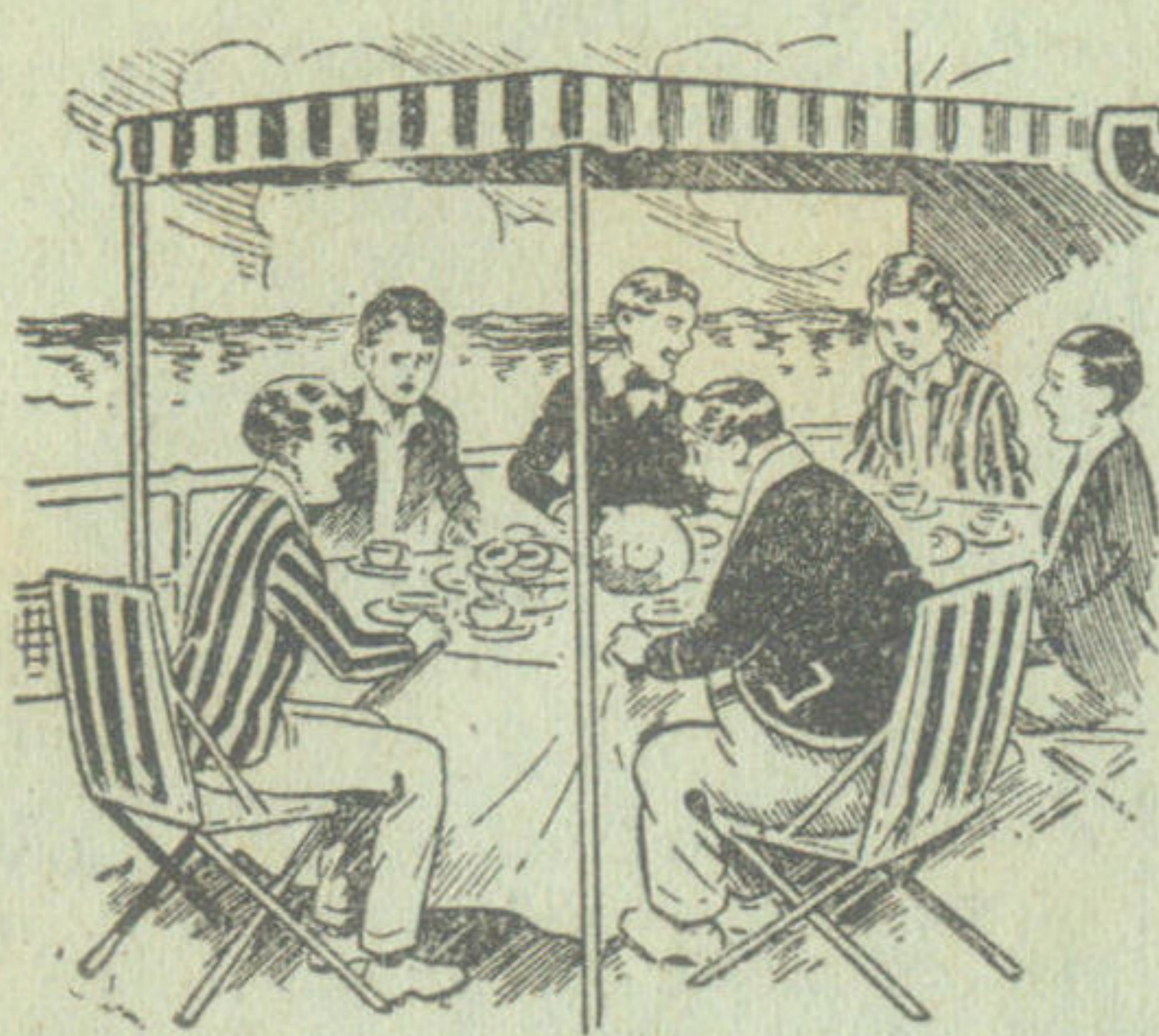
It is said that it is always the unexpected that happens, and it had happened in this case with a vengeance. The chums of Rookwood had naturally never expected to see the dusty gentleman again, or Lovell's volume, either. Both had turned up.

"Westward-Ho!" lay on the ground a few feet from the hapless man pinned down under Lovell's weight. Arthur Edward released one hand and pointed to it triumphantly.

"There it is!" he gasped.

"Oh, dear!"

(Continued overleaf.)



Jimmy Silver & Co. At Sea!

(Continued from previous page.)

"Pick it up, Jimmy. It's my book right enough; it's got my initials on it. This fellow pinched it under your very eyes."

"Oh!"

"Come up and offered to sell it to me!" gasped Lovell. "Fancy that! Offered it to me for ninepence!"

"Oh!"

"Will you let a bloke up?" demanded the tramp sulphurously. "Gerroff of a cove's chest, blow yer! I ain't pinched nothink! I offered you that there book fair and square for ninepence, and cheap at the price! Blooming historical work for them as likes sich. If you don't want it, say so, and I'll offer it elsewhere. Get orf of a bloke's chest, you!"

"Oh crumbs!" murmured Newcome.

It was unexpected, yet there was nothing really surprising in it. Doubtless the tramp had been offering that book to everyone he came on that afternoon who looked like a stranger in the town seeing the sights. It was certainly cheap at ninepence. He had offered it to Lovell in all good faith, thinking that the well-dressed schoolboy might take it off his hands. The sudden outbreak on the part of Arthur Edward had simply astounded the tramp.

"It's my book!" howled Lovell. "You sneaking rotter, it's my book, and it was stolen this afternoon—see?"

"It ain't, and it wasn't!" howled the dusty gentleman. "Get off a cove's chest, I say! That there book was give me by some young gents, and they give me a tanner along with it. Get off of a cove's chest, I keep on telling you!"

The dusty gentleman squirmed, and saw Jimmy Silver & Co.

"Why, there they are!" he howled. "They're the young gents what give me the blooming book, and they'll tell you so!"

"What!" shrieked Lovell. "You tell this cove that you give me the book, young gents!" exclaimed the dusty gentleman. "You tell him, and make him get off a bloke's chest!"

Lovell stared at his chums. Valentine Mornington burst into a roar of laughter. But the Co. did not laugh. The expression on Lovell's face showed that the matter was serious.

"You—you—you gave him the book, you fellows?" hooted Lovell. "Hem!"

"They give it to me, they did, and a tanner!" howled the dusty gentleman. "Jest wanted me to take it away and get a few coppers for it if I could. You tell 'im so, young gents, and make him get off a cove's chest! I'll have the law on him!"

Lovell detached himself from the dusty gentleman's chest. He realised now that his valuable volume had not been "pinched" by that ragged wanderer.

The dusty gentleman staggered up. He was excited, and he was wrathful, as was not to be wondered at in the circumstances.

"So you gave him the book?" roared Lovell.

"Hem!"

"You told me you hadn't touched it!"

"We didn't touch it, you silly ass!" growled Raby. "I gave the man a tanner to pick it up and walk off with it!"

"You—you—you—" gasped Lovell.

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Mornington.

"Oh, cheese it, Morny!" said Jimmy Silver. "Here, my man, here's your ninepence, if that's what you want! You clear! Here's your book, Lovell!"

"I've been handled, I 'ave!" said the dusty gentleman indignantly. "I've been called names, I 'ave! There's a law in this country. I can tell you! I ain't being 'andled for nothink, and don't you think it! Knockin' a bloke hover, and a sittin' on a bloke's chest!"

The dusty gentleman was wrathful.

But a half-crown slipped into his grubby hand caused his wrath to evaporate. He grinned, touched his battered hat, and shambled away. The Rookwooders were glad to see the last of him, at all events. Unfortunately, they could not see the last of Lovell.

Lovell picked up his volume and shoved it into a pocket, with a set expression on his face. His comrades knew that expression. It meant that Lovell was taking up an attitude of offended dignity, as he regarded it; which in the vernacular was called "the sulks."

Quite a little crowd had been attracted by the exciting scene. The entertainment being over, the crowd dispersed. Three very well-dressed fellows, who looked like schoolboys on holiday, were among them, and they stared at the Rookwooders with supercilious smiles. One of them made a remark to the others, quite audible to Jimmy Silver & Co.

"What a crew! I've seen that lot before. They belong to Rookwood."

offended. The discovery of the true story of the mysterious disappearance of "Westward-Ho!" had put up Lovell's back to a very serious extent. He walked with his comrades; but he made it quite clear by his manner that he was with them but not of them, so to speak.

Valentine Mornington was smiling. He seemed to consider the whole affair in the light of an entertainment. But the chums of the end study did not smile. There was a rift in the lute now, and they all looked glum as they walked down to Appledore and went on board the Silver Cloud. There was only one solace for this unhappy occurrence. Lovell was not likely to corner his chums again to read "Westward-Ho!" to them. That, at least, was so much to the good.

The 5th Chapter. Dignified!

Tea was served on the deck of the Silver Cloud, under a big, green-striped awning that kept off the blaze of the August sun. It was extremely pleasant under the shade of the awning, and the tea was ample and good. Likewise, it was improved by some items the Rookwooders had brought off from the shore for themselves. Jimmy Silver & Co., though they had not expected to be "paying guests" when they first arrived on board the Silver Cloud, were enjoying their

"Jam, old man?" inquired Jimmy Silver.

"No, thanks!"

"Try these banana fritters, old chap!" said Newcome.

"I do not care for banana fritters."

"You've scoffed them in the study at Rookwood!"

"Indeed!"

"Oh, don't 'indeed' me, you ass!" said Newcome, reddening.

"Hem!" murmured Jimmy Silver.

Lovell gave a shrug of the shoulders, which nearly brought him the banana fritters in a shower. Fortunately, Newcome restrained his annoyance.

Smythe and Howard and Tracy exchanged grins. They found something amusing in the obvious trouble going on in the ranks of the Fistical Four.

Smythe & Co. were talking among themselves on the subject of the Highcliffe fellows, who were to come aboard that evening. Apparently Smythe was very proud of his Highcliffe pals. He expressed a fear that they might be surprised at some of the company they were expected to keep on board the Silver Cloud. This remark was intended to "draw" the Fourth-Formers; but Jimmy Silver & Co. did not heed Smythe. It appeared from Smythe's talk that Ponsoby of Highcliffe was nephew to a lord, and first cousin to a baronet, circumstances which apparently made him a very attractive youth.

As they continued to chatter, Lovell rose to his feet and closed his volume with a bang like a pistol shot.

He put it under his arm and went below, evidently to continue his reading, in his state-room, out of the sound of puerile chatter.

"Lovell's got 'em!" grinned Raby.

"Silly ass!" commented Newcome.

"He won't be long below," chuckled Mornington. "Too jolly hot and stuffy."

Morny was right.

In ten minutes or so Arthur Edward Lovell reappeared on deck, having had quite enough, by that time, of a tiny state-room on a hot August evening. He was frowning.

Jimmy Silver & Co. suppressed their smiles. Lovell, in a state of offended dignity, had his entertaining side. But obviously it would have made matters worse had his chums revealed the fact that they saw anything of an entertaining nature in his lofty attitude of polite distance.

Lovell did not sit down in his deck-chair again. He stepped to the side, and waved his hand to a boatman who had brought his boat near the yacht in the hope of picking up a customer for a row on the bay.

The brown-faced boatman, in his blue jersey, ranged up alongside the Silver Cloud at once.

"Boat, sir?"

"Yes," said Lovell.

"Good idea!" said Jimmy Silver heartily. "We'll have a row across to Clovelly—what? Topping place." "Good!" said Raby. "Lovell can tell us all about Clovelly. You were saying something about it this morning, old chap. The High Street is some queer sort of a rocky staircase, or something—"

"We'll go across with Lovell and see it," assented Newcome.

It was the olive-branch once more. But Arthur Edward Lovell was not in the mood for olive-branches.

He gave the three a glance of lofty coldness, which might have been borrowed from Adolphus Smythe.

"You fellows want to see Clovelly?" he asked.

"Oh, yes, rather!"

"Then I advise you to hire a boat and go there," said Lovell calmly.

"I'm not going across to Clovelly."

"Anywhere you like, old fellow," said Jimmy Silver amicably. "Let's go out on the bay."

"Bideford Bay!" added Raby gracefully. But this confession, that it was Bideford Bay and not Barnstaple Bay, did not disarm Lovell. The sun was going down, and it seemed destined to go down upon the wrath of Arthur Edward Lovell.

"Yes, a ripping weeze!"

"Go, by all means," said Lovell, with frigid politeness. "I'm not going for a row on the bay."

"Where the thump are you going, then?" grunted Raby. He was getting a little tired of offering olive-branches that were not accepted.

"I'm going in a boat to read, where I sha'n't be interrupted by a lot of chattering," explained Lovell.

"Oh!"

"I don't happen to want any company," added Lovell. "But if I did, I shouldn't want fellows who might be bored by me, you know."

"Oh, don't be an ass, old chap," said Newcome.

Lovell did not condescend to heed that advice.

He prepared to jump into the boat below the rail, and he was about to ask one of his chums to hold the book for him while he jumped, to toss it down to him afterwards, when he remembered his dignity. He held out the volume to Tubby Muffin.

"Hold this a minute, Muffin," he said.

"Certainly, old chap."

Reginald Muffin took the volume.

"Chuck it down to me in the boat," said Lovell.

"Right-ho!"

Lovell jumped down, as the boatman fended off from the yacht with his oar. He landed safely in the boat, his impact setting it rocking violently. Lovell almost sat down, but he contrived to keep his balance.

With the eyes of his estranged chums on him from the rail above, he would not have rolled over for worlds. Fortunately, he kept his footing, and stood up, though, with the boat rocking and plunging wildly, it was not easy.

He waved his hand to Tubby.

"Chuck me the book, Muffin."

"Here you are, old chap."

Tubby Muffin "chucked" the book to Lovell.

In spite of the important considerations of personal dignity involved, Lovell would certainly have done well to ask one of his chums to throw the book to him when he was in the

(Continued on page 112.)



LOVELL IN THE WARS! A terrific din suddenly smote Jimmy Silver & Co.'s ears. Arthur Edward Lovell was mixed up with a dusty tramp, with arms and legs wildly flying. "Oh, my hat!" exclaimed Raby. "Lovell in a row—as usual! Can't leave him for a minute without trouble!"

They play cricket with our school. What a crew!"

Jimmy Silver glanced round, and recognised Ponsoby, Gadsby, and Monson, of Highcliffe School. It was Ponsoby who had spoken.

"What a crew!" repeated Ponsoby deliberately, as he caught Jimmy Silver's glance. Evidently the nutty young gentleman from Highcliffe liked to make himself unpleasant, even to a fellow he hardly knew.

And then the three Highcliffians turned their backs and walked away; none too soon, for they were in danger of being collared and rolled on the ground; which doubtless would have intensified their impression of Jimmy Silver & Co. as a "crew."

"They're the Highcliffe cads!" observed Raby, with an extremely inimical glance after the elegant trio. "I've a jolly good mind—"

"Oh, let them rip!" said Jimmy. "There's been enough rowing for one afternoon!"

"They're coming on the Silver Cloud, you know," said Mornington. "They don't seem to know that we're their jolly old fellow-voyagers. They're pally with Smythe."

"Let's get back," said Jimmy.

"Come on, Lovell!"

Lovell did not answer.

He walked along with his chums towards Appledore but he did not speak, and his face was grim. Evidently his dignity was seriously

cruise, and on the present occasion they would have been exceedingly merry and bright, but for the unhappy difference that had arisen.

Lovell was sulky, and on reflection his comrades admitted that he had some reason for being sulky. He had meant well. It is said that the road to a very unpleasant place is paved with good intentions. Still, a fellow deserved credit for his good intentions. The Co. really regretted the incident of the mysteriously disappearing volume. They wished now, not exactly that they hadn't handed it over to the dusty gentleman, but that they had kicked the dusty gentleman for turning up again with it so inopportunistically.

They were willing to say anything to propitiate the justly-offended Arthur Edward. But, like the prophet of old, Arthur Edward Lovell considered that he did well to be angry. He adopted a manner of frigid politeness towards his chums, to which they would have preferred any amount of slanging in the familiar old style of the Fourth Form passage at Rookwood.

"Shall I pass the cake, Lovell?" asked Raby, to break the ice.

"Thank you, no!" said Lovell.

ANSWERS
Every Saturday—PRICE 2:

And Adolphus repeated that he was afraid that his friend Cecil Ponsoby would be rather surprised, indeed, rather shocked, when he found what sort of a crowd there was on the yacht. And still the Fourth-Formers declined to be drawn, and did not heed Adolphus, being too much concerned about their private affairs.

After tea, Lovell disposed himself in a deckchair, and produced a volume. It was the unfortunate volume which had caused so much trouble in Bideford that afternoon. He sat down with an air of reserve and dignity.

"Lovell, old man," said Raby, "read it out!"

Really, it was an heroic effort at placation. But Arthur Edward was not to be placated, even by heroic efforts.

He gave Raby a look.

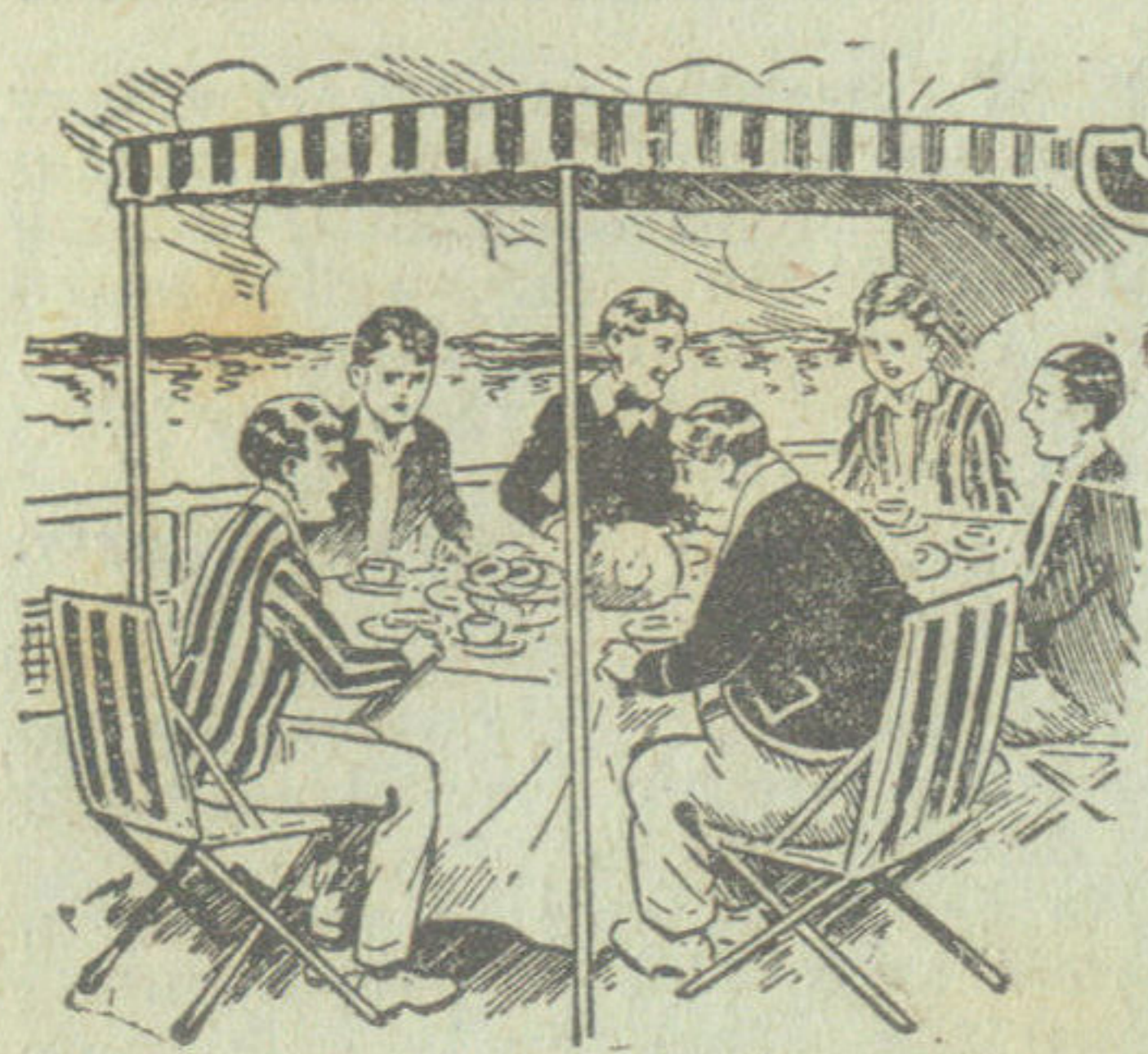
"I'm afraid I should bore you," he answered politely.

"Well, I don't mind, old chap," said Raby.

It was a rather unfortunate way of putting it. Lovell frowned, and fixed his eyes on his volume.

Jimmy Silver & Co. grouped themselves by the rail and looked towards the town. Tubby Muffin joined them, shiny and happy from an ample tea.

The juniors chatted, receiving several marked glances from Arthur Edward Lovell, as hints that their idle chatter interfered with his peaceful perusal of his book.



Jimmy Silver & Co. At Sea!

By OWEN CONQUEST.

(Continued from page 100.)

boat. For Tubby Muffin, though very obliging, was at the best but a clumsy youth—what the fags at Rookwood would have called "cack-handed."

Tubby threw the volume, intending to land it in Lovell's outspread hands. But, between the rocking of the boat and the "cack-handedness" of Reginald Muffin, the volume did not land in Lovell's hand—it landed on his chin, and smote him with a terrific smite.

"Ow!" Lovell went over backwards as if a cannon-ball instead of an interesting volume had reached him.

Splash! Jimmy Silver & Co.'s startled eyes had a brief view of Lovell's legs vanishing on the farther side of the rocking boat. Then he disappeared from view.

"Oh!" ejaculated Tubby Muffin. "I say, Lovell's gone over! I say, isn't he jolly clumsy!"

The sudden fall of Arthur Edward Lovell had set the boat rocking so violently that the boatman had plenty to do to keep it from swamping. It rocked and plunged and banged on the hull of the Silver Cloud and shipped more than a bucketful of water.

Jimmy Silver & Co. stood staring at the sea. Lovell's head came up half a dozen yards from the boat. His hat was gone, and was floating away; his precious volume was under the water, settling down deeper and deeper to a final resting-place in the mud at the bottom of the bay. Lovell was swimming—he was a good swimmer—and the expression on his face indicated that he was in a frightfully bad temper.

"Want any help, old man?" called out Jimmy Silver. Jimmy was quite ready to dive in if Lovell wanted help, clothes and all.

Lovell, treading water, glared up at him.

"You silly owl!"

"Eh?"

"Think I can't swim!"

"Oh!"

"Go and eat coke!"

"Hem!"

Lovell swam to the boat, and clutched the gunwale, and dragged himself in. He sat and streamed with water. He had gone in looking quite natty and nobby in white duck. He came out looking drenched

and dripping, with his clothes clinging to him. The boatman blinked at him with a half-suppressed grin.

"Get back to the yacht," growled Lovell. Obstinate as he was, Lovell was not disposed to go on his boating trip in his present state.

"Want your 'at, sir?"

"Eh?"

"Want your 'at?" The boatman pointed with his oar at Lovell's hat, which was floating off as if bound for Lundy Island on an independent voyage of its own.

"Oh, yes! Get after it."

"Hold on, Lovell!" called out Jimmy Silver. "Come on board, old man, and I'll go after your hat."

"Go and eat coke!"

"Look here, you ass, you'd better get changed—"

"Rats!"

The boatman pulled after the hat. Lovell steered for it, sitting in squelching water. The yacht's company watched over the rail. Lovell's chums, and Morny, and Tubby Muffin, and Smythe & Co., and Captain Muffin, and Mr. Punter, the mate, and several of the hands, and the steward, all seemed interested together in watching Lovell's chase of the hat.

It had seemed to Arthur Edward quite an easy task to run the floating straw-hat down and recapture it. But it turned out quite otherwise. The straw-hat, though getting a little water-logged, still floated merrily, dancing on the swell. The boatman, of course, had his back to it, and had to depend on Lovell's steering.

"There it is! That's it! Stop!" exclaimed Lovell.

But the boat overshot the mark, and rushed by the hat, sending it spinning away on the swell.

"Got it, sir?"

"No!" snapped Lovell breathlessly.

"Try again, sir," said the man encouragingly. "If you knowed how to steer a boat, sir, it would come easier."

Lovell made no answer to that, his feelings were too deep for words. He steered again for the dancing hat. His cheeks were growing crimson; he did not glance towards the yacht, but he was perfectly aware of an extensive grin that extended the whole length of the crowded rail.

The boat ranged up to the hat again, and Lovell clutched, and missed it by a fraction. In fact, he did not quite miss it; his finger-tips touched it, and gave it a new impetus. The boat shot onward before he could make a second clutch.

"Got it this time?"
"No!" yelled Lovell.
"Oh, my eye!" said the boatman.
"Ha, ha, ha!" came from the direction of the Silver Cloud. The grin had grown into audible merriment.

Lovell set his teeth. He was bound to capture that hat now, if he chased it till the sun went down to its bed in the distant west. From two or three other craft, interested eyes were watching him; he even had an impression that people were staring at him from ashore in Appledore. With set teeth and a flaming face, Lovell went after the hat again.

Again the boat ranged by it, and Lovell made a desperate clutch. Something had to happen this time.

Something did happen. He grasped the hat, but the successful effort was too much for him. He overbalanced, and shot over the gunwale. There was a howl from the Silver Cloud as Lovell took his header.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, my eye!" said the boatman again.

He laid in his oar, and grasped Lovell as that luckless youth's crimson face came out of the water. He dragged Arthur Edward in; but the hat was no longer in Lovell's grasp. It was gone for ever: Lovell had taken it under with him, and it did not come up again.

"Now, where's that blooming 'at?" said the boatman.

Lovell gasped.

"Never mind the hat—get me on board."

"Yes, sir."

With a crimson face, the expression on which was absolutely Hunchish, Lovell clambered up the side of the Silver Cloud. Jimmy Silver & Co. assumed all the gravity they could muster. Smythe & Co. were howling with merriment; but Lovell's chums felt that it was up to them to be serious—if possible.

"Hard cheese, old man!" gasped Jimmy.

"Too bad, old fellow—"

Lovell brushed by his comrades and stamped down below. He did not reappear on deck. As he changed his clothes in his state-room, he could hear many sounds of merriment from the deck; and from the deck the Rookwooders could hear sounds which hinted that Lovell was "chucking" things about in his state-room as he sorted out dry clothes.

It was not till a couple of hours later that Lovell's chums saw him again. And then he passed them with a frozen, frigid stare, as if they were fellows he did not know, and did not want to know. There was a rift in the lute with a vengeance now.

THE END.

(It's great—"Rivals of the Silver Cloud!" Next Monday's stunning yachting adventure of Jimmy Silver & Co. of Rookwood School. Don't miss it on any account, chums! Order your 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.

MAGNETIC PRIZES.

Our Companion Paper, the "Magnet," must be seen by everybody this week. It is giving away four Stand-Up, Cut-Out, Real Action Photographs of those Famous Cricketers, Hobbs, Sutcliffe, Parkin, and Hendren. The Prize List in the Famous Cricketers' Competition is tremendous. First Prize, Ten Shillings a Week for a Year; Second Prize, Five Shillings a Week for a Year; and there are forty other fascinating awards. Get this week's "Magnet," now on sale, and don't on your life be out of the running for a good thing! Ten shillings a week for twelve months means a start in life worth having.

OUR TOPPING PROGRAMME.

Next Monday's "bill" is long, varied, and doubly interesting. "Rivals of the Silver Cloud" is the Rookwood yarn. Jimmy Silver & Co. have a giddy surprise. The unexpected happens, and unlooked-for visitors drop into tea at sea. "On Forbidden Ground" is a great story of the Glory Hole Gang, full of liveliness and adventure, with plenty of pep and pepper. There will be another grand instalment of "The Three Gold Feathers" and a ditto of "Knights of the Wheel," while Arthur S. Hardy romps in a winner with "Stumped." Our staunch counsellor "Scoutmaster" supplies the best Talk to His Troop yet, for he has chosen as his subject, "Through England by Canal." It is to be done, and the trip will be read about with intense interest, or I am greatly in error. By the way, kindly note that the "Holiday Annual" should be ordered now. It comes out on September 1st, a day formerly best noted for partridges, and also because it was the date on which King William the First sneezed at a particularly bad bit of news that was wireless to him from Pevensy. Some of the histories omit this atishoo, more shame to them! But, of course, in these times September One is the day of the H.A.

TWO WEEKS ON!

In one fortnight—what? Why, "Goalie's" opening onslaught on the subject of the season's footer.

"Goalie" is always going one better, generally two! This season he will add two more forecasts to his useful programme of vaticinations. These two will be the Third Northern and the Third Southern. He has further a A 1 features in store.

EARLY DAYS.

It seems over soon to get talking about what's going to happen in the winter, though "Goalie" is busy about the coming footer show. See the note above. A correspondent up north at Chorley asks me for tips about recitations. He has to mug up a few pieces to spout at a concert in the early autumn. He should ask his bookseller for a cheap reciter. He cannot do better than Kipling. I wonder if he has read "Pook of Pook's Hill" all about the fuzzy, red-headed Picts and the Romans. Then, of course, Macaulay is hard to beat. The "Lays of Ancient Rome" have the real ring: "Lars Porsenna of Clusium, by the nine gods he swore, That the proud house of Tarquin should suffer wrong no more!"

Old Porsenna was biting a bit more off the loaf than was seemly. He had left out of count Horatio Cocles, Herminius, Spurius, Lartius, and the rest of the bunch; they were good at bridge—bridge keeping, anyway; they had the pick of the trumps. I am sure my Chorley chum will find not the least difficulty in striking a good patch in the land of lyrics.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

That's me, in a manner of speaking, and giving all freedom to grammar. Here's a cheery letter about limericks. "There was a young man of Bath, who grew as thin as a lath." The fellow who made up this perfectly astounding couplet asks me why we do not have some merry limericks in the Boys' FRIEND. For one thing, it is not the season. Making up limericks is hot work. It may promote the circulation in the piping times of winter, but take warning by that Bath chap! Perhaps, however, it was the moist warmth of Bath City which made him meagre—not that one is going to pity thin people. They have far less to carry, and the sight of their nice, spare figures is a constant lesson to individuals built on the generous lines of Tubby Muffin, whose avoirdupois is excessive.

KNOCKING UP A SHED.

This is not a hobby column. I sometimes wish it were. But what, after all, are half-warmed fishes—I should say half-formed wishes? Yet, I am bound to give prominence to a reader down at Dundee, where the bonnets and the marmalade jars come from, for he sends me no end of a letter about his hobby, which is carpentering. He is to the manner born, as it were. The right use of a plane, a hammer, nails, and so forth comes to him naturally. He has a shed in his backyard, and, besides doing the house repairs, he makes cupboards, shelves, and whatnot for the neighbours. They pay him, and so they ought. Three cheers for the handy hobbyist. The fellow who makes the useful household accessory often ends up by putting the lid on the box and making his fortune.

TRAVELLERS' TALES.

For the life of me I never could understand how it happened that this term should have slipped into disrepute. Of course, some travellers tell stories unbased on fact, but the majority do not. There are the exceptions, I know. I have a book in my library written about New Guinea by a certain man who declared he had been to that head-hunting country. He gave details which led one to think he knew Papua inside out. But we can leave this misguided, brilliant author alone. I expect he meant well. That brings me, however, to a chat I had with Mr. Duncan Storm the other evening. Mr. Storm leaned back in his chair and told me solid facts about China. He was the man behind the pipe, and he had a lot of fascinating things to say concerning the unknown world of China, also of the untrodden ways of Africa. I am booking more of his experiences for the "Green 'Un." They are not things to miss.

Your Editor.

HOBBS, SUTCLIFFE, PARKIN, HENDREN.

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