

A Complete Story of School Life and Adventure

By OWEN CONQUEST



THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Lovell's Idea !

"I've got an idea !"

Arthur Edward Lovell, of the Classical Fourth at Rookwood, made that announcement impressively.

Lovell had been silent for some minutes, while Jimmy Silver, Raby, and Newcome were deep in discussion. Lovell had evidently been thinking while the other fellows were talking.

It was a matter of some importance that the Fistical Four of Rookwood were considering, nothing less than what was to be done with the afternoon. It was a half-holiday at Rookwood—a sunny summer's afternoon. The Fourth Form were playing the Third at cricket ; but such a match did not require the services of the mighty men of the junior eleven. Jimmy Silver and Co. had willingly left the "fag" match to the lesser lights of the Fourth. And the four chums had met in the end study after dinner to discuss ginger-pop and the programme for the afternoon.

Jimmy Silver favoured a long bike spin ; Raby suggested the river ; Newcome was rather in favour of a visit to Latcham to see the "pictures." Each of the three argued the merits of his own scheme—at the same time—while Arthur Edward Lovell wrinkled his youthful brows in thought, and finally announced that he had an idea.

"You agree with me?" asked Jimmy Silver. "That's two votes for the bikes, you fellows."

"Eh? I didn't hear what you were saying, Jimmy—but I don't agree with you, anyhow."

"Ass!" remarked Jimmy. "You said you had an idea. I might have guessed that you hadn't!"

"The river's ripping," observed Raby. "We can get out a four-oar, and take Tubby Muffin to steer, if you like."

"They've got a new lot of pictures at Latcham," remarked Newcome.

"Oh, bother the pictures!" said Lovell. "We don't want to sit indoors on an afternoon like this!"

"The river——"

"Bless the river! Haven't I said I've got an idea?"

"You've said so!" answered Raby in a sarcastic tone, apparently hinting that in his opinion Arthur Edward Lovell was over-estimating his mental powers.

"Look here, you ass——"

"Well, you look here, fathead!"

"Peace, my infants peace!" said Jimmy Silver soothingly. "If Lovell's got an idea, let's hear it. It's his first——"

"Are you going to dry up while I tell you my idea?" demanded Lovell warmly.

"Go ahead, old chap. We're all ears."

"Hold on a minute," said Raby, interrupting. "Don't say it's a stunt against the Moderns. It's too warm for ragging the Moderns. Besides, Tommy Dodd and his crowd are playing cricket."

"I'm not thinking of Tommy Dodd. Bother Tommy Dodd!"

"Oh, all right. Get on with the washing then!"

Lovell gave a grunt.

Considering that he had spent quite a considerable time thinking out his idea, there was a plentiful lack of appreciation in the end study. Somehow, the Co. did not seem duly impressed by the announcement that Lovell had an idea.

"Well," said Lovell, "there's a new kid coming to Rookwood to-day."

"Is there?" yawned Raby.

"Yes; a new kid for the Fourth Form—Modern side. A relation of Tommy Dodd, I believe."

"Didn't you say something about an idea?" asked Newcome politely.

"I'm coming to that."

"Oh, I see. When do you think you will get to it?" asked Newcome, in a tone of polite and patient inquiry.

"Are you going to listen to me?" roared Lovell.

"We've been listening for a quarter of an hour already, old scout!" Which certainly was an exaggeration on Newcome's part.

"Go it, Lovell, old top!" murmured Jimmy Silver. "Shut up, Newcome. Give Lovell a chance!"

"This new kid——" recommenced Lovell

"Leave him out, and get to the idea!"

"It's about the new kid."

"Oh!"

"He's landing along by the three train at Coombe. Tommy Dodd was going to meet him at the station, but Jimmy asked him to captain the team in the fag match, so he can't go. The new kid will be left to crawl into Rookwood on his own."

"Let him!"

"He's a Modern kid——"

"We've had that," murmured Newcome.

"My idea is——"

"You're getting to the idea?"

"Yes!" roared Lovell.

"Hurray! Go it!"

"My idea," said Lovell, breathing hard, "is this. Suppose we meet young Loring—his name's Loring—at the station——"

"Eh?"

"Suppose we meet him at the station——"

"My only hat!"

"Great Jupiter!"

"You ass!"

The ejaculations of Lovell's chums certainly seemed to hint that they were not greatly taken with Lovell's idea.

"Meet him at the station?" said Jimmy Silver, in a tone more of sorrow than of anger. "Spend a half-holiday—and a ripping afternoon—meeting a new kid at the station—and a blessed Modern kid at that! Is your mind wandering, Lovell?"

"Has he a mind to wander?" murmured Raby.

"I haven't finished yet!" roared Lovell.

"Oh, my only uncle! He hasn't finished yet! I can see how we're going to spend this afternoon," said Newcome, in a tone of resignation. "We're going to sit in this study while Lovell exercises his chin. Is there any more ginger-pop?"

Lovell jumped up.

"You silly asses, I won't tell you, then! I'll ask Mornington to go with me."

"Morny's playing cricket," said Jimmy Silver.

"Conroy, then, or Van Ryn——"

"They're playing cricket, too," grinned Jimmy. "Sit down, old top, and expound."



"Look here——!" bawled Higgs of the Fourth, flinging the study door open. Then three pretty faces dawned on Higgs, and he stuttered and vanished. Higgs, apparently, was the owner of some of the "borrowed" crockery. (See page 249.)

Your old pals are entitled to the refusal of the idea—if any! Get on with the washing.”

“Well, then, my idea is to meet young Loring at the station,” said Lovell. “As a new kid, I don’t suppose he knows much about Rookwood—about the rows between Classicals and Moderns, and all that. We’ll guy him.”

“Oh! You’re not proposing to take him under our wing?”

“No, ass. We’ll guy him—it will be one up against the Moderns,” said Lovell. “Of course, I don’t mean to hurt the duffer. Just guy him, because he’s a blessed Modern. As he’s a relation, or something, of Tommy Dodd, it will make Tommy Dodd sit up. It’s time we gave the Moderns another lesson, or they’ll be forgetting that we’re top side at Rookwood.”

“Ahem!”

“Blessed if I see——!” began Raby.

“I haven’t finished yet.”

“Great Christopher Columbus! Not yet?”

“No!” howled Lovell.

“Wake me up when you have.”

“My idea,” said Lovell, with a glare at Raby, “is to pull his leg. We’ll hire a trap in Coombe, and take him in. He’ll think we’re nice chaps looking after him, and all that. And we’ll drive him to Bagshot School——”

“What on earth for?”

“And land him there,” said Lovell. “He’ll think it’s Rookwood—being a silly new kid. See?”

“My hat!”

“Just picture him,” chuckled Lovell. “Marching into Bagshot—presenting himself there as a new chap—when he ought to be coming to Rookwood all the time! Isn’t that a ripping stunt? Just think of it! Ha, ha, ha!”

And Lovell, evidently immensely tickled with his extraordinary idea, roared.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

A Rift in the Lute.

“HA, ha, ha!”
Arthur Edward Lovell was so taken with his idea that he roared in great merriment; and did not observe, for a moment

or two, that his three comrades had faces that displayed the solemnity of owls.

When he did observe it, his laughter died away quite suddenly.

He glared at the three.

“Well?” he demanded warmly. “Don’t you think it’s a ripping idea?”

“Oh, tip-top!” said Jimmy Silver, slowly.

“Gorgeous!” said Raby. “But——”

“Ripping!” said Newcome. “B:b—but——”

“Well, but what? It’s the stunt of the season—the first really good idea that’s ever been heard of in this study.”

“Ahem! Suppose the new kid isn’t so soft as you suppose——”

“Well, he’s a silly Modern.”

“Hum! But suppose he isn’t taken in——”

“He will be.”

“Suppose he don’t go to Bagshot—and suppose we have all our trouble for nothing—as well as paying for the trap?”

“Oh, rot!”

“And suppose——”

“Are we going to spend the afternoon supposing, Jimmy Silver?”

“Well, suppose——”

“Oh, rot!”

“Besides, it’s rather rough on the new kid,” said Raby, judiciously. “Of course, he’s only a Modern, and we’re up against the Moderns. But after all, he’s a silly new kid, and doesn’t know his way about, and it’s rather rough——”

“What rot!”

“In fact, rather outside the limit, old chap,” said Newcome, shaking his head. “Let’s go to the pictures——”

Lovell rose to his feet again, with an expression of dogged determination on his face. It was not often that Arthur Edward Lovell propounded an idea—ideas not being much in his line. But when he did, he expected respectful attention. He was not receiving it.

“You don’t like the idea, Jimmy Silver?”

“Well, you see——” hesitated the captain of the Fourth.

“Do you like it, Raby?”

“Not much!”

“And you, Newcome?”

“Precious little.”

“Well, you can go on the river, or to the

pictures, or you can go and eat coke!" said Lovell. "I'm going to the station to meet Loring."

And he tramped to the door.

"Hold on, Lovell——"

"Well?" grunted Arthur Edward, turning his head.

"It's really rather rough on a new kid, old chap," urged Jimmy Silver. "Of course, it's a good idea—really ripping—but if it was played on us when we were new kids, we should have thought it was—was—rather—rather——"

"Rather what?" asked Lovell, with a gleam in his eyes.

"Well, rather inconsiderate, don't you think?"

"No, I don't."

"Ahem!"

"So I'm inconsiderate, am I?" demanded Lovell.

"Well, you see——"

"Oh, say what you think!" growled Lovell. "I do. For instance, I think you're a cheeky ass, Jimmy Silver, and I don't make any bones about telling you so!"

"Well, then, I do think that it's inconsiderate," exclaimed Jimmy, rather warmly. "I think it's unfeeling, if you want the exact truth."

"So I'm unfeeling?" growled Lovell.

"In this instance——"

"That's enough!"

Lovell strode to the door and dragged it open.

"Lovell, old chap——" began Jimmy.

Slam!

Arthur Edward Lovell was gone.

Jimmy Silver and Co. looked at one another. It was a storm in a teacup, so to speak, such as had sometimes happened in the end study before. Even the Fistical Four of the Fourth did not always see eye to eye with one another, though they generally managed to pull together with exemplary harmony.

"Oh, dear!" murmured Jimmy.

"It's rather a shame to pull old Lovell's leg," said Newcome, repentantly. "He can't help being a bit of an ass."

"But he oughtn't to spring ideas on the study," said Raby. "Ideas ain't in his line.

Still, we can't have old Lovell going off on his own like this. I suppose we'd better back him up in his silly stunt. After all, I'm not set on going on the river."

"And the pictures can wait!" said Newcome.

Jimmy Silver smiled.

"Come on, then," he said.

The Co. left the end study to rejoin Lovell. But Arthur Edward was not to be seen in the Fourth Form passage. Mornington and Erroll were coming out of their study, with their bats; they were figuring in the "fag" match that afternoon.

"Seen Lovell?" asked Jimmy.

"He's just gone downstairs," answered Mornington. "He was looking wrathful. I asked him what was up as he went up, and he told me to go and eat coke."

"Oh!"

Jimmy Silver and his comrades hurried on to the stairs. The junior cricketers were heading for Little Side. Wegg of the Third was carrying his bat along with an air of great importance. Wegg and Algy Silver and Grant, and other heroes of the Third, were in hopes of beating the Fourth that afternoon—especially as Jimmy Silver and Co. were standing out of the junior team.

"Hallo, Jimmy!" called out Algy Silver.

"What's the matter with Lovell?"

"Have you seen him, Algy?"

Jimmy's cousin grinned.

"Yes, rather! He's gone into the quad—scowling like a demon in a panto. Looked in no end of a bate."

Jimmy and Raby and Newcome went into the quadrangle to look for Lovell. Arthur Edward was sighted at last, striding along with his hands driven deep into his pockets, with a deep line in his brows. Algy Silver's description was exaggerated; Lovell was not scowling like a demon in a pantomime. But he certainly looked disturbed and wrathful.

"Lovell!" murmured Jimmy, as the Co. joined Arthur Edward.

Lovell stared at them.

"Well?" he snapped.

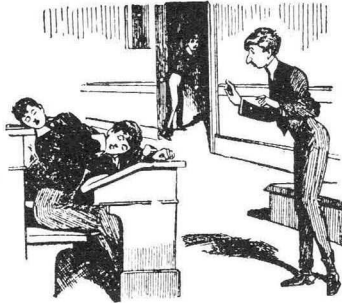
"We—we—we're coming——"

"Where?"

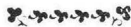
"To the station, you know, to—to carry out that ripping idea," said Jimmy Silver.

THE
GREYFRIARS GALLERY
IN VERSE

By Dick Penfold



No. 8: Alonzo Todd



Who shines above us like a star,
And wags his finger from afar
To warn us what base wrecks we are?
ALONZO!

Who swallows books of fearful size?
Who laps up wisdom from the wise,
And chants their praises to the skies?
ALONZO!

Who once was victimised by Skinner,
And bolted Dr. Locke's own dinner,
Then found he hadn't backed a winner?
ALONZO!

Who hero-worships Uncle Ben,
And clucks just like a broody hen
On reading letters from his pen?
ALONZO!

Who uses words so long and quaint
That when he speaks without restraint
His hearers fall down in a faint?
ALONZO!

But who, although we take him off,
And sometimes feel inclined to scoff,
Is really every inch a toff?
ALONZO!

The captain of the Fourth spoke in honeyed tones, giving the soft answer which is popularly supposed to turn away wrath. In this instance it failed of its effect.

"Are you?" said Lovell grimly.

"Certainly, old chap."

"So you're going to be inconsiderate?"

"Eh?"

"And unfeeling?"

"Ahem!"

"I won't put your consciences to such a strain," said Lovell, with deep sarcasm. "You'd never sleep o' nights if you'd been inconsiderate and unfeeling, you know. I can do without you."

"Look here, Lovell——"

"Oh, give a chap a rest."

"But—I say!" began Newcome.

"Go and see your blessed pictures," said Lovell. "You don't want to be rough on a new kid. New kids are such important persons. It's better to rag your own pal than to be rough on a new kid, isn't it?"

"Look here——!"

"Oh, rats!"

Lovell, evidently in a mood to let the sun go down on his wrath, turned his back on his chums, and strode away.

"Oh, bother!" said Raby. "Lovell's got his back up—and I'm fed up, for one. He'll come round by tea-time. Let's get off somewhere. They're beginning the cricket already."

Jimmy Silver looked rather worried.

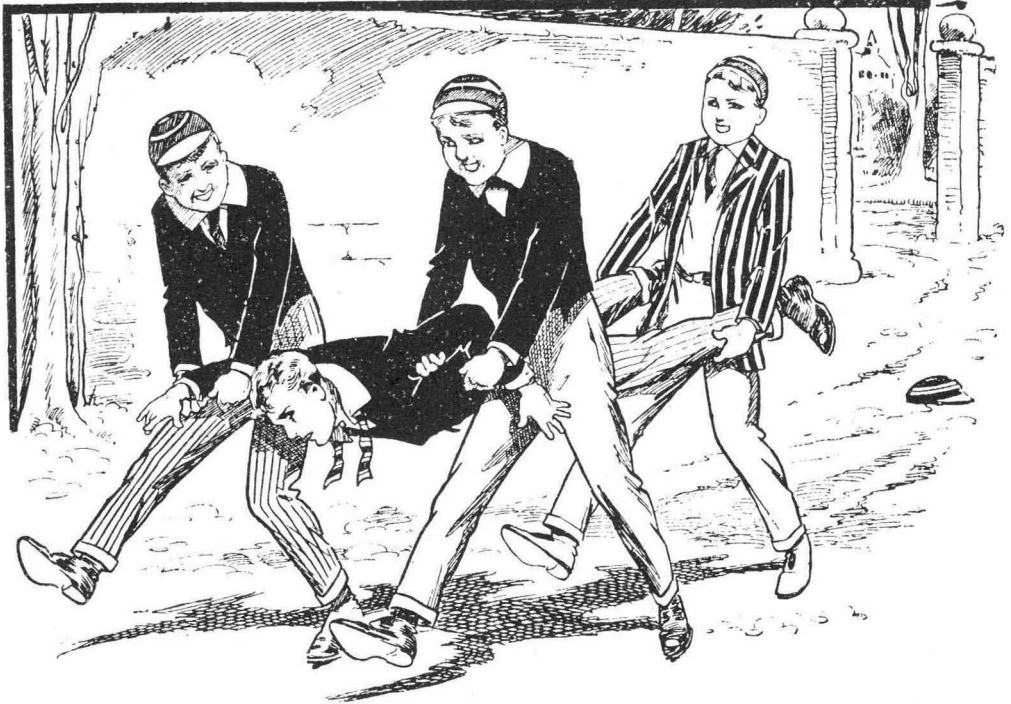
The tiff with Lovell cast rather a shadow over the bright afternoon.

Tommy Dodd, Tommy Cook, and Tommy Doyle, of the Modern Fourth, came along on their way to Little Side. The three Tommies were playing that afternoon in the Fourth-Form team.

"There's those blessed Moderns!" growled Jimmy. "Bump 'em!"

"Good egg!"

The three Moderns were certainly quite innocent, so far as the tiff with Lovell was concerned; but they were Moderns, and the three Classicals felt the need of expending their exasperation upon somebody. Tommy Dodd and Co. had come along in the nick of time, as it were. The Co. rushed upon them,



Arthur Edward Lovell went along the dusty road, experiencing the joys—or otherwise—of the frog's march. For a hundred yards along the road he went, and there the Bagshot trio left him sitting in the dust. (See page 218.)

and collared them, to the great wrath and indignation of the three Tommies.

"Here, wharrer you at?" roared Tommy Dodd. "I'll bat you—I'll—oh, my hat—yaroooooh!"

"Bump them!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The three Moderns were strewn in the quadrangle.

There was a volcanic eruption of howls and roars, as they sorted themselves out.

Jimmy Silver and Co. scudded away, chortling, leaving them to sort themselves out at their leisure, and feeling somewhat solaced. Tommy Dodd grasped his bat when he found himself on his feet again.

"After them!" he gasped. "I'll—I'll—"

"You fellows coming?" shouted Mornington, from the direction of the cricket field. "You're late already."

"Oh, we're coming," grunted Dodd.

And the Modern juniors went on to the cricket field, postponing vengeance on the Classical trio for the present.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

On His Own.

"OH, rotten!" growled Lovell.

Arthur Edward was dissatisfied.

Having rejected the advances of the Co., he was, naturally, left "on his own"; but somehow he did not find that satisfactory. Jimmy Silver and Raby and Newcome disappeared out of the gates, after their little scrap with the Moderns, and were lost to sight. Lovell, with his hands deep in his pockets and a frown on his brow, looked about him glumly.

He was determined to carry out that idea—if only to show the end study that he could do as he liked. That, certainly, was not a

very noble spirit in which to make up his mind; but Lovell was irritated, and in an obstinate mood. He was wounded at the charge of want of feeling, too; for Lovell was the best-natured of fellows, and detested ill-nature—which made him all the more determined not to see that his proposed rag on the new “kid” was a little wanting in consideration.

But he did not want to go alone—half the fun would be lost without a comrade or two. His own chums having failed him, he looked round for support, as it were. The quad. was nearly deserted; most of the fellows were on the cricket field, or out of gates. Lovell walked down to Little Side in the hope of picking up a recruit there.

The junior match was beginning. Wegg and Algy Silver were batting for the Third, and the Fourth-Formers were in the field. Mornington was captaining the Fourth, and Conroy, Van Ryn, Pons, Oswald, Flynn, Grace, were all in the team, as well as the three Tommies and Towle of the Modern side.

Townsend and Topham, the dandies of the Fourth, were lounging on the field; but Lovell did not want them. They were too slack even for a rag. Lattrey, Peele, and Gower were in a little group, talking “geegees”—but Lovell did not want to talk geegees. Leggett, the Modern, gave him a nod; but Lovell did not return the nod—he couldn’t stand Leggett.

After a look round the field, he tramped away again, with a darker shade than before upon his brow. On Big Side there was a senior match in progress; Bulkeley and Neville and Knowles, and other great men of the Sixth, were playing a visiting team. Lovell paused to look on for a few minutes, and he joined in the cheering of a mighty hit by Bulkeley, the captain of Rookwood. Then he strolled on.

In the quad. again, he found Smythe, of the Shell, chatting with Howard and Tracy major. He hesitated, and then came up to them. The Fistical Four were not on the best of terms with Adolphus Smythe and his nutty pals; but Lovell was feeling the need of somebody to accompany him in his expedition, and the time was getting close now.

“You fellows got anything on this afternoon?” he asked, as agreeably as he could in his present humour.

Adolphus Smythe glanced at him

His glance was lofty. A series of raggings and bumpings had never convinced the great Adolphus that he was only a common mortal, and not in the least entitled to put on airs.

“Nothin’ special,” answered Smythe. “Life’s a bore, my dear fellow. I’m fed up with everythin’.”

Lovell suppressed a snort. The lackadaisical Adolphus always roused his ire, but this was not an appropriate moment for telling Adolphus what he thought of him.

“Like to take a hand in a rag?” he asked genially.

“A rag?” repeated Adolphus.

“Yes—a rag on the Moderns.”

“Oh, gad!”

“My dear man,” said Tracy major. “We’re not interested in your fag rags. Don’t be funny.”

“Yaas; you make me rather tired, Lovell,” remarked Adolphus. “Thankin’ you all the same, we won’t take a hand in your faggy raggin’.”

“You silly ass!” snorted Lovell.

There was no longer any need to suppress his snort; evidently he wasn’t going to pick up recruits among the nuts of the Shell.

“My dear man,” said Adolphus, with a wave of his hand, “wander away! Vanish! Give us a rest! Yaroooooh!” Adolphus wound up suddenly, as Lovell took him by the collar: “Yow-ow! Leggo, you beast!”

Shake! Shake!

“Oh, gad! Yoop! Leggo!” wailed Adolphus. “You’re muckin’ up my collar! Oh, goodness!”

Shake!

After another powerful shake, Lovell sat the great Adolphus down in the quad, with a bump, and walked away.

“Wow-wow-wow!” said Adolphus.

Tracy major and Howard helped him up! It did not seem to occur to them to intervene while Lovell was shaking him.

“Ow! The frightful ruffian!” gasped Smythe. “I’ve a jolly good—ow!—mind to go after him—wow!—and thrash him—

grough! But it's a bit beneath a chap's dignity to get into fag fights! Ow!"

And Adolphus—perhaps from considerations of his dignity—did not go after Lovell and thrash him—which was probably very fortunate for Adolphus.

Arthur Edward Lovell tramped on towards the gates. He had made up his mind to go alone now.

"He, he, he!"

Lovell glanced round as he heard that not very musical cachinnation. Tubby Muffin, of the Fourth, grinned at him.

"He, he, he!" he repeated. "I'm jolly glad you bumped Smythey, Lovell—the beast knocked my cap off to-day. I say, Lovell, old chap, can you do me a little favour?"

"What is it?" grunted Lovell.

"Lend me a bob!"

"Oh, rats!"

"I mean threepence" said the fat Classical. "Three D., you know, till——"

"Till the Greek Kalends?" asked Lovell sarcastically.

"He, he, he!" cackled Tubby, perhaps thinking that if he was entertained by that little joke, the three D. would be forthcoming.

But it wasn't.

Lovell turned towards the gates again; and then he turned back as a thought came into his mind. He disliked going out alone, and even Tubby Muffin's company was better than none. The fat Classical's society was not generally sought after, but it was a case of any port in a storm.

"Like to come along and see a rag, Tubby?" asked Lovell.

"Yes, old chap," answered Muffin. "Anything you like. Where are you going?"

"To Coombe."

"Might call in at the tuck-shop there."

Lovell did not seem to hear that suggestion. He walked out at the gates, Tubby Muffin trotting by his side to keep pace.

It was a sunny afternoon, and, as he walked along the leafy lane, Lovell felt his good-humour return. He explained to Tubby Muffin the nature of the "rag," and was solaced by Tubby's unqualified admiration. Indeed, it seemed to be Tubby's fat opinion that such a glorious stunt had never been

mooted before in the history of Rookwood. Admiration is always pleasing, and Lovell was pleased—especially after the reception his idea had received in the end study—and he began to think that Tubby was not such a fat duffer as was generally supposed.

Tubby slowed down as they were passing Mrs. Wicks's little shop in the High Street of Coombe.

"By the way, did you know Mrs. Wicks had a new lot of tarts in, Lovell?" he inquired.

"No," answered Lovell, without stopping.

"Her ginger-pop's jolly good, too!" murmured Tubby.

"I dare say."

"I—I say, Lovell——"

"Come on, Muffin; we don't want to be late at the station."

Tubby Muffin glanced into the tuck-shop and glanced at Lovell. That youth showed no sign of coming to a halt. With a deep sigh, Tubby Muffin trotted along on his track.

But his hearty admiration of Lovell's "stunt" seemed to have vanished now; his enthusiasm had died away. He hardly answered Lovell's remarks as they went up the village street; and by the time they reached the railway station Tubby Muffin was silent, and seemed quite gloomy.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Taking the Stranger In.

"COOMBE!"

The train stopped.

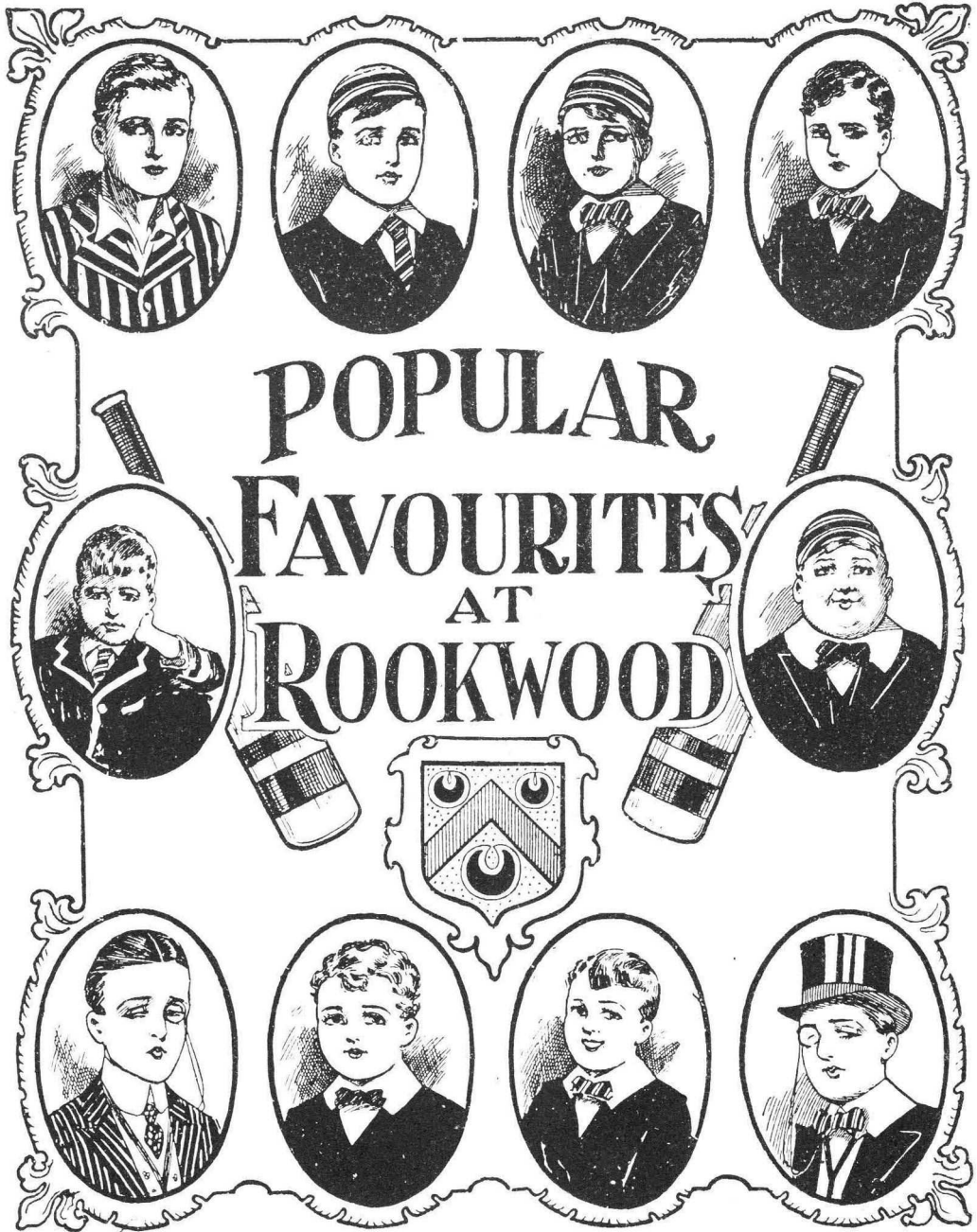
A rather good-looking lad of about fifteen, with fair hair under his straw hat, glanced from a window in the train, and rose as the old porter shouted.

He stepped from the carriage, with a bag in one hand, and a rug over the other arm.

"That's the merchant!" murmured Arthur Edward Lovell.

Lovell was leaning on an automatic machine on the platform. Tubby Muffin was asking him whether he had an odd penny about him, but Lovell was not listening. He was watching the passengers alighting from the train—on the look-out for the new "kid."

There were few passengers; Coombe was not a station with much traffic. Among the



Reading from left to right: George Bulkeley, Oliver Loring, Jimmy Silver, Arthur Edward Lovell, Algy Silver, Tubby Muffin, Adolphus Smythe, Teddy Grace, Tommy Dodd, Val. Mornington.

half-dozen who alighted from the train, there was only one who could possibly have been the new boy for Rookwood School, and that was the fair-haired youth with the bag and the rug.

Lovell watched him as he spoke to the porter, apparently giving directions about a box. The new fellow then stood on the platform, as the other passengers cleared off, looking about him. Possibly he expected to be met at the station; as he would have been had not Tommy Dodd, of the Modern Fourth, not been otherwise engaged on business of importance.

Lovell detached himself from the automatic machine, and approached the new junior, with Tubby at his heels.

"Excuse me," he said, with elaborate politeness, "may I ask if you are the new chap for Rookwood?"

The youth looked at him.

"That's right," he answered, in a rather pleasant voice.

"Oliver Loring?" asked Lovell.

"Yes."

"I'm Lovell of the Fourth. I've come to meet you."

"You're very kind," said Loring. "I thought perhaps Tommy Dodd would come along——"

"He's playing cricket this afternoon," explained Lovell. "As some of the fellows who usually play with the Form team are standing out, he couldn't very well get away."

"I see."

"I've come instead—and Muffin. This is Muffin."

Oliver Loring gave Tubby a pleasant nod, to which the fat Classical responded with a grin.

Tubby was wondering whether it would be possible to inveigle the new junior, who looked a very agreeable fellow, into Mrs. Wicks's shop, and "stick" him for refreshments.

"This way, Loring," said Lovell. "I've ordered a trap at the Coombe Arms to take you to the school."

"Have you really?" exclaimed Loring, in surprise.

"Oh, yes."

"That's awfully good of you."

"Not at all. Of course, I'm standing the trap," added Lovell hastily. "You see, as you're a relation of Tommy Dodd—you are his relation, I think?"

"Yes, a distant relation."

"Well, as you're Tommy's relation, we want to make you welcome," said Lovell solemnly. "We think no end of Tommy at Rookwood, you know."

"He, he, he!" came from Tubby Muffin.

Lovell gave him a look; and Tubby's chortle died away in a cough. The new boy glanced at him for a moment.

"You're a Modern, I suppose?" asked Loring.

Lovell was a little taken aback by that question. He had taken it for granted that Loring, as a new boy, would not be well "posted" in the politics of Rookwood.

"A—a Modern!" he repeated.

"I'm entered on the Modern side," said Loring, looking at him. "As you're a friend of Tommy Dodd's, I suppose you're a Modern?"

"I see you know all about Rookwood."

"Tommy's told me a lot about the school," said Loring, with a smile. "It seems that there are no end of rows between the Moderns and the Classicals. Modern side is top side in cricket and footer——"

"What rot!"

"Eh?"

"I—I mean——"

"I only know what Dodd's told me, of course," said Loring, looking at him. "He's told me that the Moderns are always ragging the Classicals. The Classicals try to keep their end up, but they haven't any earthly."

"The silly ass!"

"Oh, you're not a Modern, then?"

"I—I—I——" Lovell stammered a little. He had not intended to reveal the fact that he belonged to the Classical side; but his unguarded remarks had revealed it pretty effectually. "You—you see—well, the fact is, I'm a Classical." It had to come out, and Lovell looked rather confused as it came, "But—but I'm quite friendly with Dodd, you know. Our little rows don't make any difference to that."

"Oh, yes, I understand. Dodd's told me about it."

"That's all right, then," said Lovell.

"Good friends, and all that, but you rag the Moderns, and so on," said Loring, with another of his rather keen looks at Lovell. "You jape them, as Tommy calls it, and that kind of thing.

"Ye—e—es.

"I see!"

"This way," said Lovell hastily. "Carry Loring's rug, Tubby."

"Oh, certainly," said Tubby Muffin. "I say, Loring, would you care to step in at Mrs. Wicks's shop? New fellows generally like to see the place——"

"Shut up, Tubby! This way."

"But I say, Lovell, Loring would like——"

"Shut up!" roared Lovell.

Tubby grunted, and let the subject drop—for the present. Outside the Coombe Arms, the trap was waiting for Lovell, a stableman holding the horse. Loring's bag and rug were deposited in the trap, and the new boy followed them, and Tubby Muffin clambered in after him.

Lovell jumped in, and took the reins from the ostler.

"I say, Lovell," began Tubby Muffin, "stop at Mrs. Wicks's, will you? Loring would like to see——"

"We're not going that way!" snapped Lovell.

"We pass Mrs. Wicks's shop going to Rookwood!" said Tubby, forgetting for a moment the "rag," and the fact that Rookwood was not the present destination of the party.

Lovell gave him a hunnish look.

"Oh! I—I mean——!" stammered Tubby.

"Shut up!"

Lovell gathered up the reins, and set the horse in motion. The trap bowled away, taking a short cut from the station into Bagshot Lane. Lovell handled the horse well, and the trap bowled along at a good speed.

An expression of deep gloom overspread Reginald Muffin's fat face. The "rag" looked like being a success; but Tubby's thoughts were dwelling more upon the tuck-shop than the "rag." Probably the new junior, unsuspecting, would be landed at

Bagshot, and left there when the trap drove off—quite a success from Lovell's point of view. But Tubby Muffin was thinking of other things, and he was not comforted.

"Much distance to Rookwood?" asked Loring.

"Oh, not very far, at this rate," answered Lovell.

"I thought you went through the village. Dodd's told me——"

"This is a longer way round; but it's very pleasant in the lanes, on an afternoon like this," said Lovell.

"Oh, yes. That's so."

"He, he, he!"

Tubby Muffin suppressed his ill-timed mirth, as the new junior glanced at him rather curiously.

Loring was looking decidedly curious by this time.

Contrary to Lovell's expectations, he knew all about the rivalry at Rookwood School, having heard a great deal about it from his relation, Tommy Dodd. Indeed, he had probably heard very adorned accounts of the doings of the Rookwood juniors. And probably it struck him as odd—considering what he knew of affairs at Rookwood—that a Classical junior should take all this trouble on account of a Modern—a new fellow he had never seen before, and was not likely to have much to do with at the school.

"One mile to Bagshot!" said Loring, reading from a finger-post as the trap was bowling along. "We're going Bagshot way, are we, Lovell?"

"You've heard of Bagshot?" asked Lovell, starting.

"Oh, yes—Dodd's told me——"

"Blow Dodd!"

"Eh, what?"

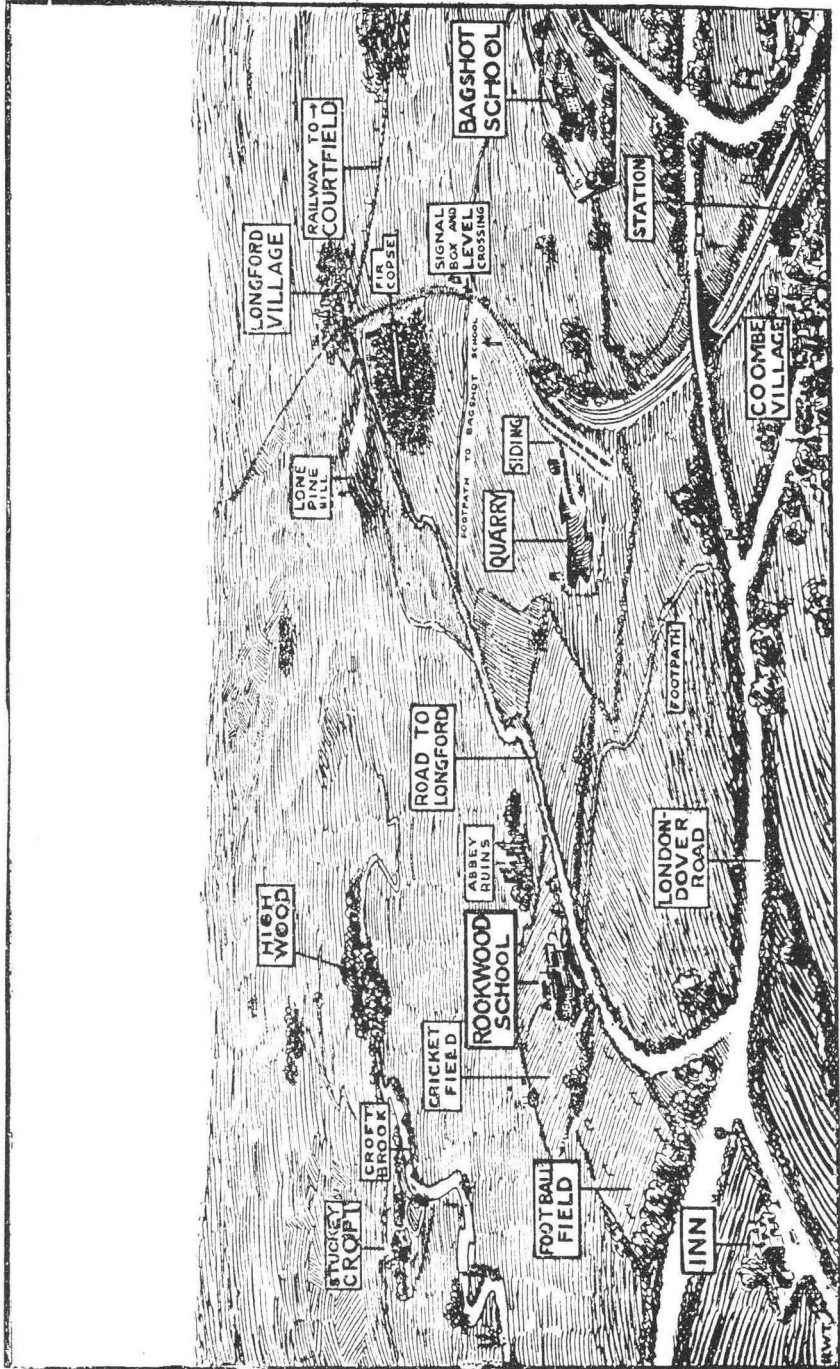
"N-n-nothing! Lovely scenery, isn't it?"

"Yes, lovely. Dodd's told me about Bagshot school—you play the fellows at cricket and footer, and rag them sometimes," said Loring. "Shall we pass Bagshot School?"

"He, he, he!"

"What are you cackling at, Muffin?" roared Lovell, rather regretting that he had brought this exceedingly inefficient assistant with him.

ROOKWOOD SCHOOL, HAMPSHIRE.



A GENERAL VIEW OF THE SURROUNDING DISTRICT.

"N-n-nothing, old chap."

"Then shut up," growled Lovell.

Arthur Edward gave his attention to the horse, and did not answer Loring's question, and the new junior did not repeat it. His face wore a very thoughtful expression, however, and there was a glimmer in his eyes. Tubby Muffin, watching him, wondered whether he had "tumbled" to the fact that he was the victim of a "rag."

A big red-brick building dawned into view over the trees. Loring glanced at it.

"That's the school!" said Lovell, pointing with his whip.

"Rookwood?" asked Loring, in surprise.

Lovell cracked his whip, and did not seem to hear.

Tubby Muffin smothered a chuckle just in time.

"Not much like Dodd's description of Rookwood," said Loring.

"Isn't it?"

"Not a bit."

"Dodd isn't much of a hand at describing things," remarked Lovell casually.

"He can't be," said Loring. "I gathered from him that Rookwood was an old place—mossy stone and ivied tower, and that kind of thing."

"Did you really?" said Lovell.

"I certainly did. That show looks as if it hasn't been built twenty years," said Loring, looking at the red-brick building through the trees.

"Oh, it's older than that, you know."

"Not what I fancied Rookwood to be."

"You'll like it all right—places often disappoint a chap at first glance, you know," said Lovell.

And he avoided further discussion by dashing up to the gates of Bagshot with a flourish and a clatter.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Lovell's Luck.

CLATTER!

The horse's hoofs rang on the road outside the school gates.

The big iron gates were open, and fellows could be seen within, and a glimpse of red-

brick buildings and a fountain. Three juniors—well known to Lovell and Tubby Muffin—came towards the gates as the trap halted. They were Pankley, Poole, and Putter, of the Bagshot Fourth.

"Jump down!" said Lovell hastily.

He was anxious to get his passenger landed before the Bagshot fellows came on the scene. Enlightenment for the new junior would have come at an awkward moment, just then, for Lovell's scheme.

"I get down here?" asked Loring.

"Yes, certainly."

"He, he, he!"

"Here's your bag—here's your rug—"

"Aren't you getting down?" asked Loring.

"I—I—oh, yes," gasped Lovell.

He did not need telling, now, that the new boy was suspicious. And certainly it would have strengthened his suspicions if Lovell had remained in the trap, after reaching the school—supposed to be Rookwood!

Lovell jumped down.

"Hand me your bag," he said.

"Aren't you getting down, Muffin?"

"Nothing for me to get down for," answered Tubby. "I—I mean—" he stammered, as he caught Lovell's look. "I—I mean—yes, oh, certainly."

And he got down.

Pankley and Co had arrived at the gate by that time, and they were looking curiously on.

"What's this—a visit in state?" asked Pankley.

Lovell breathed hard. The new boy was still delaying in the trap—and delay was threatening Lovell's little scheme with disaster.

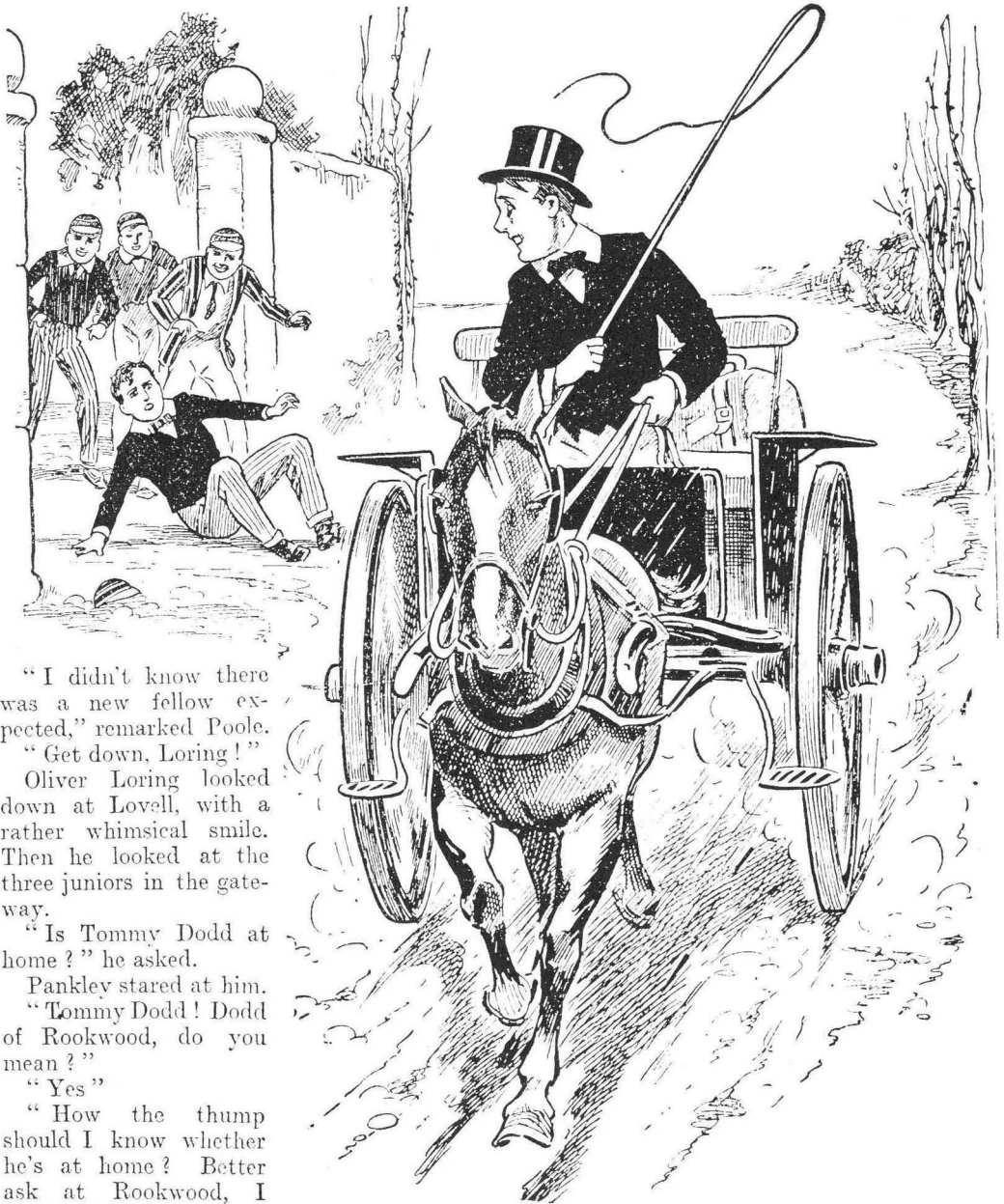
"It's a new fellow for the school," explained Lovell, not specifying which school; "I've brought him along from the station."

"That's jolly good of you," said Pankley, in surprise. "Quite a good turn from the enemy."

"Oh, I wanted a drive, anyway," said Lovell carelessly. "Get a move on, Loring. What are you waiting there for?"

"Admiring the scenery," answered Loring coolly.

"Oh, get down!"



"I didn't know there was a new fellow expected," remarked Poole.

"Get down, Loring!"

Oliver Loring looked down at Lovell, with a rather whimsical smile. Then he looked at the three juniors in the gateway.

"Is Tommy Dodd at home?" he asked.

Pankley stared at him.

"Tommy Dodd! Dodd of Rookwood, do you mean?"

"Yes."

"How the thump should I know whether he's at home? Better ask at Rookwood, I should think."

"Oh!" gasped Lovell.

He stood rooted to the ground for a moment.

What happened next passed like a flash. Loring caught up the reins, cracked the whip, and the trap bowled away down the road. Lovell sat in the dust, and blinked after it dizzily. (See page 218.)

All had been going well—even the Bagshot fellows could not have betrayed the scheme, not knowing anything about it, but the keenness of the new junior had spoiled everything. Evidently he had been suspicious—and his suspicions had strengthened—and he had asked that question about Tommy Dodd simply to put the matter to the test.

And now he knew!

He dropped into the seat Lovell had vacated, smiling.

“What a merry joke!” he remarked. “A Classical rag, what? Just the kind of stunt I’ve heard about from Tommy Dodd!”

“I—I——” stammered Lovell.

“You were going to land me at Bagshot—ha, ha! What a screaming joke! But the yarn won’t be so funny when you tell it now, will it?” grinned Loring.

“Get down!” roared Lovell.

“No fear!”

“If you don’t get down, I’ll jolly well mop you out of that trap!” shouted Lovell, quite losing his temper. The utter failure of his scheme was too much for him.

Loring looked down at him coolly.

Lovell’s wrath apparently did not make him nervous. He laughed.

“You hear me?” shouted Lovell.

“I’m not deaf.”

“Will you get out?”

“Oh, no.”

“Then I’ll make you.”

Lovell put his foot on the step, to clamber in, Pankley and Co. watching the scene in astonishment.

Oliver Loring reached out and gave the Rookwooder a gentle shove on the chest.

“Ow!” roared Lovell, as he sat in the dust with a bump.

What happened next passed like a flash.

Loring caught up the reins, cracked the whip, and the trap bowled away down the road.

Lovell sat in the dust and blinked after it dizzily.

“Oh, my hat!” exclaimed Pankley.

“What’s this game?”

“Come back!” shrieked Tubby Muffin.

“Oh, you rotter! I can’t walk to Rookwood. C-c-come back!”

Loring did not come back.

He did not even turn his head.

He was driving away cheerily: and the trap rattled on at a good speed. Arthur Edward Lovell scrambled to his feet, and roared.

“Loring! Come back! I’ll smash you! Come back! I’ll pulverise you—you rotter! Oh, you Modern cad!”

The trap turned a corner and vanished from sight.

“Ow!” gasped Tubby Muffin. “We—we—we’ve got to walk home to Rookwood! Oh, you silly ass, Lovell—you thumping ass—oh, dear!”

“Well, my word!” said Cecil Pankley. “Lovell, old scout, you seem to have had a jape on—if you call it a jape—and you seem to have slipped up on it! And it seems that you’ve got to walk home to Rookwood—and it would be only a kindness to help you on your way. You fellows, lend Lovell a hand.”

“What-ho!” chuckled Poole and Putter.

Tubby Muffin took to his heels as the three Bagshot fellows rushed out of the gateway. But Pankley and Co. did not trouble about Tubby. They collared Arthur Edward Lovell.

“Let go!” roared Lovell savagely.

“My dear chap—Yarook!” howled Pankley, as he received Arthur Edward’s knuckles forcibly on his nose.

Lovell was hitting out furiously.

But hitting out was not of much use against three. In a few moments Arthur Edward was helpless in the grasp of the old rivals of Rookwood. And he was bumped as a warning.

“Now, then,” gasped Pankley; “frog’s march!”

“Go it!”

“Yow-ow! Leggo! Oh!”

Arthur Edward Lovell went along the dusty road, experiencing the joys—or otherwise—of the frog’s march. For a hundred yards along the road he went, and there the Bagshot trio left him sitting in the dust, struggling to get his second wind.

They walked back cheerily to the school,

waving their hands to Lovell as they went ; and leaving him sitting in the dust—of the dust dusty, so to speak—and with feelings that could not have been expressed in any known language.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Not a Success !

“ THIS right for Rookwood School ? ”

Jimmy Silver, Raby, and Newcome were sauntering along the leafy lane, when a trap slackened down in the road, and the driver—a youth in Etons—called to them.

Jimmy Silver glanced up.

He recognised the trap belonging to the Coomb Arms, but its occupant was a stranger to him.

“ First to the right, and second to the left,” he said. “ That takes you into Coombe Lane, and then it’s straight on to Rookwood.”

“ Thanks.”

“ Hold on a minute, will you ? ” exclaimed Jimmy. “ Are you the new kid for Rookwood, by any chance ? We belong to Rookwood, you know.”

“ Yes, my name’s Loring.”

“ Oh, my only aunt ! Weren’t you met at the station ? ” asked Jimmy.

Loring smiled.

“ Yes ; a Rookwood chap met me there.”

“ Lovell ? ” exclaimed Raby.

“ He told me his name was Lovell, and another chap named Muffin. This is their trap ! ” said Loring cheerfully.

“ Where are they, then ? ” asked Newcome, with a stare.

“ I left them at Bagshot School. ”

“ Oh, my hat ! ”

“ They were going to leave me there—a joke, I suppose, on a new fellow,” explained Loring. “ So I left them there ! Rather funny, what ? ”

And he drove on cheerily.

Jimmy Silver and Co. looked at one another, as the trap bowled away. Then they stared after Loring. Then they looked at one another again.

“ Well, my hat ! ” said Jimmy Silver, at last.

Raby chuckled.

“ Lovell seems to have made rather a mess of his game with the new kid,” he remarked. “ Landed at Bagshot. My hat ! I wonder what the Bagshot fellows will do to him ? ”

“ We’d better get along there,” said Jimmy Silver. “ Poor old Lovell will be feeling rather rotten—especially if Pankley and Co. get hold of him. We shall have to miss those blessed pictures after all, Newcome.”

“ Oh, all right,” said Newcome

The chums of Rookwood turned in the direction of Bagshot, walking quickly. They could not help being tickled by that complete reversal of Lovell’s little scheme ; but they were rather anxious about Arthur Edward, too. The discussion as to the programme for the afternoon had ended in a compromise ; the three chums were going to walk along the river to Latcham, and see the pictures there—so far as time allowed. But that programme was abandoned now. It was the duty of the loyal Co. to rally round the member of their honourable society who had fallen into disaster—even if it was his own fault.

“ Hallo ! Here’s Muffin ! ” exclaimed Newcome suddenly, as they turned into Bagshot Lane.

Tubby Muffin was pounding along in a cloud of dust, with perspiration rolling down his fat face.

“ Yaroooh ! Keep off ! ” he howled, as the three Rookwooders dawned upon him.

“ Tubby, you ass ! ”

“ Oh ! It’s you, Jimmy ! ” gasped Reginald Muffin. “ I—I thought it was those Bagshot beasts for a minute. Oh, dear ! ”

“ What are you rolling along at that rate for ? ” demanded Jimmy Silver.

“ They’re after me.”

“ Eh ! Who are ? ”

“ The Bagshot beasts. Ow ! ”

“ You fat duffer ! There’s nobody after you ! ” growled Raby.

Tubby Muffin blinked round at the open road behind him, and gasped with relief. His terrors had peopled the road with Bagshot fellows, all thirsting for his gore, so to speak.

“ Oh, dear ! ” he gasped. “ I—I thought—
—I—I mean don’t you fellows think I was

running away from the Bagshot bounders, you know. Nothing of the sort, of course."

"What were you doing, then?"

"I—I was coming for—for help for—for Lovell, you know. They've got Lovell," stammered Tubby. "I—I fought till—till I got away. I felled several of them——"

"Bow—wow!"

"I fought like a lion, you know!" gasped Tubby. "You fellows know what I'm like when I'm roused. I felled them, right and left——"

"Chuck it, Tubby! What was happening when you scooted?"

"I didn't stop to see. I—I mean, the road was fairly strewn with them. A dozen at least, felled by my terrible blows. Then I thought I'd go for help to rescue Lovell, you know."

"Oh, rats!"

Jimmy Silver and Co. did not wait for the rest of Tubby's stirring story of heroism. They were anxious about Lovell, and they proceeded at a run towards Bagshot School. The big, red-brick building was in sight in the distance, when they came on Arthur Edward at last.

He was limping along the road towards them, dishevelled and dusty, and alone. There was no sign of the Bagshot enemy.

"Hallo, Lovell!"

"Oh, you!" grunted Lovell.

He tramped on, his chums turning and walking with him. Lovell was evidently in a bad temper.

"Had bad luck?" asked Jimmy sympathetically.

"I've been frog's marched."

"I wish we'd been there, old chap."

"You ought to have been there. You would have been there if you'd backed me up as I asked you."

"Ahem! The—the new kid—we passed him on the road—he was driving a trap," said Jimmy. "We came to lend you a hand, if you wanted it, old scout."

"And you came too late!" grunted Lovell.

"Well, that couldn't be helped. Let's drop in at Coombe, shall we? You want a bit of a brush down."

"I'm going to Rookwood."

"Oh, all right, we'll go on to Rookwood, then."

"No need for you fellows to come."

"Look here," began Raby testily. But he stopped, as Jimmy gave him a warning glance.

Jimmy could feel for his chum, whose little plans had ended in such utter disaster; and he made allowances for Lovell's wrath.

"It's about time we got in for tea," remarked Jimmy.

"It's not tea-time!" grunted Lovell.

"We'll have an early tea, and then a trot out, shall we?"

"I'm not going out."

"Oh!"

"I'm going to look for that Modern cad and smash him," said Lovell, between his teeth.

"Do you mean Loring?"

"Yes; that's the cad's name."

"Is he a cad?" asked Jimmy Silver, mildly.

"Yes, he is."

"He looked a pretty decent chap for a Modern," said Newcome.

"I say he's a cad!"

"Oh, all right; he's a cad then," murmured Newcome, amicably. "I daresay he is—the Moderns are all cads, anyway."

"But—but what happened?" murmured Raby.

Lovell breathed hard.

"I met him at the station, as I said, and got him as far as Bagshot. Then he tumbled to the game—through that fool Muffin talking too much, and sniggling, I suppose. I was an idiot to bring Muffin. I shouldn't have, if my own pals had come."

"Ahem!"

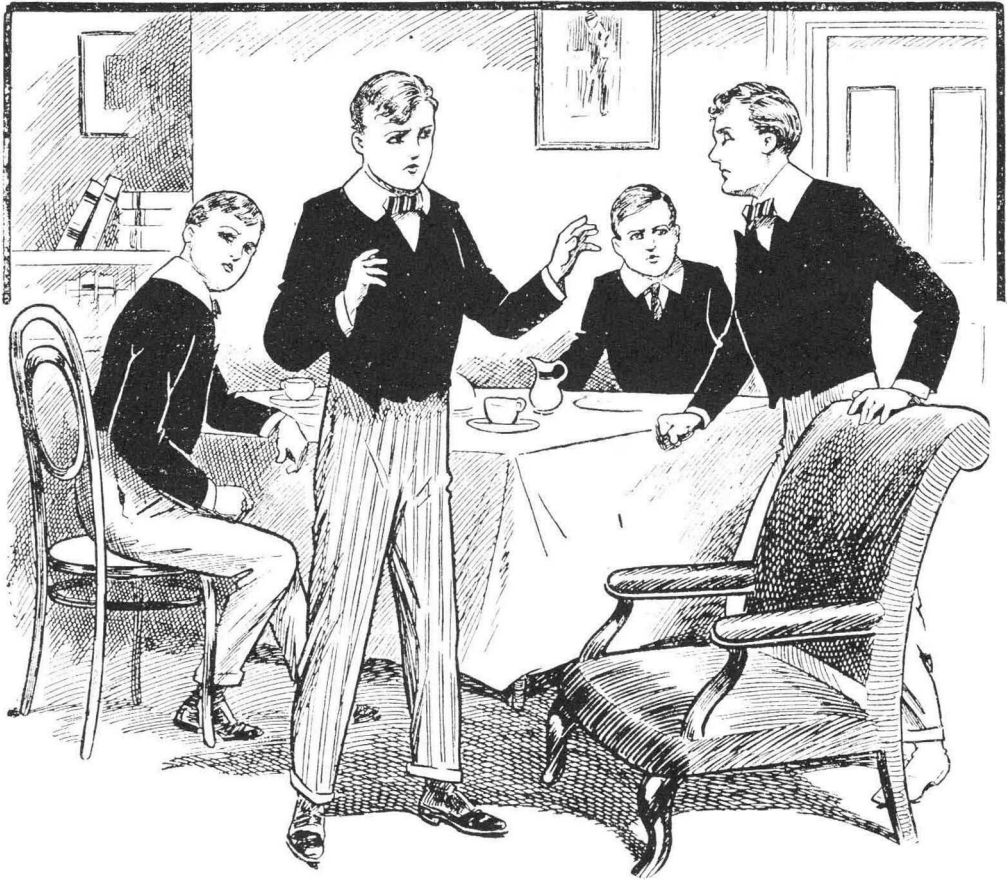
"But, of course, they wouldn't have a hand in anything that was unfeeling—Modern kids are such important persons," growled Lovell.

"But—but what——"

"He knocked me over when I was going to pitch him out of the trap, the cheeky cad!"

"Well, if you were going to pitch him out, old chap——"

"And he bolted with the trap—my trap—and left me stranded. And the Bagshot rotters collared me and gave me the frog's march."



"No, I won't go!" rapped out Jimmy Silver, sharply. "You ought not to want to fight this new fellow, and I won't have a hand in any such rot!" (See page 224.)

"Cheeky rotters!"

"Oh, I wonder you don't say they were quite right—everybody seems to be in the right but me!" snorted Lovell. "So that is what has happened. I'm stuck for seven and six for the trap, and that cad's got it—he's driving to Rookwood, and I'm walking—and I'm dusty, and I've got bumps—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Why, you rotters, what are you howling at?" roared Lovell, greatly incensed by that involuntary outbreak on the part of his comrades.

"Well, old son, it's rather funny," said Jimmy, repressing his merriment. "You do seem to have gone for wool, and returned shorn. Never mind; it's all in the day's work. We'll mop up the Moderns another time. Keep smiling."

"I'm going to smash that cad Loring!"

"What for?"

"Because I choose!"

"Oh!"

After that reply from Arthur Edward, there really seemed nothing more to be said. The Fistical Four walked on to Rookwood in silence.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Jimmy Silver Says "No"!

OLD Mack, the porter, came up to the Fistical Four as they entered the school gateway.

"It's 'ere, Master Lovell," he said.

Lovell stared at him.

"What's here?" he snapped.

"The trap," answered old Mack. "And what I want to know is this 'ere—wot's to be done with it? I can't 'ave a 'orse and trap 'anging round my lodge all day."

The juniors glanced at the trap waiting on the drive.

"So—so it was left with you, Mack?" murmured Jimmy Silver.

"Yes, sir. Noo young gentleman—Master Loring, of Mr. Manders' House, sir, came driving it. He said it belonged to Master Lovell, and was to be left 'ere for 'im. And 'ere it is," added Mack. "Wot's to be done with it, sir?"

"I don't know and don't care!" snapped Lovell.

"Wot?"

"Hang the trap!"

With that reply, which could not be called polite, Arthur Edward Lovell swung on into the quadrangle. Old Mack stared after him, and rubbed his chin, and stared at Lovell's friends.

"Wot's this 'ere mean?" he asked, gruffly. "If the trap ain't Master Lovell's, what's it 'ere for? I s'pose I'd better speak to the 'Ead——"

"Not a bit of it," said Jimmy Silver. "It's all right, Mack. The trap's got to be sent back to the Coombe Arms, where it was hired. Know anybody who'd drive it back for a couple of bob, Mack?"

"I dessay I could find somebody, sir," answered old Mack, quite genially. "Leave it in my 'ands, and I'll see to it."

The matter was left in Mack's hands—as was a two-shilling piece—and the juniors followed Lovell, who was crossing the quad. with great strides, looking neither to the right nor to the left. He attracted a good many curious glances as he went; it was not usual for a fellow to appear in the open quad. at

Rookwood in such a dusty state. Smythe and Co. burst into a chortle as they sighted him, and Lovell's ears tingled as he heard it. But he strode on unregarding.

In the doorway of the schoolhouse, however, he was met by Mr. Bootles, the master of the Fourth. Mr. Bootles raised a commanding hand, and Lovell stopped.

"Lovell!" said Mr. Bootles, with a severe blink over his glasses. "Boy! What does this mean?"

Lovell's grubby face flushed.

"Is this," continued Mr. Bootles, with greater severity, "is this the state, Lovell, in which a Rookwood boy should appear in public? Your face, Lovell, is dirty—actually dirty!"

"I—I——" stammered Lovell.

"Your collar is torn, Lovell—your trousers are rumpled and covered with dust—you are dusty from head to foot, Lovell. You are not clean. I am shocked at you, Lovell."

Lovell gritted his teeth.

"I—I couldn't help——," he began.

"Have you had an accident?" demanded Mr. Bootles.

"I—I've had a—a scrap with some fellows——"

"That is no excuse. You should not have done so. You should endeavour, Lovell, to pass a half-holiday in quiet repose, or in some harmless game, such as cricket or—or pegtop," said Mr. Bootles.

"Cricket or—or pegtop!" murmured Lovell, almost overcome.

"You will take a hundred lines, Lovell. Now 'o and clean yourself immediately—immediately!" said Mr. Bootles.

Lovell was glad enough to go. The form-master's severe glance followed him, disapprovingly, as he tramped up the stairs.

Jimmy Silver and his companions had stopped in the quad. The cricketers were coming off Little Side; though on Big Side the senior game was still in progress. Mornington and Erroll joined the trio, smiling.

"No; finished already?" asked Jimmy Silver.

Mornington chuckled.

"You be!" he answered. "The Merry Third did not turn ou such paladins as they

expected. We declared for fifty, and made them follow on."

"And their two innings gave them thirty!" said Erroll, with a smile.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And we're winners by an innings and uncounted wickets!" yawned Mornington. "Next time we play the Third, you needn't ask me to captain the side—you can ask Tubby Muffin."

"Tommy Dodd might as well have gone and met his blessed relation after all!" remarked Raby.

"Just as well—or better," grunted Jimmy Silver. "Have you fellows seen anything of a new chap—Loring, of Manders' House?"

"There's a chap on the cricket ground now, talkin' to Tommy Dodd," answered Mornington.

Jimmy Silver glanced towards the cricket field, and discerned Oliver Loring, coming along with the three Tommies of the Modern Fourth. The Tommies were chuckling in chorus, and it was easy to guess that the new fellow was relating how Lovell, the Classical, had been dished.

"Hallo, Silver!" called out Tommy Dodd, cheerily. "Where's Lovell? Has he crawled in yet?"

"He came in with us," answered Jimmy, rather gruffly.

"What did the Bagshot bounders do to him?"

"Oh, rats!"

"You ought to kape him on a chain intirely!" roared Tommy Doyle. "Lovell isn't to be trusted out alone. Has he paid for the trap?"

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

And the four walked on towards Mr. Manders' house in great spirits. Jimmy Silver and Co. looked rather grim. They could see the humorous side of the affair themselves; but it was not exactly gratifying to see the Moderns chortling over it like this. It was "one up" against the Classical side.

"What's the merry joke?" asked Mornington.

Jimmy explained rather briefly, and Mornington roared, and Erroll smiled.

"Poor old Lovell!" said Morny. "I

suppose he's rather ratty now. You will have to smoothe his ruffled plumes with a tactful hand."

"And we'd better go and do it," murmured Newcome.

Jimmy nodded, and the three chums went into the house. They did not find Lovell in the end study. He was in the dormitory, putting himself to rights.

"Shall we go up?" asked Newcome.

"Better give him time to calm down, answered Jimmy, judiciously. "It's no wonder he's a bit ratty, considering. I wish he'd never thought of the stunt at all. Poor old Lovell!"

"What about tea?"

"We'll get rather a spread, and soothe him with it," said Jimmy. "Music hath charms to soothe the savage breast, and tuck is still more efficacious, I believe. Let's have tea ready when he comes down."

"Right-ho!"

Fortunately funds were not short in the end study. Newcome ran down to the school shop for supplies, while Raby lighted the fire, and Jimmy Silver laid the table.

In ten minutes there was a fragrant odour of coffee and sausages and chips in the end study—calculated to soothe any savage breast, even that of a Hun.

Then Jimmy Silver and Co. waited for Lovell.

In a few minutes more Arthur Edward appeared. He came into the end study washed and brushed—newly swept and garnished, as it were. But his face, though clean, was no more amiable in expression. His brows were knitted, and his eyes had a gleam in them.

"Tea's ready!" announced Jimmy Silver, with determined cheerfulness.

"It's not tea-time yet."

"Well, we've been out, you know, and I'm rather peckish——"

"I'm not."

"Ahem! These sosses are rather nice," said Jimmy. "Pour out the coffee, Raby. There's your chair, Lovell."

"I'm not going to have tea now."

"Oh!"

"I've got something to do before tea."

" Ah ! "

" Bootles gave me a hundred lines for coming in dusty—dirty, he called it," said Lovell.

" You needn't do them before tea."

" I'm not going to. Hang the lines, and hang Bootles! I want one of you to go over to Manders' House for me."

" What for ? "

" To take my challenge to that Modern cad, Loring."

" You want to fight him, do you mean ? "

" Of course."

" What about ? "

" You know what about. No need to jaw all that over again," growled Lovell. " Will you go ? "

Jimmy Silver looked steadily at his chum. He had never seen Lovell quite in this humour before; and his own patience—extensive as it was—was beginning to wear thin.

" Will you go ? " repeated Lovell irritably.

" Look here, old fellow," said Jimmy at last, " there's nothing to fight the new fellow about. You tried to play a trick on him and he turned the tables on you. Take it good-temperedly. We can't expect always to score off the Moderns. No need to lose one's temper over it when it goes the other way."

" Who's lost his temper ? "

" You seem to have. Anyhow, let's have tea now, and talk it over after tea."

Jimmy Silver had a well-founded hope that after tea Lovell would be in a better humour. A comfortable meal always had a mollifying effect. But Arthur Edward Lovell was not to be mollified.

" I don't want tea now," he answered. " I've told you I'm going to settle with that Modern cad first. Will you go as my second ? "

" What the dickens am I to say to him—and to the rest ? " exclaimed Jimmy impatiently. " Am I to say that you want to fight the chap because he got the better of a jape, and you can't take it like a sportsman ? "

" Will you go ? "

" No, I won't ! " rapped out Jimmy sharply. " You ought not to want to fight him, and I won't have a hand in any such rot ! "

" I'll ask somebody else, then."

" Look here, Lovell——"

Slam!

The door closed behind Arthur Edward Lovell, with a concussion that rang the length of the passage. His heavy footsteps died away towards the stairs.

" Oh ! " murmured Newcome.

Jimmy Silver compressed his lips.

" I'm getting fed up with this," he said.

" If Lovell chooses to play the goat, let him. Let's have tea."

And the three chums sat down to tea—not in the cheerfullest mood.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Wanted—a Second.

" MORN ! " " Hallo, old top ! "

Mornington and Erroll were in the quad, when Lovell joined them, with a black brow. They smiled as he came up. As a matter of fact, they had been talking of his misadventure, but his look warned them not to make any reference to it.

" I'm looking for a second," explained Lovell.

" Fight on ? " asked Mornington, with interest.

" Yes."

" Who's the happy victim ? "

" A new Modern cad—Loring."

" Oh ! You're fightin' him ? "

" Yes; and I want a second. Will you stand by me, and take my challenge to the cad ? "

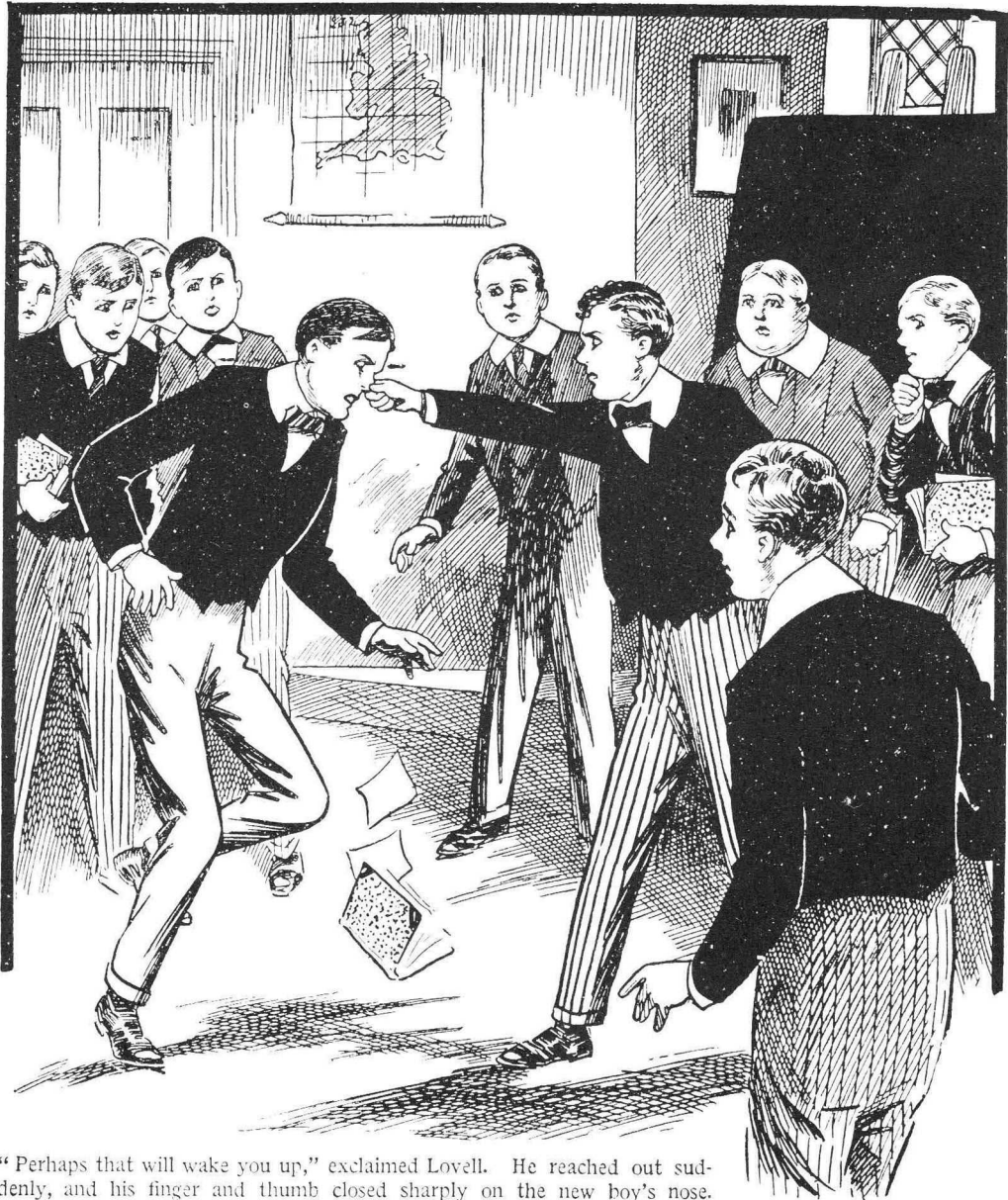
Mornington glanced at Erroll, who compressed his lips a little. It was easy to see that Erroll disapproved of Lovell's bitterness. Mornington generally took his cue from his chum.

" Hadn't you better think about it first, old scout ? " he asked. " It's rather sudden, isn't it, to drop on a new kid before he's been a couple of hours in the school——"

" I'm not asking you for advice; I'm asking you to act as my second."

" Oh," said Morny, nettled at Lovell's tone. " In that case, you can ask somebody else."

" That will do."



"Perhaps that will wake you up," exclaimed Lovell. He reached out suddenly, and his finger and thumb closed sharply on the new boy's nose. There was a buzz of excitement from the Fourth. (See page 233.)

Lovell walked away.

"His lordship is wrathful!" grinned Mornington. "I suppose it's time for common

mortals to tremble and bow the knee! By gad!" And Mornington shrugged his shoulders.

Lovell's eyes gleamed under his knitted brows as he strode away. His own chums considered him in the wrong, and their opinion was evidently shared by Mornington and Erroll. At any other time that might have had some effect on Lovell, who was really at bottom a good-natured and easy-going fellow. But all the events of the afternoon had combined to sour him, and he was now in a bitter and obstinate temper, and not at all inclined to listen to the gentle voice of reason.

Conroy and Van Ryn and Pons were coming away from the school shop with supplies for tea, and Lovell bore down on them. The three Colonials had not yet heard of his adventure, and were not even aware of the existence of Oliver Loring, the new boy on the Modern side.

"Will one of you fellows second me?" asked Lovell. "I've got a fight on with a Modern chap."

"Like a bird," answered Conroy at once. "I'm your man!"

"Thanks."

"Not at all—it's a pleasure," said the Australian junior, laughing. "Who's the man—Dodd, or Cook, or Doyle, or Towle, or the merry Leggett?"

"A relation of Dodd, I think; a chap named Loring. He's in the Fourth, in Manders' house."

"Fighting a new chap?" said Van Ryn, curiously.

"Yes; a sneaking worm of a Modern!"

"Well, I'm your man," said Conroy. "I suppose you don't want to fight him before tea?"

"I want to get it arranged for to-day. Will you cut over and see him? You'll find him in Manders' house."

"Right you are."

Conroy handed his parcel to Pons.

"I'll wait for you in your study," said Lovell.

"Right."

Conroy started at once for Mr. Manders' house, and Lovell went into the schoolhouse with Van Ryn and Pons, and up to No. 3 study. Both the Colonials were looking rather curious, wondering why Lovell did not

call on one of his own study-mates to back him up. However, that was not their business, and they did not remark upon it.

Lovell threw himself into the study armchair, while Pons and Van Ryn were getting tea, to wait for Conroy's return.

A fat face looked into the doorway.

Tubby Muffin rolled into the study, and blinked in a very friendly way at the two Colonials. He did not observe Lovell in the armchair for the moment.

"I've dropped in to lend you fellows a hand," he remarked.

"Drop out again," suggested Pons.

"Ahem! If you're going to cook those sosses, you'd better leave 'em to me. I'm an old hand at frying sosses. I say, I've had an awful time this afternoon," said Tubby Muffin pathetically, "simply awful! I've been landed in a fearful fight with a crowd of Bagshot bounders. It's exhausted me, and I'm awfully hungry."

"Oh, go ahead," said Pons, relinquishing the frying-pan to the fat Classical. "If you are going to stay to tea, you may as well lend a hand."

"As you're so pressing, old fellow, I will stay to tea," said Tubby Muffin affably. "Leave the sosses to me; they'll be a dream when I've done 'em. I say, I'm covered with bruises. Fancy me, you know, standing up to Pankley and Poole and Putter, and several other fellows, all at once—"

"It wants some fancying!" grinned Pons.

"It's true, you know. It was all through Lovell, and his potty idee of taking the new kid to Bagshot and japing him."

"Eh?"

Tubby Muffin, frying-pan in hand, had his back to the armchair, and was not yet aware that Lovell was seated in the shady corner of the study. Lovell's eyes were beginning to gleam, but he did not speak.

"Loring turned the tables on Lovell," rattled on the fat Classical. "Instead of being planted at Bagshot, you know, he stranded Lovell and me there, and drove off with the trap. Lovell's got to pay for the trap. He, he, he!"

"Oh!"

"Lovell's no end waxy," chuckled Tubby

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Declined With Thanks.

Muffin. "The Bagshot bounders gave him the frog's march. Serve him right! He, he, he! I put up a terrific fight, and got away, leaving the road fairly strewn with them. My knuckles are quite sore with knocking down Bagshot fellows! Fancy that!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I don't see the joke. What are you cackling at?"

"You're the joke, old top," said Van Ryn, laughing. "Keep it up. How many did you leave for dead?"

"Well, I didn't exactly leave 'em for dead," said Tubby cautiously. "They were fairly knocked out, though. If Lovell had put up a fight like me, he'd have got away all right. He hadn't it in him, you know. Lovell's not much of a fighting man. Not like me!"

"You fat idiot!" came a roar from the shady corner.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Tubby Muffin jumped.

"Wha-a-at—who—oh! is that you, Lovell, old chap? So glad you got away, dear boy. I say, that was a splendid stunt of yours, planting the new kid at Bagshot, wasn't it?"

"Br-r-r-r!"

"You needn't be waxy with me," said Muffin. "I didn't give you the frog's march, Lovell. And I've had to walk all the way home from Bagshot, same as you did. I've a jolly good mind to thrash that Modern chap. I would only I'm rather tired with knocking down Bagshot fellows. My poor knuckles——"

"You podgy worm!" growled Lovell. "You bolted before they could get near you."

"Look here, Lovell——"

"Oh, shut up!"

"I'll shut up when I please," answered Tubby Muffin independently. "This isn't your study, Lovell. I say, Pong, is this all the sosses?"

"That's the lot."

"What are you fellows going to have, then?"

The study door opened before the chums of No. 3 could reply to that interesting question.

CONROY of the Fourth sauntered into Mr. Manders' house, and made his way to the Fourth-Form quarters. There was a sound of merry voices and laughter from Tommy Dodd's study as the Australian junior tapped at the door.

"Come in!" sang out Tommy Dodd.

Conroy entered.

The three Tommies were at tea—cricket had given them a good appetite, and there was a handsome spread on the table—partly on account of the good appetite and partly in honour of a guest in the study. The guest was Oliver Loring, the new junior.

"Hallo, old bean!" said Tommy Dodd, as the Australian junior came in. "Looking for a tea? If so, you've come to the right shop."

"No; not exactly. I've brought over a challenge."

"Some of your Classical dufers want me to slaughter them?" yawned Tommy. "I'm the man to do it! Who is it wants to be put on the casualty list?"

"You're not the man, Dodd. I'm looking for a new chap, named Loring——"

"Little me?" said the new junior.

Tommy Dodd waved his hand towards the guest.

"That's Loring," he said.

Conroy looked at the new junior. He rather liked Oliver Loring's looks; but he was there on business, and he proceeded with it.

"You know Lovell, of our side, I suppose?" he said.

"I've met him," answered Loring, with a smile; and there was a loud chortle from the three Tommies.

Well, I suppose you've met him, as he's sent you a challenge. I'm his second, and I've come over to make arrangements."

"Does Lovell want to fight me, then?" asked Loring, raising his eyebrows.

"Looks like it, as he's challenged you."

"I don't quite see why. I certainly don't want to fight him."

"Am I to tell him that?" asked Conroy, rather dryly.

The new junior knitted his brows thoughtfully.

"Yes, you can tell him that," he said at last, after a long pause. "I don't see anything to fight about. He tried to jape me, and I turned the joke on him. He ought to take it like a sportsman."

"Certainly he ought!" said Tommy Dodd, warmly. "I'm surprised at Lovell—and at you, too, Conroy, for backing him up in playing the goat like this."

"I don't know what the row's about. Lovell asked me to be his second—that's all I know."

"Then I'll tell you."

And Tommy Dodd explained.

Conroy grinned as he listened.

"Poor old Lovell!" he said. "It was a mess-up, and no mistake. It's no wonder he's waxy, but—but there's nothing for a real fight about. If I'd known——" He paused. "Well, what am I to say to Lovell? He seems bent on a scrap."

"Tell him to think it over, and leave it till he's cooler," said Loring. "If there's an injured party in the case, I'm the man, not Lovell; but I haven't come over to the Classical side breathing fire and slaughter. If he's worried about paying for the trap, I don't mind paying for it, as I had it. But I'm not going to fight him."

"Chaps generally fight when they're asked."

Loring coloured a little.

"I'm not afraid of him, if that's what you mean," he exclaimed. "If he's in the same frame of mind to-morrow, I'll do as he wishes, but I won't fight him to-day, and that settles it. He ought to have more sense."

"Well, I'll tell him that," said Conroy, and he turned to the door.

"And you can tell him from me that he's a silly ass!" exclaimed Tommy Dodd wrathfully, "and you can tell him, too, that if he's spoiling for a fight, I'm his man, if he likes, to-day or to-morrow or any day."

"My dear man, you can tell him all that yourself," said Conroy. "One row is enough at a time. Ta-ta."

And the Australian junior left the study, leaving the Modern juniors looking rather grim.

Oliver Loring glanced at his companions, his colour deepening.

"You fellows——" he began; and stopped.

"Ahem! Another cup of tea?" asked Tommy Dodd.

"Never mind the tea now: Do you fellows think I ought to have taken up that silly ass's challenge?"

"H'm!"

"There's nothing to fight about. By to-morrow the chap will most likely have got over his wax, and will be laughing over the affair himself."

"H'm!"

Silence fell upon the three Tommies.

"If you think I've shown the white feather——" began Loring hotly.

"I—I don't think so," murmured Tommy Dodd. "But I'm pretty certain that every fellow on the Classical side will think so, as soon as they hear of this."

"There's nothing to fight about."

"Oh, I know—but there generally is nothing to fight about. But fellows do fight, all the same."

"The fact is, I don't dislike Lovell," said Loring uncomfortably. "He's a bit of an ass, and seems to have an uncertain temper; but the fact is, I like him rather than otherwise. I don't see why I should hammer him for nothing."

"He's asked you to."

"He will change his mind by to-morrow, most likely."

"And if he doesn't?"

"If he doesn't, he can go ahead, of course. I sha'n't refuse his challenge a second time."

"That's all right, then," said Tommy Dodd placably. "After all, you're not called on to fight your first day here, after a long train journey. You must be a bit tired."

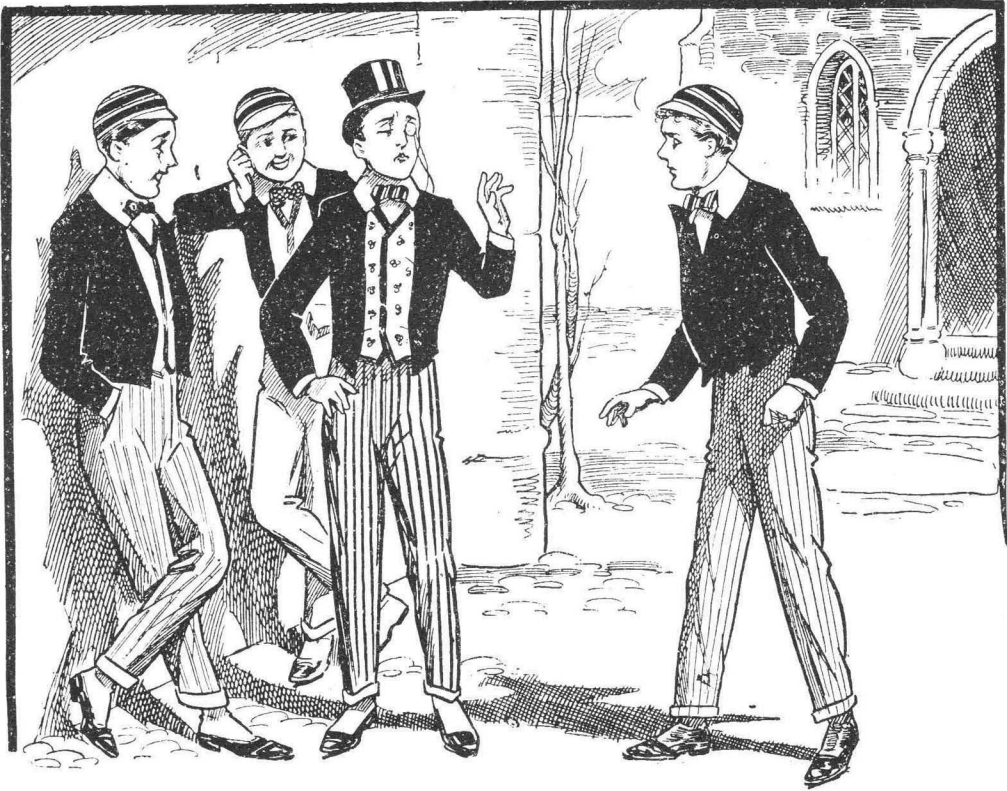
"That wasn't my reason."

"Your reason, old top, is that you're a bit of an ass, and don't know Rookwood manners and customs yet. Never mind; to-morrow will do."

"You think Lovell will want to fight me to-morrow?"

"I know he will."

"Well, if he wants to, let him. Pass the jam."



“My dear man,” said Adolphus, with a wave of the hand. “Wander away! Vanish! Give us a rest!” (See page 210.)

And the subject was dropped in Tommy Dodd’s study; though the three Tommies gave Loring rather curious looks from time to time.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Baffled.

ARTHUR EDWARD LOVELL rose from the armchair as Conroy came into No. 3 on the Classical side.

“Is it fixed?” he asked.

“Not quite.”

“I suppose the cad is going to meet me, isn’t he?” exclaimed Lovell.

“He doesn’t seem very keen on it,” answered Conroy. “The fact is, he’s declined the challenge, Lovell.”

Lovell set his teeth.

“Then he’s a coward as well as a rotter!” he said.

“I don’t know whether he’s suffering from cold feet or not; but I don’t see that he’s a rotter, Lovell,” said the Australian junior. “From what I hear, you were trying to fool him, and he got the best of the bargain. Nothing rotten in that.”

Lovell grunted.

“Why not let the matter drop?” suggested Conroy. “There really doesn’t seem much reason for two chaps to hammer one another in earnest over a trifling affair like that.”

“Rubbish!”

“Well, I think you’re playing the goat,” said Conroy sharply. “It’s not sporting to show so much temper over getting the worst of a joke.”

"Oh, rot! I suppose I can lick a Modern cad if I like. And if he won't take my challenge and meet me in the gym., I'll go over and look for him. That will bring him up to the scratch, I think."

And Lovell tramped out of the study.

"Silly ass!" commented Conroy. And the three Colonials sat down to tea—with Tubby Muffin.

Lovell went down the stairs with a black brow, and tramped across the quadrangle to Mr. Manders' house. His wilful mind was made up; the refusal of the new junior to meet him only added fuel to his anger and bitterness.

He did not believe that Loring was "funky," and the refusal seemed to him scornful and contemptuous, as if he were being treated like a fractious child that could be disregarded. He was bitterly determined to show the new junior that he could not be disregarded.

Several Modern juniors were in the hall in Mr. Manders' house when Lovell came in. Lovell's black look was not at all propitiatory, and it drew hostile glances on him at once. Moderns and Classicals were generally ready for a "row," and Towle and Lacy, and McCarthy and the other Modern fellows were justly incensed at a Classical junior stalking into the house as if it belonged to him. There was a howl at once.

"Classical cad!"

"Where did you dig up that face, Lovell?"

"Travel off!"

Lovell gave a glare round.

"I'm looking for a Modern funk!" he retorted.

"No funks on this side—all on the Classical side!" answered Towle.

"Cheeky cad!" roared Lacy. "Kick him out!"

Five or six Modern juniors gathered round Lovell. He backed away a little, clenching his fists.

"Look here——" he began.

"Outside!"

"I'm after a funk——"

"Kick him out!"

"Bump him!"

There was a rush at Lovell, and the Classical junior went spinning through the doorway.

The Moderns roared as he rolled down the steps.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Hallo, he's coming back!" yelled Towle. "Look out!"

Lovell, with a flaming face, came charging back furiously. He was too enraged to care for the odds.

But the odds were rather too much for him, all the same. He was collared and whirled back to the door, and hurled out again, amid peals of laughter.

This time he came into collision with a couple of seniors who were coming into the house—Knowles and Catesby of the Sixth.

"What the thump——" gasped Knowles, as the Classical junior crashed into him. "Why—what—what——"

"Yaroo!" howled Lovell.

"Perfect!" piped Towle; and the Modern juniors vanished from the scene as if by magic.

But Lovell, with Knowles' grip on his collar, could not vanish. He wriggled in the grasp of the angry Modern prefect.

"What does this mean, you young hooligan?" exclaimed Knowles, shaking him.

"Let me go, you bully!" growled Lovell.

Knowles let him go, after administering a severe shaking and a cuff or two. Lovell staggered out into the quadrangle rather dizzily.

He made a step towards Mr. Manders' house again, but stopped. It was evidently useless to seek to track out his enemy in the enemy's quarters just then.

With a grim brow he tramped back to the Classical side.

He went into the Hall to tea, not caring to seek the society of his chums at that juncture.

After tea, however, he had to turn up in the end study for prep.

He was not looking amiable when he came in.

"Hallo! Where have you been all this time?" said Jimmy Silver, with forced cheerfulness. Lovell's persistent bad temper was beginning to get on the nerves of the end study.

Lovell gave him a sulky look.

"That cad's refused my challenge," he said.

"Shows his sense," growled Raby.

"Shows he's a funk, you mean."

"Oh, I mean anything you like," said Raby resignedly. "Anything for a quiet life."

"I went over for him, and they chucked me out," said Lovell, glowering. "He's hiding somewhere behind the rest."

"Let him hide, and be bothered to him!" said Newcome.

"For goodness' sake, Lovell, be sensible, and let the matter drop!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver. "This is really getting too much of a good thing. What's the chap done, after all?"

"Of course, I expected you to be down on me," said Lovell savagely. "That won't make any difference, though. The cad will have to turn up to classes to-morrow, and I shall nail him then."

"Are you going to fight him in the form-room, under Bootles' nose?" asked Raby, sarcastically.

"I shall find a chance of cornering the cad where he can't dodge, and can't hide behind a gang of Moderns."

"Br-r-r-r-r-r!"

Prep. in the end study that evening was not cheerful.

When work was done the Co. were glad to escape downstairs, and leave Arthur Edward Lovell alone with his bad temper.

Lovell ground through his lines for Mr. Bootles after prep. with a dark brow. He scribbled the lines hurriedly and carelessly, and it was not surprising that when he took them to his form-master's study Mr. Bootles gave him a lecture upon slovenliness, and ordered him to write out the imposition over again.

Arthur Edward returned to the end study in a savage mood, choked with wrath. Somewhat unreasonably, he put it all down to the account of the new junior. Oliver Loring was to pay for it all on the morrow, if Lovell had his way.

The repetition of the lines occupied him till bed-time. When the Classical Fourth went to their dormitory Lovell's brow was black and sullen, and it drew smiling glances from the other fellows.

So far as the Classical fellows could see,

Lovell was sulking because he had got the worst of a jape on the Moderns, and they did not conceal their opinion that he was making a fool of himself.

Perhaps, deep down in his heart, Lovell realised that they were right; and that he was, in point of fact, making a fool of himself. But if he realised that, it did not change his humour or lessen the bitterness that rankled in his breast.

He turned in, without answering his chums' cheery "good-night." He was the last in the Classical Fourth dormitory to fall asleep; and when he slept he dreamed of punching Oliver Loring's good-looking face, and rendering it anything but good looking. Arthur Edward Lovell had let the sun go down upon his wrath.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Wanted—A Second.

JIMMY SILVER gave his chum a rather anxious glance in the morning when the Classical Fourth turned out at the clang of the rising-bell. Sunshine streamed in at the high windows of the dormitory, and on that sunny morning the Rookwood fellows turned out in cheery spirits. Lovell met Jimmy Silver's eyes, and coloured a little.

Like the prophet of old, Arthur Edward Lovell had said to himself that he did well to be angry; but in spite of himself, as it were, a great deal of his sullen anger had evaporated during the night.

He gave Jimmy Silver a nod and a rather forced grin.

Jimmy smiled.

"Lovely morning!" he remarked. "We can get a run in the quad. before brekker. Pull up your socks!"

"Right-o!" said Lovell.

The Fistical Four were first out of the dormitory, and they came out quite cheerily into the quadrangle. In the distance, the three Tommies could be seen sniffing the morning air; but Jimmy was relieved to note that the new junior was not with them.

Jimmy led the way, and the Fistical Four took their trot round the playing-fields before breakfast. They came in when the bell rang,

THE
GREYFRIARS GALLERY
IN VERSE

By Dick Penfold



No. 9: Herbert Vernon-Smith



Who, when he came to Greyfriars School,
Refused to knuckle to its rule?
Who went astray, and played the fool?
THE BOUNDER!

Who sought to settle Wharton's hash,
And made a bold and daring dash
For his position—then went smash?
THE BOUNDER!

Who gambled, smoked, and stayed out late?
And sowed wild oats at such a rate
We thought "the sack" would be his fate?
THE BOUNDER!

Who, though he fairly went the pace,
Could hold his own in sport or race,
And of his revels showed no trace?
THE BOUNDER!

Who, after many terms, became
Acutely conscious of his shame,
And henceforth strove to play the game?
THE BOUNDER!

Who, former failings swept aside,
Has won such high renown and pride
That seldom is the name applied—
THE BOUNDER!

and caught sight of Loring, in company with Tommy Dodd and Co. now, heading for Mr. Manders' house. Lovell's eyes glinted at the sight of him, and he half-stopped; but Jimmy drew him on towards the school-house.

"Brekker!" he said.

And they went in.

Lovell's chums hoped that now he had had time to calm down, his irritation would disappear, and that the whole affair would drop. For that reason they wanted to keep him from coming into contact with Loring. But when the Fourth Form turned up for morning lessons there was no choice about the matter.

Oliver Loring came into the form-room with the rest of the Modern Fourth, looking fresh and smiling and good-humoured—his face a contrast to Lovell's clouded looks. His eyes fell on Lovell, who was already in the form-room, and was eyeing him grimly. Mr. Bootles had not yet arrived.

Loring paused a moment, and then, as if suddenly making up his mind, came over to the Fistical Four, who were lounging about their desks till the Form-master came in.

Lovell breathed hard, and his eyes flashed. For a moment he supposed that the new junior was approaching him with hostile intent, and his fists clenched instinctively.

But Loring soon showed that his intention was not hostile.

"I seem to have annoyed you a good deal yesterday, Lovell, without intending it," he said, with a frankness of manner that conciliated three of the four at once. "I'm sorry if you feel yourself injured in any way. As you were trying to pull my leg, I thought it fair play to turn the tables on you if I could. It was simply a joke."

Lovell eyed him, too surprised to speak.

"If you'd landed me at Bagshot in an absurd position, it would have been rather rotten for me," said Loring. "But I hope I should have taken it as a joke. I don't see any need for ill-feeling. What do you say to forgetting about the whole matter, and saying nothing more about it?"

Had Lovell's better nature been uppermost he would certainly have responded to that appeal; but the sulky bitterness of the previous day was not quite finished yet.

"You don't want to have the gloves on, what?" he asked, with a curl of the lip.

"I didn't mean that."

"Oh, I thought you did!"

"Lovell!" murmured Jimmy Silver.

Lovell gave him a steely look.

"You needn't chip in, Jimmy. I suppose Loring knows best whether he's afraid."

Loring crimsoned.

"Afraid!" he exclaimed.

"When a fellow dodges an invitation to the gym., it's generally taken that he's got the wind up," answered Lovell, mockingly.

"He, he, he!" came from Tubby Muffin.

"You cheeky ass, Lovell!" shouted Tommy Dodd.

Lovell looked across at him.

"What have you got to say?" he inquired.

"This much—if you want the gloves on, I'm your man as soon as lessons are over!" exclaimed Tommy, hotly.

"Is Loring hiding behind you, as he was behind a gang of Modern cads yesterday?" sneered Lovell.

Loring's eyes flashed.

"I'm not hiding behind anyone!" he exclaimed. "You seem to misunderstand me, Lovell. I spoke to you as a decent chap; you've answered me like a cad."

"Hear, hear!" from Tommy Dodd.

Lovell smiled, a rather evil smile.

"So you're screwing up your courage at last, are you?" he said. "You're not a funk after all, what?"

"Shut up, Lovell!" growled Jimmy Silver, quite ashamed of his chum at that moment.

"Why?" jeered Lovell. "If the fellow's not a funk, he will put his hands up. A chap on the Classical side doesn't need asking twice. Loring seems to need asking a dozen times, and then he doesn't come up to the scratch."

"Punch his nose, bedad!" ejaculated Tommy Doyle fiercely. "Sure, if ye don't punch his nose, Loring, I'll punch yours myself."

"Oh, he couldn't punch a rabbit's nose," said Lovell. "There, you cad! Perhaps that will wake you up!"

Lovell reached out suddenly, and his finger

and thumb closed sharply on the new boy's nose. It was only for an instant. The Classical junior intended to tweak Loring's nose; but the tweak never came off. Loring's right shot out as if it were suddenly electrified, and Lovell caught it with his chin. He gave a gasp and tumbled over backwards, sprawling at full length on the floor of the form-room.

There was a buzz of excitement from the Fourth.

"Well hit!" roared Tommy Dodd, in great delight.

"Oh!" gasped Lovell.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Arthur Edward Lovell scrambled to his feet, and in a moment more he would have been upon his enemy. But at that moment Mr. Bootles walked into the form-room.

"Cave!" muttered Rawson.

Lovell dropped his hands, breathing hard, his eyes burning at the new junior. Mr. Bootles blinked round at the excited Fourth.

"What?—what? Why are you not in your places, boys? Take your seats at once! What?—what?"

"After lessons!" muttered Lovell, in a choked voice.

Oliver Loring nodded.

The Fourth Form went to their desks.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

Great News!

"LETTER for you, Jimmy!"
Tubby Muffin came up to the Fistical Four in the quadrangle after dinner. Jimmy Silver and Raby and Newcombe were arguing with Lovell. The latter was unwilling to postpone the combat with Oliver Loring till after the day's lessons; he said savagely that there was plenty of time before afternoon school. But his three chums put the veto on that.

"You're not going into the form-room with a prize nose and a fancy eye!" Jimmy Silver declared. "Leave it till after lessons. You'll be able to keep your beauty marks out of sight till the morning, then."

"Do you think that funky cad can hurt me?" snorted Lovell, contemptuously.

"He doesn't seem funky, and I don't see that he's a cad," answered Jimmy Silver.

"Are you backing that Modern cad up against me?" roared Lovell.

"Not a whit. We're backing you up, though you don't deserve it, as you're acting like a silly, hot-headed chump!" retorted Jimmy Silver. "And you won't lick Loring so easily as you think. I've got an eye for a fellow's form, and I think he looks pretty hefty."

"Oh, you're a dummy!"

"Well, suppose you do wallop him," said Raby. "You don't want him to take a black eye to show Manders in class this afternoon. Whichever way it works out, it's better to leave it till after classes."

Lovell growled.

"Letter for you, Jimmy."

"Oh, bother!" said Jimmy, ungratefully. "Roll away, Tubby."

"But there might be a remittance in it, you know," said Tubby Muffin.

"Bother!"

"If that's how you thank a chap, Jimmy, for bringing you a letter——" said the fat Classical, in an aggrieved tone.

"Oh, if you've brought it, hand it over," said Jimmy.

Tubby Muffin extracted a letter from his pocket, and handed it over, watching the captain of the Fourth eagerly. If there was a remittance in that letter, Tubby intended to be early with a demand for a loan.

Jimmy's face brightened as he glanced at the letter.

"Oh, good!" he exclaimed, as he opened the envelope.

"How much?" gasped Tubby Muffin, breathlessly.

"Eh! It's not a remittance, fathead."

"Why, you said it was good——"

"Ass! It's from my Cousin Phyllis."

"Your Cousin Phyllis!" repeated Tubby Muffin, with indignant scorn. "Bless your Cousin Phyllis! Bother your Cousin Phyllis! If I'd known it was only from a girl, I'd have left it in the rack till it was mouldy. Bother—yaroooh—yoop—leave off kicking me, Lovell, you beast."

Tubby Muffin fled.

"What's Phyllis got to say, Jimmy?" asked Lovell, quite amiably.

Jimmy grinned.

Arthur Edward Lovell thought a very great deal of Jimmy's Cousin Phyllis, as did Jimmy himself—and with reason, for Phyllis certainly was a very charming young lady. For the moment, Lovell had forgotten even Oliver Loring and his enmity towards that harmless youth.

"Is she coming?" asked Raby, almost equally interested.

"Saturday?" inquired Newcome.

"Yes."

"Hurray!"

The Fistical Four were evidently pleased. For a whole term it had been arranged that Cousin Phyllis should pay a visit to Rookwood, and that the end study should "spread" itself on that great occasion. There was going to be tea in the study, and a great celebration generally, and canoeing on the river if the weather was fine. And the weather looked like being fine.

"Fixed for Saturday?" asked Lovell, quite cheerily.

"Yes, I asked Phil to make it Saturday, if she could, and she's made it Saturday. She's bringing a couple of friends with her—two school kids she knows at Cliff House, the girls' school near Greyfriars, you remember. You fellows know them, Marjorie Hazeldene and Clara Trevlyn. So it will be quite a merry party."

"Good egg!" said Raby, heartily.

"Phyllis is going to try my canoe," said Lovell. "I hope the weather won't change for the worse."

"And I hope your features will be normal again by Saturday," said Jimmy Silver grimly.

"Eh? Nothing's the matter with my features now, fathead."

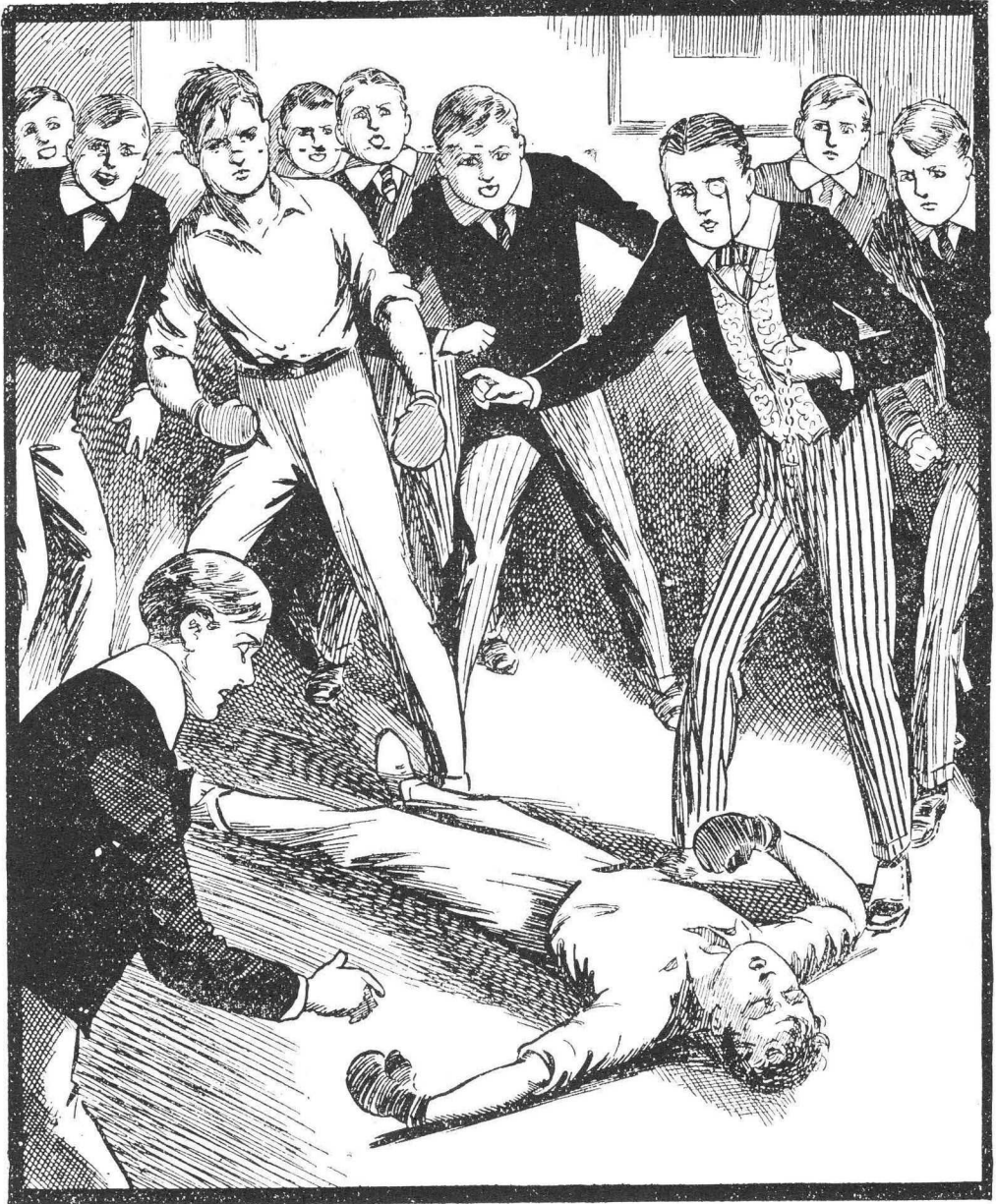
"You haven't had your fight with Loring yet."

"Oh!" exclaimed Lovell.

"I'll tell you what," suggested Raby, with a grin. "Make it up with him."

"After he's knocked me down in the form-room!" exclaimed Lovell angrily.

"Well, you were pulling his boko, and that



The gleeful Modern juniors did not have to wait long for the coup-de-grace. Lovell was on his back in a few seconds, laid there by a terrific drive straight from the shoulder. Mornington began to count.
(See page 240.)

makes it even. Besides, you were in the wrong."

"Oh, talk sense!" growled Lovell.

"Look here——"

"I shall lick that Modern cad easily enough. I don't suppose for a moment that he'll leave a mark on me," said Lovell. "Perhaps we'd better have the gloves on, come to think of it."

"You'll certainly have the gloves on," grunted Jimmy Silver.

"I was thinking of the knuckles——"

"Time you thought again, then."

"Well, I agree to having the gloves on," snapped Lovell. "And the sooner it's over the better, I think——"

"Blessed if I believe you can think at all," said Jimmy. "We'd better see Jane, and tip her to give the study an extra rub or two. It can do with it. And we shall want some flowers—the Head's gardener will work that, for a half-crown or so. What shall we put the flowers in on Saturday?"

"We've got the jam-pots," said Raby.

Jimmy sniffed.

"Jam-pots won't do with distinguished visitors," he said. "We had an art pot, only that ass Lovell knocked it over. Bulkeley's got a couple of rather decent vases in his study——"

"He won't lend them to us."

"He might. He may be going out on Saturday, and in that case he can lend them to us after he's gone."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Of course, it will have to be understood that Lovell doesn't knock them over——"

Snort from Lovell.

"And we can have Townsend's new square of carpet to put down for the occasion," said Jimmy Silver. "Towny will lend it to us——"

"More likely he won't."

"He will if we hold his head under the tap till he does."

"Oh! Yes! Quite so."

"We've got to make the place decent, with lady visitors coming; we don't have lady visitors every day. I only hope Lovell won't have a black eye to show them. How the thump shall we explain it, if he does?"

"Accident with a punch-ball is the usual thing."

"You silly chumps!" roared Lovell. "Do you think that Modern worm can give me a black eye?"

"Well, let's hope not. If you only have a swollen nose——"

"I sha'n't have a swollen nose——"

"You can explain that you ran it against something hard, without mentioning that it was Loring's fist. But——"

"Oh, rats!"

Arthur Edward Lovell stalked away in great dudgeon, leaving his chums to discuss the distinguished visit—to which, truth to tell, they gave more thought than to Lovell's forthcoming scrap with Loring of the Modern Fourth.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

The Fight.

JIMMY SILVER and Co. did not see Oliver Loring during afternoon lessons, the Moderns being engaged on their own side with Mr. Manders. Jimmy and Raby and Newcome were not, in point of fact, wasting much thought upon him—and Lovell noted it with resentment. His quarrel was not, in his own eyes, the trifling matter his chums seemed to consider it.

After lessons Lovell's brow was clouded as he joined his chums in the corridor.

"You're going to see about it before tea, I suppose?" he said abruptly.

"After tea will do," answered Jimmy. "There's lots of time before Saturday."

"I mean about my fight with Loring."

"Oh! I—I thought you meant about refurbishing up the study. All right—I'll cut over and see Loring before tea."

"I'll wait for you," grunted Lovell.

Lovell waited in the doorway of the school-house while Jimmy Silver went to the Modern side. Jimmy came back in a few minutes.

"Six o'clock, in the gym.," he said.

"Somewhere quieter would have been better," growled Lovell. "Some dashed perfect may take it on himself to interfere, if there's some real thumping."

"My dear man, I should take it upon myself to interfere, without waiting for a prefect, if there was anything too strong," answered Jimmy Silver.

"Oh, you're a silly ass!"
"Fathead!"

With that exchange of compliments, the chums parted for the time, and did not meet again till tea-time in the end study. Jimmy spent the interval in giving that celebrated apartment a few artistic touches. It was astonishing the number of things that required putting away, in readiness for the clean sweep that the boys' maid was to be induced to make—for a financial consideration—before Saturday. It was generally agreed that the end study was to be as spick and span as a new pin—chiefly for Cousin Phyllis's sake, but also to show Marjorie and Clara that boys' studies were quite as neat and tidy as the girls' studies at Cliff House.

After that useful personage, the boys' maid, had done her best, and the Fistical Four had done their best, and Bulkeley's vases had been borrowed for flowers, and Towny's new carpet for the floor, Jimmy considered that the end study would equal anything at Cliff House School. And there would be no need to mention that the study wasn't always in that glorious state.

After tea there was a general adjournment to the gym.

The Fistical Four turned up there in good time—and most of the Classical Fourth followed them. Lovell's quarrel with Oliver Loring was not taken very seriously by anybody but Lovell himself, but everyone was interested in a fight, which promised to be unusually tough. Lovell was well known as a fighting-man, and the general opinion of Loring was that he was "hefty." As Loring was a Modern, all the Classics bestowed their very best wishes upon Arthur Edward Lovell; but Oliver Loring had an equally hearty backing on the other side of Rookwood.

Lovell's "row" with Loring, and the fight on his second day at Rookwood, had brought the new fellow into a prominence not usual at all for new fellows. He might have gone

a term with half the fellows hardly knowing his name. Now he was quite well known to all the lower school, and he owed his celebrity to Lovell.

Nearly all the Fourth, Classical and Modern, turned up in the gym., with a contingent of the Third and the Second. Adolphus Smythe and Co., of the Shell, came loftily along, to look on, and to make bets among their nutty selves on the result.

"They've brought him up to the scratch," remarked Lovell, with a sneer, as Oliver Loring came in with the three Tommies.

"Rot!" said Raby. "The chap's got pluck enough, from his looks."

"He's acted like a funk!"

"Bosh!"

"Look here, Raby——"

"Keep your wool on," said Raby. "You're not going to fight me, old scout. Keep it for Loring. He looks as if he can do with all you can give him."

"I expect I shall smash him up in a couple of rounds."

"Blessed are those that don't expect—they don't get disappointed," grinned Raby.

"Ready!" called out Tommy Dodd.

"Ready and waiting," growled Lovell.

"We won't keep you waiting any longer," said Tommy, tartly. "Off with your jacket, Oliver."

Jimmy Silver helped Lovell off with his acket, and on with the gloves, while the Tommies were attending to their champion. Lovell was angry and restless, and eager to begin. Loring was quite calm and cool, but he had a determined look.

"Keep cool, old scout," murmured Jimmy to his principal.

"Who's not cool?" snapped Lovell.

"I mean, if you lose your temper, you're giving away chances."

"Who's losing his temper?"

Jimmy compressed his lips, and did not answer. He was feeling exasperated, but it was not a time to irritate Lovell. He was only too likely to lose his temper as it was; and that might easily spell defeat for him.

"Morny will keep time," said Tommy Dodd.

"Trot out your ticker, Morny."

"I'm your pippin!" answered Mornington.

He took out his handsome watch, as the crowd of juniors cleared back, leaving a ring for the champions.

"Ready?"

"Quite!" said Loring quietly.

"Of course!" grunted Lovell.

"Seconds out of the ring. Time!"

"Go it, ye cripples!" said Conroy.

"Go it, Lovell!"

"Pile in, Loring!"

The two combatants were already going it, without waiting for the encouraging shouts from the rival juniors of Rookwood.

Fifty fellows, at least, were crowded round them, watching eagerly, both Classicals and Moderns, with a keen desire to see their representative victorious.

The thick ring of onlookers screened the antagonists from general view, and as bouts with the gloves were common enough at Rookwood, the fight attracted no special attention.

Valentine Mornington kept his eyes on his watch.

The fight was according to rules, as were most of the little affairs of the kind at Rookwood.

Lovell was attacking hotly, and most of the onlookers considered that he was having things all his own way. Loring had to give ground several times, though he was very nimble in recovering it. He seemed to be contenting himself with defence—which gave an impression that he was not "up" to attack. But Tommy Dodd shook his head sagely.

"Oliver's taking his measure," he murmured to Cook and Doyle. "Oliver will wake up presently."

"Time!"

First round was over, and nobody a penny the worse, as Raby remarked. But in the second round matters were enlivened a little.

Lovell's face was growing darker and darker, and his eyes had an angry gleam. He forced the fighting recklessly, and several heavy blows came home on the Modern champion's face. But as Lovell, spent by a furious attack, hung fire, so to speak, Oliver Loring closed in on him with right and left, and the Classical junior went spinning.

Crash!

"Time!"

The call of time came fortunately for Lovell; for he could never have recovered in time to avoid being counted out.

He was looking heavy and groggy as Jimmy Silver helped him to a seat and sponged his heated face.

He gasped for breath, blinking dizzily.

The Modern juniors were grinning now with delightful anticipation. They had hoped, but hardly ventured to believe, that a new fellow would succeed in getting the upper hand of so well-known a fighting-man as Lovell. But their hopes were rising now; indeed, Leggett remarked that it looked like a "dead cert."

Jimmy Silver attended to his principal, but forbore from uttering the words that were upon his lips. It was not much use warning Lovell to keep his temper, and give himself a chance. Lovell seemed bent on losing his temper and losing the fight; and any word of advice in his present mood would only have rendered that result more certain.

"Time!"

Lovell stepped up at the call of time with alacrity enough. But his seeming advantage in the earlier rounds had vanished now. Oliver Loring had taken his measure, as Tommy Dodd described it. The two juniors were, as a matter of fact, about equal in strength and science, and certainly equal in pluck; and had Lovell been in his usual mood, it might have been "anybody's" fight. But with Lovell in a hasty, savage, passionate temper, the result was hardly doubtful. It gave Loring an advantage he could not fail to make the most of.

The Classical junior forced the fighting again, though every fellow present knew that he ought to have stalled off his opponent and given himself time to recover. Close on the finish of the round, the unlucky Lovell had pumped himself out, and the Modern junior pushed the fighting home. Jimmy Silver set his lips as he looked on.

Lovell was in the wrong—wilfully unreasonable—and Jimmy knew it. But Lovell was his chum; and it was bitter for Jimmy to see him knocked right and left like this. It was through his own folly, too; he would have



Jimmy Silver and Raby linked hands to make a "carriage," and Phyllis was rushed away towards the school. (See page 251.)

had at least an equal chance if he had kept cool. Jimmy's face grew darker as he watched.

Crash!

Arthur Edward Lovell was down again,

and again the call of time came luckily to save him from being counted out. Jimmy Silver raised him, and made a knee for him in grim silence.

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

Down and Out.

"LOOKS like a win for us, what?" smiled Tommy Dodd to his comrades.

"It does!" grinned Cook.

"Bedad, and it does intirely!" chuckled Tommy Doyle. "Hurray for us!"

"Modern side wins!" howled Leggett.

Lovell's eyes blazed.

"They've not won yet, Jimmy!" he muttered. "I'm good for licking that cad, anyhow. Hang him!"

Jimmy was silent.

"They're counting on a win already," said Lovell, bitterly. "Let 'em wait a bit! I'll knock that rotter out, or—" He gasped and broke off.

"Go in and win, old fellow," said Jimmy.

It was all he could say.

"Time!"

In the fourth round it was clear enough to all that Lovell was getting the worst of it. He had realised his mistake now, and was trying to keep cool; but it was too late. He was dizzy with the punishment he had already received, and he seemed in trouble for breath.

In spite of the gloves, considerable damage had been done. Lovell's nose was swelling already, and was pretty certain to swell a good deal more. Loring had not escaped scatheless, either.

"Fourth round!" smiled Tommy Dodd.

"What's the betting that it's the last?"

"Last but one!" opined Tommy Cook.

"And our man's winning!"

"You bet!"

"Go it, Modern!" roared a score of voices.

Loring was attacking all the time now, and Lovell stood up gallantly to the punishment he was getting. It seemed to Jimmy Silver, looking on, that the Modern junior was not hitting as hard as he might have done. It was odd enough that he should be sparing his adversary; but it certainly seemed to the captain of the Fourth that he was doing so.

Once or twice, when there was an opening for a drive that would have sent Lovell crashing, Loring did not put it in—and certainly he was wide-awake enough. When

Mornington called "Time!" again, Loring dropped his hands at once and stepped back. Lovell staggered almost blindly.

"Better call it off, old chap," Raby whispered.

Lovell gave him a bitter look.

"Do you think I'm beaten?" he almost hissed.

"Well, you see——"

"You're a fool, Raby!"

"Well, if you come to that, you are beaten, and everybody in the gym. can see it," said Raby tartly. "What's the good of playing the goat?"

"I'll jolly well show you."

"Hallo, here comes that chap. It's not time yet," said Newcome.

Oliver Loring was stepping across towards them, with a slight flush on his face. Lovell stared at him.

"I've had enough of this, if you have, Lovell," said Loring. "What's the good of going on? It's about nothing. Let's call it a draw and shake hands over it."

"I'll shake hands with you when I've licked you, if you like."

"You refuse, then?"

"Yes, you cad!"

"It's as you like, of course."

Loring stepped back to his own side.

"You see that!" muttered Lovell. "He knows I'm going to lick him, and he wants to crawl out of it."

"He knows he's going to lick you, you ass!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver, out of all patience.

"He wanted to let you down lightly."

"Oh, you're a silly fool!"

"Time!" came from Valentine Mornington.

Lovell almost staggered as he toed the line again. It was clear to everyone but himself that he was "done." It was, in point of fact, clear enough to himself, but he was determined not to admit it.

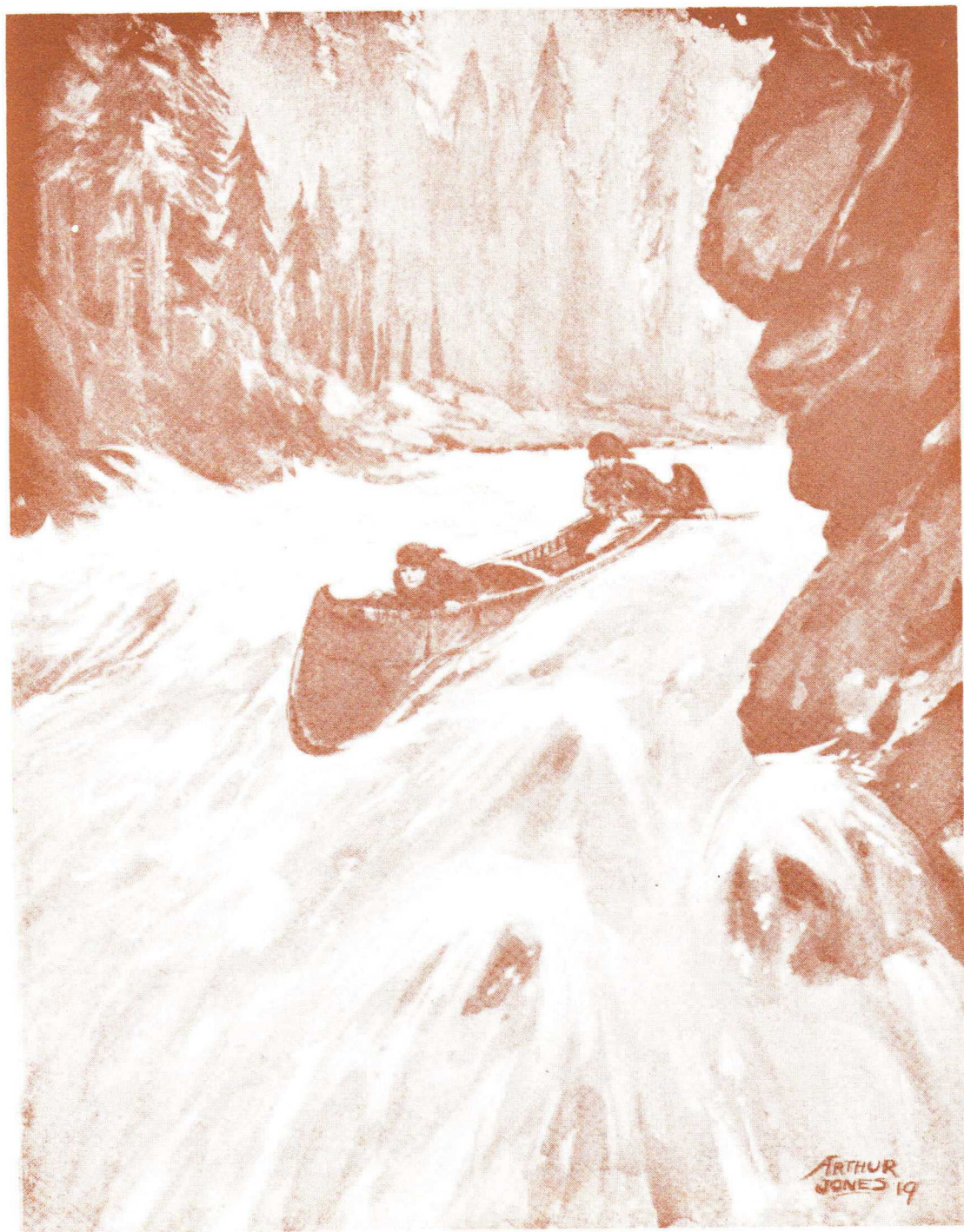
"Now for the coup-de-grace!" murmured Tommy Dodd.

The gleeful Modern juniors did not have to wait long for it. Lovell was on his back in a few seconds, laid there by a terrific drive straight from the shoulder.

Mornington began to count.



ALMOST IN THE TWINKLING OF AN EYE THE CANOE WAS CAPSIZED!



It seemed impossible that the canoe could live through such a plunge as that which lay before it!

Once, twice, Lovell made an effort to rise, but he sank back again. All eyes were upon him.

“ Eight—nine—— ”

Lovell struggled, and half rose, sinking back from the weakness of utter exhaustion.

“ Out ! ”

“ Modern side wins ! ” yelled Towle.

“ Hurray ! ”

“ Bravo, Loring ! ”

There was a rush of the Moderns to surround the victor, to clap him on the back and congratulate him. Jimmy and Raby and Newcome helped Lovell to his feet. He hung upon them helplessly. He had gone beyond his strength, and he was utterly spent.

“ This way, old chap, ” said Jimmy. “ Sit down ! That’s better. ”

“ I—I’m not licked. ”

“ You’re counted out, old fellow. Don’t worry about that. ”

“ I should have been up in another second, ” gasped Lovell, desperately. “ I could go on now. I’m feeling all right now. ”

It was so evident that Lovell, far from feeling all right, was utterly at the end of his tether, that his chums could only look at him in silence. Oliver Loring came towards them.

“ Well, it’s all over, ” he said cheerily. “ Give us your fist, Lovell. No malice on either side, what ? ”

Had there been a sign of crowing in the new junior’s manner, Jimmy Silver would have hated him at that moment. But there was nothing of the kind. He was simply frank and kind, though his face was showing heavy marks of the blows that had fallen on it.

Lovell did not move.

Loring was holding out his hand ; the Classical junior did not seem to see it.

“ Lovell ! ” whispered Newcome.

Lovell raised his hand. Instead of shaking hands with Loring, however, he clenched his fist, and knocked the extended hand aside.

“ Oh ! ” ejaculated Loring.

“ That for you, ” said Lovell. “ You’ve got the best of me this time. I’ll lick you another time, you cad ! ”

Loring looked at him steadily.

“ You won’t ! ” he said quietly. “ I shall not fight you again, Lovell. I’ve come to Rookwood to work, not to fight every day with a hot-headed fellow about nothing. I’m willing to be friends if you are ; if you’re not, keep your distance, and let me alone. That’s all. ”

And Oliver Loring walked away, rejoining the three Tommies, and leaving the gym. with them.

Lovell gritted his teeth.

“ Come away, ” said Jimmy Silver, shortly.

The defeated champion left the gym., leaning heavily on Jimmy’s arm.

Lovell did not appear in the common-room that evening.

He remained in the end study, with a brooding bitterness in his heart that was worse than the aches and pains that were the result of the conflict. He had not only been surpassed in prowess, but in generosity and good feeling ; and he knew it, and he knew that his chums knew it. It was a bitter evening for the junior who was “ down and out. ”

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

Bitter Blood.

MR. BOOTLES fixed his eyes upon Arthur Edward Lovell in the form-room the following morning with a very stern glance. Lovell had contrived to avoid the form-master’s eyes till then, but there was no avoiding them any longer. The “ beauty marks ” on Arthur Edward’s face were very conspicuous, and Mr. Bootles, short-sighted as he was, could not miss them.

“ Lovell, ” said Mr. Bootles severely.

“ Yes, sir, ” grunted Lovell.

“ You have been fighting again. ”

“ Yes. ”

“ On Wednesday, ” said Mr. Bootles in his most magisterial manner, “ I gave you an imposition, Lovell, for coming into school in a disgraceful state of untidiness, following a fight. To-day you again show the signs of personal conflict, Lovell. I am afraid that you are a very quarrelsome boy. ”

Silence.

“ This time, Lovell, I feel compelled to

cane you. You will stand out before the form," said Mr. Bootles, taking his cane from his desk.

Lovell tramped out sullenly.

Up jumped Oliver Loring in his place.

"If you please, Mr. Bootles—sir——"

"What have you to say, Loring?"

"It was I who was fighting with Lovell, sir."

"Good man!" murmured Jimmy Silver, approvingly.

Lovell gave the Modern junior a dark glance. Loring had owned up in the frankest way to take his share of the blame; but possibly Lovell would have been better pleased if the Modern had sat silent and allowed him to face the music alone. It would have helped to justify him in his bitter dislike of the new fellow.

"Dear me," said Mr. Bootles, blinking at Oliver Loring over his spectacles. "Is that the case, Loring? I did not observe—yes, I can see now that you have been fighting. You may step out before the class."

Oliver Loring joined Lovell at the form-master's desk.

Swish! Swish!

Two light swishes met the case; Mr. Bootles did not want to be hard on a new boy; and so Lovell got off more lightly in consequence. The juniors returned to their seats—one of them smiling, and the other scowling.

The Moderns were only with Mr. Bootles for first lesson that morning, after which they marched off to Mr. Manders' house. Lovell's eye lingered on the new junior as he went with the rest; Loring walked out cheerfully, evidently not feeling much the effects of the previous day's "scrap." That observation added to Lovell's bitterness, for he was feeling the effects very much indeed. His head ached, his swollen nose was very painful, and he had a weariness in his limbs that was new to him, and very depressing.

Lovell was in hot water several times that morning. His prep. had been carelessly scamped in the evening before, as was natural, considering how he had been feeling at the time. But Mr. Bootles, as was also natural, expected a junior to get his work done

whether he was bent on a "scrap" or not; and he was very severe with Lovell, who blundered through his construe in a way that made even Tubby Muffin grin.

When morning classes were dismissed, the Fistical Four came out into the sunny quad, not quite in their usual cheery spirits.

Lovell's chums were concerned for him; and his tart temper made it necessary to be very diplomatic with him. He seemed ready to quarrel with his best pals at a word.

He "mooched" away by himself after a time, and Jimmy and Raby and Newcome put in the interval before dinner at garnishing the end study for the great celebration on Saturday.

Lovell's gloomy face at the dinner-table drew Mr. Bootles' attention again. The form-master gave him a very disapproving look.

"Lovell," he said, "you are looking very sullen."

Lovell gave him a look that was something more than sullen.

"This is not right, my boy," said Mr. Bootles, in his kind but ponderous way. "I had occasion to punish you this morning, Lovell; but you should not be sullen. Sullenness is unmanly. Kindly do not look sullen, Lovell."

Some of the Classical Fourth grinned.

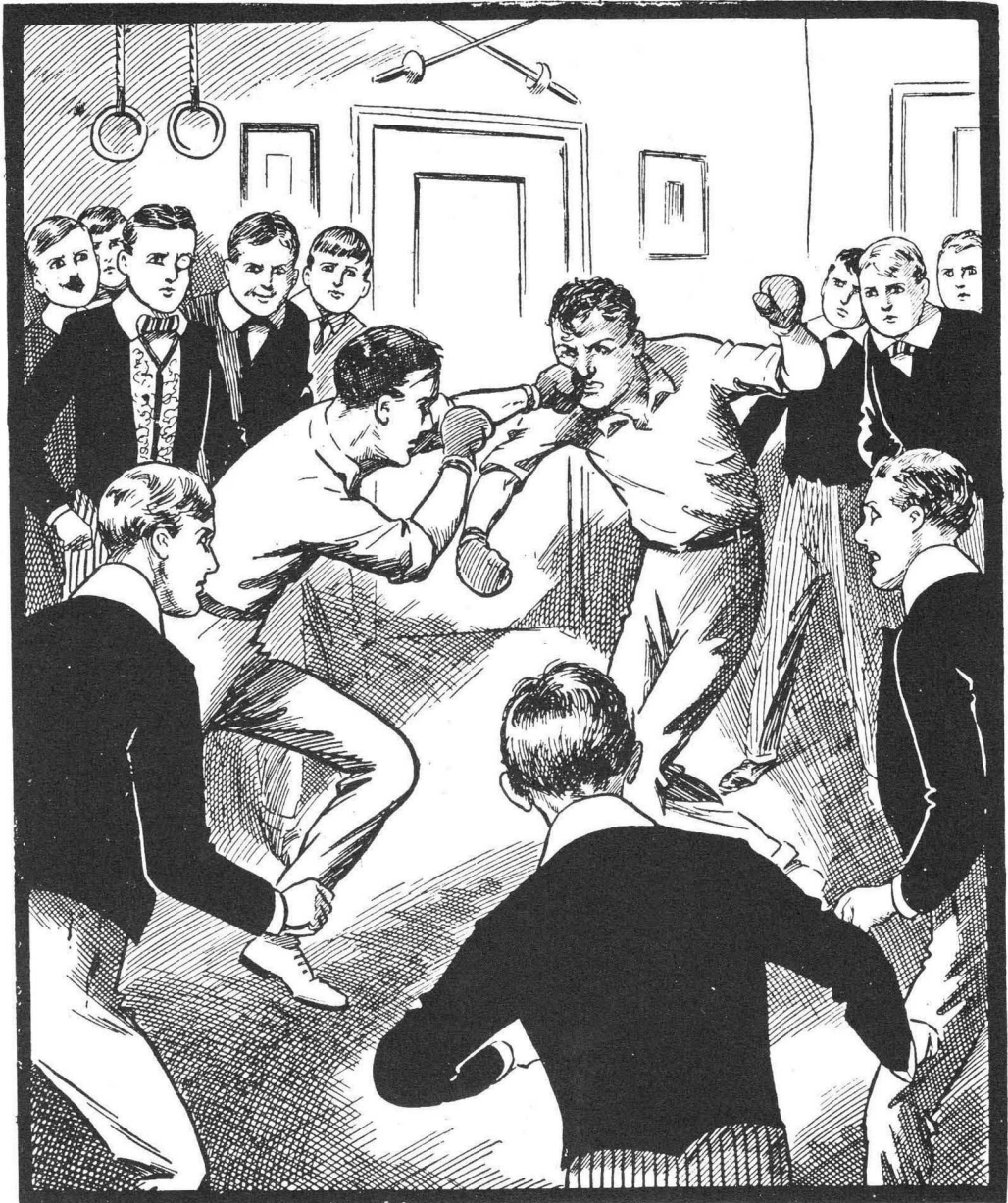
Lovell's face crimsoned, but it was quite out of his power to look less sullen. He looked rather more so than less, after Mr. Bootles' remarks. He was, in fact, feeling thoroughly out of sorts, and "up against" everything in general. If he had beaten the Modern junior in the fight in the gym., his ill-humour would probably have evaporated on the spot; but his defeat rankled deeply and bitterly.

After dinner Newcome and Raby went back to decorative work in the end study. Jimmy Silver would gladly have gone with them, but he felt impelled to bestow his company on Lovell in the quad.

Arthur Edward was not a cheerful companion just then. He tramped in silence under the beeches for quite a long time.

When he spoke at last to his patient companion, it was in a bitter tone.

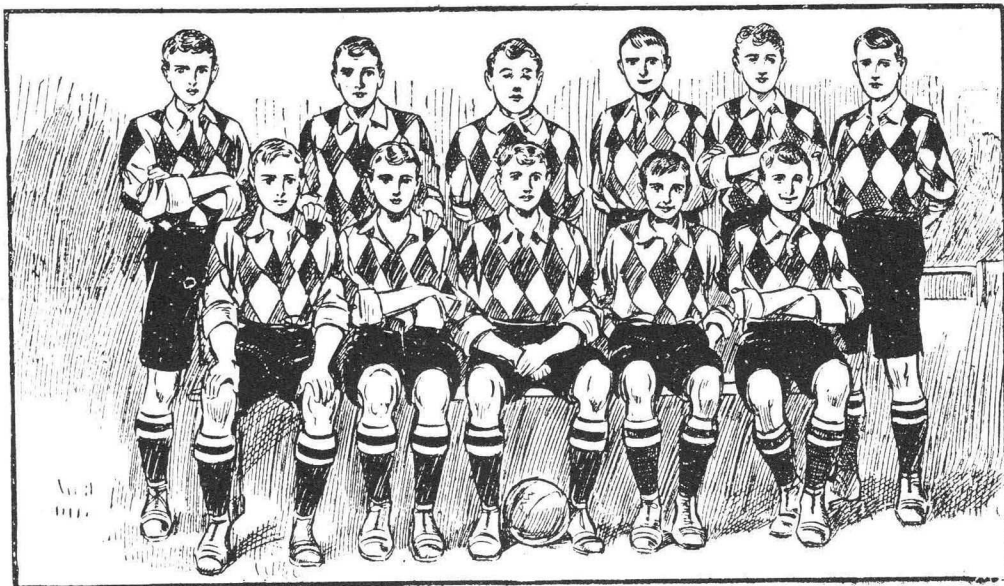
"I'm feeling rotten, Jimmy."



Fifty fellows, at least, were crowded in the gym, watching eagerly, both Classics and Moderns, with a keen desire to see their representative victorious. (See page 238.)

“I know, old chap,” answered Jimmy, “I should have licked that Modern cad if I’d been more careful.”

ROOKWOOD SCHOOL JUNIOR FOOTBALL XI.



Reading from left to right: Top row—A. E. Lovell; G. Raby; Tommy Dodd; Kit Erroll; Conroy; Val Mornington. (Sitting—Tommy Cook; Teddy Grace; Jimmy Silver, captain; Selwyn; Tommy Doyle.

"No reason why you shouldn't have. But, after all, you put up a good fight."

"I'm going to lick him next time."

Jimmy did not answer that.

"He says he won't fight me again," said Lovell savagely. "I'll jolly well make him. I shall feel more fit to-morrow—"

"Phyllis will be here to-morrow."

"Oh! I'd—I'd forgotten." Lovell coloured "I'll leave the cad till next week then."

"I wish you'd get this out of your mind, old chap," said Jimmy. "I'm blessed if I can see what the fellow's done. It's not like you to come down on a chap like this for nothing, or next to nothing."

"It's because I'm inconsiderate," said Lovell, bitterly. "Because I'm unfeeling, you know."

Jimmy compressed his lips, and did not reply.

He was beginning to wonder how long he would be able to stand this new temper of Lovell's without a "row."

The captain of the Fourth was glad when the bell rang for classes that afternoon. Lovell was heavy and despondent during classes, and came in for some more sharp words from Mr. Bootles. He listened to them with the sulkiness that seemed now to have become part of his nature.

But by tea-time Lovell seemed a good deal more like his old self. His nose was still a prominent feature; but he was recovering from the effects of the milling in the gym. During tea he was silent and thoughtful, and he spoke abruptly when the meal was over.

"Jimmy!"

"Hallo, old scout."

"I've got over that mauling now."

"Glad to hear it."

"I played the fool yesterday," said Lovell. "I lost my temper. If I'd kept cool, I could have made rings round that cad Loring. He's not much of a boxer, that I can see."

"He seemed fairly good to me," remarked Raby, with a touch of sarcasm.

"He didn't to me. I don't think he's got over much pluck, either."

"Rot!" was Raby's rejoinder to that.

"Well, that's my opinion," said Lovell, savagely, "and I'm going to put it to the test. I'm going to tackle him again to-day. No need to wait till next week."

"You want an eye to match that nose, for Phyllis to see to-morrow!" exclaimed Newcome.

"Look here, Lovell, there's been enough of this rot," said Jimmy Silver impatiently. "Loring won't fight you again to-day. Why should he? He's got other things to do. He didn't come to Rookwood to have a fight on his hands every day. Let the fellow alone."

"I'm going to make him."

"Then you can play the goat on your own," exclaimed Jimmy wrathfully. "We sha'n't have a hand in it."

"Please yourself."

Lovell left the study. He tramped away to Mr. Manders' house, and came upon the three Tommies and Oliver Loring in the quadrangle. He stopped.

"I'm looking for you, Loring," he said grimly, without a glance at the new junior's companions.

"Well, here I am," answered Loring, good-humouredly.

"I want you to meet me in the gym. this evening."

Loring eyed him.

"Another fight, do you mean?" he asked.

"Yes."

"Then I'm not coming," said Loring decidedly. "I've had enough of that; and you ought to have had enough, too."

"Are you afraid?"

Loring shrugged his shoulders.

"I've fought you once," he said. "The

fellows can judge whether I'm afraid or not. I won't fight you again, and that's flat. I'm fed up."

Lovell's eyes glittered.

"If you don't come I'll brand you as a coward up and down Rookwood," he said, between his teeth.

"Go ahead, then. I don't think Rookwood will believe you," said Loring. "I'll chance it, anyway."

The Classical junior clenched his fists. He seemed inclined to make an attack on the Modern fellow there and then. Tommy Dodd interposed.

"You're playing the goat, Lovell," he said. "Why can't you take a licking like any other fellow? What do you want another for? Look here, you'd better keep on your own side of the quad. If you come over here looking for trouble, you'll get bumped."

"Funk!" said Lovell, with an aggressive glare at Oliver Loring.

"Rats!" answered Loring, unmoved.

Lovell, with a black brow, tramped back to the schoolhouse, followed by a curious, half compassionate look from Oliver Loring, and a chortle from the three Tommies.

THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER.

The Distinguished Visitors.

"Glorious weather!" said Jimmy Silver, with great satisfaction.

It was Saturday morning.

Bright sunshine streamed down on the green old quadrangle of Rookwood School, and glimmered on dusky ivy and grey old stone. Jimmy Silver and Raby and Newcome walked in the quad after breakfast, in cheery humour. Lovell had not joined them as usual. He had not spoken to his chums since tea-time the previous evening.

"What time will Phyllis and Marjorie and Clara be here?" asked Newcome.

"Two-thirty train. We're bagging a trap to fetch them from the station," said Jimmy cheerfully. "We're going to have a jolly good afternoon. I've heard from Tubby that Bulkeley is going over to Latcham with Neville, so there'll be no difficulty about borrowing those vases."

"Good!"

"Towny has agreed to let us have the carpet. The study will look ripping."

"All except Lovell's nose."

"Well, his nose is getting better—it's not quite so impressionist this morning. I hope his temper will get better, too. But Phyllis will soon put him in a good temper," said Jimmy. "That will be all right. It's rather rotten his being on such terms with Loring, though. Tommy Dodd will want to speak to Phyllis, and Loring chums with him, and they're bound to be together. Still, I suppose Lovell will behave himself."

"Let's hope so!" grunted Raby.

There were strained relations in the end study now. Lovell did not speak to his chums before lessons that morning; and in the form-room he avoided looking at them.

It looked as if the Co. were now among the fellows against whom he was nursing a sense of injury—and the Co. were growing rather restive under it. They could not quite understand Lovell of late. It was quite unlike him to nourish malice against anyone, and now he seemed to be feeling little else but malice.

At dinner the same state of affairs subsisted. After dinner, Arthur Edward Lovell was leaving the schoolhouse by himself, with a gloomy brow, when Jimmy Silver made up his mind to break the ice. He caught his old chum by the arm, as cheerily as if there had been no unpleasantness.

"You coming to the station?" he asked.

Lovell started and coloured.

"I——" he stammered.

"You see, only two can go, or there won't be room in the trap for the distinguished visitors," explained Jimmy. "Newcome's going to fix up the flowers in the study, and Raby's agreed to manage the carpet. So I want you to come to the station."

Arthur Edward Lovell gulped something down.

"I—I'll come!" he gasped.

"Right-o!"

It was old Mack's trap that was destined to have the honour of conveying the distinguished visitors from Coombe Station. Old Mack at first would not hear of it—owing to the impossibility of trusting the horse in the

hands of Fourth-Form juniors. After certain coin of the realm, however, had passed from Jimmy Silver's possession into old Mack's, it appeared that the horse could be trusted to the juniors, if they were very careful. Jimmy Silver solemnly undertook to be very careful indeed; and he drove away with Lovell in the trap, in great spirits.

"Like to drive, Lovell?" asked Jimmy, generously, as they bowled down the lane.

"Take it in turns," said Lovell, "I'll drive back."

"Oh!"

"You see, we shall have to be careful, with the girls in the trap," explained Lovell.

Jimmy Silver looked at him. Apparently Lovell considered that the girls would be safer with the ribbons in his hands—which was not in the least the opinion of Jimmy Silver.

But Jimmy acquiesced. Lovell was to be "given his head" that day, in the hope of restoring his customary good temper during the distinguished visit.

On the way to the station, Arthur Edward gave his nose several dabs, as if to feel how it was getting on.

"How does it look, Jimmy?" he inquired, as they drove into the village.

"Eh! How does what look? Coombe?"

"No, you ass—my nose!"

"Oh, your nose! First chop."

"Is it very red?"

"A pretty pink," answered Jimmy.

"Does it look as if it's been punched?" demanded Lovell.

"Well, as if it's been—ahem—tapped," said Jimmy.

Lovell grunted.

Jimmy Silver brought the trap to a halt at the station with a clatter and a flourish. They were in ample time for the train; Jimmy had taken care of that.

They waited ten minutes on the platform; an interval chiefly spent by Arthur Edward Lovell in squinting into the cracked mirror on the automatic machine there, getting views of his nose from all sides.

"Here it comes!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver, at last.

The train stopped.

Three charming faces, surmounted by three



"Hallo, Phil, old girl!" cried Jimmy Silver, opening the carriage door. "How do you do, Marjorie—and you, Clara? Ripping afternoon, isn't it? Give me your bag—and your sunshade—Lovell, will you take Phyllis's sunshade—" Would he? (*See this page.*)

charming hats, looked out of a carriage window.

Jimmy Silver cut across the platform, and had the carriage door open in a twinkling.

Lovell, with a face as red as his unhappy nose, followed him more slowly.

"Hallo, Phil, old girl! How do you do, Marjorie—and you, Clara? Ripping afternoon, isn't it? Give me your bag—and your sunshade—Lovell, will you take Phyllis's sunshade?"

Would he?

Arthur Edward Lovell grinned with delight as he took Cousin Phyllis's sunshade, forgetful at that moment of even his haunting nose.

If Phyllis and Marjorie and Clara noticed that Lovell's nose presented an unusual aspect of rich colouring, they did not allow the fact to appear. So far as the three girls were concerned, Lovell might as well not have had a nose at all.

"Trap outside, Phil," said Jimmy Silver, rather loftily, "just room for five in it."

"How very nice!" said Cousin Phyllis.

"You kids are insured, I hope?"

"Insured?" exclaimed Marjorie and Clara.

"Yes; Lovell's going to drive."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You—you frabjous ass, Jimmy!" exclaimed Lovell, "I—I—I mean—ha, ha, ha!"

"This way," said Jimmy Silver.

Quite a merry party marched off the platform, Jimmy taking charge of Marjorie and Clara, and leaving Phyllis to the escort of Arthur Edward. Lovell stole a sidelong glance at Phyllis's pretty face. He was silent, thinking hard, as they came off the platform, and left the station; but in the street outside he found his voice.

"I—I——" he began.

Cousin Phyllis looked at him.

"Here's the trap!" said Jimmy Silver.

"I—I knocked it!" gasped Lovell.

"You knocked the trap!" exclaimed Phyllis, in surprise.

"Nummo! My—my nose—I knocked my n-n-nose——"

"Goodness gracious! You knocked your nose on the trap?" asked Phyllis. "I hope it was not hurt much."

"N-n-not on the trap! I—I just knocked it," said Lovell, "against something hard, you know."

"I'm so sorry!" murmured Phyllis.

"Against—against—against something hard," gasped Lovell, "I—I knocked it. You—you see, I—I——"

"All aboard!" sang out Jimmy Silver.

Phyllis was smiling as Arthur Edward assisted her into the trap. Perhaps she guessed the nature of the "something hard" against which Lovell had knocked his nose. But Arthur Edward, feeling that the matter was

now satisfactorily explained, was greatly relieved, as the trap bowled away down the leafy lane to Rookwood School.

THE SEVENTEENTH CHAPTER.

Adolphus's Fault.

RABY and Newcome had not quite finished giving finishing touches to the end study when the distinguished visitors arrived. It was probable that if the arrival had been delayed another hour or two, they would not quite have finished. Raby had a duster in his hand, and a considerable amount of dust on his person, and Newcome was giving a final rub to the kettle with an oily bike rag, when there were footsteps and merry voices in the passage. Phyllis and Marjorie and Clara dawned on Raby and Newcome—who reddened through dust and smudges as they greeted them.

They greeted them rather incoherently, and escaped to get cleaned. Lovell lighted sticks in the grate to boil the kettle, being firmly under the impression that what lady visitors always wanted, first of all, was a cup of tea. Phyllis and Co. were greatly interested in the study. They admired, especially, the handsome vases of flowers, and the bright new carpet. Marjorie thought it was really creditable to the juniors that they kept those handsome vases in the study without breaking them—and Clara was astonished that the carpet stood the strain without showing more signs of trouble. Jimmy Silver devoutly hoped that Bulkeley of the Sixth would not come in before the visitors departed. It would have been very awkward if he had come along inquiring for his vases.

Arthur Edward Lovell was in great spirits now. His recent sulkiness had rolled off like a cloud before the sunshine.

He quite distinguished himself with the tea. Owing to a slight oversight, he made it without putting any tea into the pot, and it came out colourless—much to Lovell's surprise, and to the amusement of the girls. He made it a second time with more success. It was doubtless some confusion of mind that caused him to put in salt instead of sugar. But the third time the tea was made it was a

triumphant success, and Phyllis and Co. declared that they had never tasted nicer tea—much to Arthur Edward's gratification.

Raby and Newcome turned up, spotless and smiling, in time for the tea—owing to the number of times it had been made. There was a slight difficulty about crockery, but that was overcome, Jimmy Silver slipping out quietly and returning with a bunch of saucers in one hand and a string of cups on the fingers of the other. Heavy footsteps followed him to the end study, and the wrathful face of Higgs of the Fourth looked in.

"Look here—!" bawled Higgs.

Then three pretty faces dawned on Higgs, and he stuttered and vanished.

Higgs, apparently, was the owner of some of the crockery.

After the tea had been disposed of, four cheery juniors and three smiling girls walked out of the end study in a merry company. Tubby Muffin joined them in the passage—Tubby having plenty of nerve—and other fellows eyed them enviously.

Envious glances, too, fell upon them in the quadrangle. Miss Dolly, the Headmaster's daughter, rushed up to greet Phyllis, and remained with her—giving Tubby Muffin a decidedly "marble" eye when that fat youth proffered himself as attendant cavalier.

Tommy Dodd was in the quadrangle with Oliver Loring, and he came up to speak to Phyllis. Loring followed him a step, and then stopped and raised his hat to the girls from a distance. Arthur Edward Lovell's brow darkened at the sight of the new junior.

Phyllis Silver glanced at him.

Perhaps she wondered, for a moment, why Tommy Dodd's friend did not come up with him. Loring had excellent reasons, which Phyllis was not likely to guess. He sauntered away while Tommy was chatting with the girls and the Classical juniors, and disappeared out of the gates.

Loring's good-looking face was a little dissatisfied, for once, as he went.

He would have liked very much to be presented to the three girls, and Tommy Dodd would have introduced him, as a matter of course, but for Lovell's unreasonable enmity, which kept Oliver at a distance.

Indeed, Tommy would have done so, anyway, forgetful of Lovell and his feud, had not Loring wisely walked on.

"Now for the river," said Jimmy Silver cheerily.

"You'll like my canoe, Phyllis," said Lovell eagerly, as they walked towards the gates.

Phyllis smiled and nodded.

"I'm sure I shall," she assented.

"It's really a little corker, you know——"

"I'd better come in the canoe, I think, Lovell!" remarked Tubby Muffin.

Lovell gave the fat Classical a glare.

"It's not an Atlantic liner," he answered.

"It wouldn't stand your weight."

And Lovell quickened his pace, hoping to leave the fat Classical behind. But Tubby was not to be left. He was rolling cheerfully after the Co. when they arrived at the river.

"How beautiful!" exclaimed Phyllis, as they came through the trees, and the shining waters burst upon their view.

"Topping, isn't it?" said Miss Clara.

"Hallo, there's Smythey out," remarked Raby.

There was a boat on the river, with Smythe of the Shell, and Howard and Tracy, in it. Howard and Tracy were rowing in a leisurely way, and the lofty Adolphus was reclining in the stern.

Adolphus put his eyeglass to his eye, and surveyed the merry party on the bank.

"Jimmy Silver's cousin, begad!" yawned Adolphus. "Cheeky young cad, Silver. He knows perfectly well that I'd like to talk to his cousin, and he plants her with that heavy lout, Lovell, instead. Hard cheese on the poor gal."

"Awfully hard!" grinned Tracy, with a wink at Howard.

"They're lookin' at us," said Smythe, with a satisfied smile. "A well-dressed chap always attracts a gal's eye. I really wonder how they can stand those young Fourth-Form ruffians, by gad. Put in, you chaps, an' we'll ask 'em into the boat—what!"

"They won't leave Silver's gang," said Tracy.

"My dear chap," said Adolphus, with a superior smile, "you leave it to me. Two to one in half-sovs. that I bag one of them."

“ Done ! ”

The boat pulled in a little. Lovell had taken his canoe from the boat-house and run it out. Phyllis stepped lightly into the little craft, and Lovell followed.

Jimmy Silver and Co. walked on by the path along the river. They were at a little distance by the time the Shell boat came up.

Adolphus rose, and lifted his straw very gracefully to Phyllis. The other girls were out of reach, as it were, and it was clear that if Adolphus was to win his half-sov. by “ bagging ” one of them, the one would have to be Phyllis. But Adolphus was not troubled with doubts. He had full faith in his own fascinating personality.

“ Good-afternoon, Miss Silver,” he chirruped. “ How delightful to see you at Rookwood again. How well you are lookin’.”

Phyllis nodded rather curtly.

It would have astonished Adolphus to learn with what complete indifference he was regarded by Jimmy Silver’s cousin.

“ Keep clear ! ” grunted Lovell.

“ Did you speak, dear boy ? ” asked Smythe, with elaborate politeness.

“ I told you to keep clear,” answered Lovell gruffly. “ Don’t bring that tub too close to my canoe. It’s not safe.”

“ I rather think it’s not very safe, anyway,” remarked Smythe. “ Miss Silver would be safer in the boat, I think. Perhaps you will honour us, Miss Silver. It would be such an honour and a pleasure——”

“ Thank you, no,” answered Phyllis.

“ But really, Miss Phyllis, it would be a delightful pleasure to us,” urged Adolphus, quite taken aback.

“ Oh, sheer off ! ” interposed Lovell.

“ Keep steady, dear boys,” said Adolphus to his comrades. “ Keep close. Miss Silver is goin’ to step in——”

“ I am going to do nothing of the sort ! ” said Phyllis coldly. “ Will you please keep your boat at a safer distance ? ”

“ Oh, gad ! ” ejaculated Smythe.

His companions chuckled. This was a facer for the lofty Adolphus; he was not left in any doubt as to whose company Miss Silver preferred. A grin dawned on Lovell’s face.

“ Keep clear ! ” he rapped out again.

Adolphus’s eyes gleamed. The irrepressible chortle from his comrades irritated him, as well as the rebuff he had received.

“ Pull, you duffers ! ” he growled.

Howard and Tracy pulled, and at the same time Adolphus pulled the line, and the boat swung right on to the canoe.

Crash !

There was a yell from Lovell, and a cry from Phyllis.

Adolphus, in his obtuse annoyance, had only intended to give the canoe a bump, and perhaps splash the occupants with water. But the little craft was not designed to meet such a shock. Almost in the twinkling of an eye the little canoe capsized, and its occupants were hurled into the water.

Crash !

Splash !

“ Oh, gad ! ” gasped Adolphus, utterly terrified at what he had done. “ Oh, gad ! Help ! Help ! Oh, gad ! ”

“ Help ! ”

THE EIGHTEENTH CHAPTER.

By Luck and Pluck.

“ H^{ELP} ! ”

The cry came faintly from Phyllis Silver.

A swirl of the water swept the girl away from the capsized canoe, and her face showed white and terrified above the ripples.

Lovell gave a panting cry. He was caught in the sail as it swamped over, and was struggling frantically to free himself. Long before he could do so Phyllis was swept far from his reach.

Far away on the bank, Jimmy Silver and Co., who had seen the disaster, were running towards the river.

But the girl’s cry had been heard; and from the shade of the trees on the river-side a Rookwood junior ran, dropping a book, and then throwing off his jacket as he raced towards the water.

It was Loring of the Fourth.

He threw his hands together and plunged in, cleaving the water like an arrow.

A despairing hand was thrown up as Phyllis

sank under, but the hand was caught in a strong grasp.

Too dazed to realise what was happening, Phyllis came up, her face white, and half-conscious, her loosened hair in a cloud about her shoulders.

"Hold to me!" said Oliver Loring.

"Help!"

"Safe now."

Loring was swimming strongly. They were in deep water—deep and dangerous. But the new junior at Rookwood was as cool and collected as if he were at school "ducker."

He swam strongly and steadily, and his steady grasp kept the girl's head well above the surface of the shining water.

"Loring!" panted Jimmy Silver. "Oh, good man! Good man!"

Oliver Loring glanced towards the bank.

"All serene!" he called out. "Tell those fools in the boat to pull this way."

"Howard! Tracy!" Tommy Dodd roared.

"We're coming!"

The sudden catastrophe had utterly unnerved Smythe and Co., but they were pulling for the swimmer now. Lovell, disentangled from the swamping sail at last, hung on to the canoe and looked round him. Phyllis was at a good distance from him, but safe now. But for all the help Lovell could have given her in time she would have been at the bottom of the river, and he knew it.

"Phyllis!" gasped Lovell.

She was too far to hear him. The boat swept by him, and closed in on the swimmer. Loring caught the gunwale with one hand.

"Don't brain me, Tracy," he said coolly. "Shove that oar somewhere else, will you, not down my neck."

"Oh!" gasped Tracy.

"Oh, gad!" babbled Adolphus. "I—I—I—oh, gad!"

Phyllis was helped into the boat, and Loring followed. The girl sank into a seat, utterly exhausted, and drenched and dripping. Loring supported her with his arm.

"Pull ashore!" he rapped out. "Lovell's all right. Pull in!"

The boat shot towards the bank.

Many willing hands were there to help poor Phyllis ashore. Marjorie and Clara and Dolly

caught her and helped her out. She leaned heavily on Marjorie Hazeldene.

"Better get her to the school as quickly as possible," said Loring.

"Oh!" gasped Jimmy Silver. "Phil, old girl——" His voice broke.

Phyllis tried to smile.

"I—I am not hurt," she whispered. "I—I was frightened, I—I think——"

"Come on," said Jimmy. "Can you walk?"

"I—I think——"

"We'll carry you."

Jimmy and Raby linked hands to make a "carriage," and Phyllis was rushed away towards the school. Marjorie and Clara and Dolly hurried with her, and most of the juniors followed.

Lovell was wading out now.

He looked at Loring.

"You!" he muttered. "It—it was you——"

"How lucky I happened to be reading my book under the trees here," said Loring.

"I—I couldn't help. I—I was tangled in that rotten sail," muttered Lovell. "I—I thought—oh, I thought——" His voice trembled, and there was a rush of tears in his eyes.

Loring looked at him curiously.

"If—if you hadn't——" stammered Lovell.

He did not speak again for a minute; he could not. He came nearer to the Modern junior, suddenly, and held out a wet hand.

"I—I'm a silly fool, Loring," he said. "I—I'm sorry! I—you offered to shake hands with me the other day, and I wouldn't! Now——"

"Now you will," said Loring with a smile. "All serene—there's my fist. I don't quite see what you've been down on me so much for, Lovell. I'm not really a bad chap when you know me."

"Oh, I was a silly fool— n obstinate, silly ass!" said Lovell, repentantly. "I—I called you a funk, and now—now you—I'm sorry, Loring. I—I—I'd like to be friends, if you'd care to be friends with such a silly, waxy ass——"

"Nothing I'd like better, old scout. It's a go."

"Let's get in," said Lovell, abruptly.
Two drenched and dripping juniors ran for the school.

Phyllis was a little pale, but otherwise quite her cheery self, when she came into the end study with Marjorie and Clara to tea. The Fistical Four were there, with their best bibs and tuckers on, so to speak, and a glorious spread on the table. And there was another guest in the famous study. It was not Tubby Muffin—Tubby had been forcibly persuaded to depart before the arrival of the ladies. It was Oliver Loring, cheerful and smiling—and on the best of terms with Arthur Edward Lovell, his old enemy.

Jimmy Silver and Co. had blinked when Lovell suggested asking Loring of the Modern Fourth to tea. But they assented at once, quite pleased by this change of front. It was clear that the feud was "off"—very much off.

Phyllis thanked Loring very gratefully for what he had done, and it was useless for Oliver to declare that he had simply had a swim. The three girls were convinced that he had risked his life to save Phyllis's—all the more because he was so modest about his performance. And Lovell took the same view, emphatically.

It was a merry celebration, after all, in the end study. The afternoon had very nearly been clouded with tragedy; but now all was merry and bright.

After tea, it was time for Phyllis and Co. to catch their train; and old Mack's trap was requisitioned once more. To Raby and

Newcome fell the duty of seeing that Bulkeley's vases were taken back to his study, as soon as the visitors were gone—a duty which they luckily succeeded in carrying out just before the captain of Rookwood came home.

Quite a little army of juniors gathered to see the trap off. Lovell was going with Jimmy Silver and the visitors to the station—there was no room for more. But Lovell paused, as he was about to climb in, and came back to speak to Loring.

"I—I say, Loring," he muttered.

"Yes?"

"You—you can go, if you like."

Oliver Loring stared for a moment, and then smiled.

"My dear chap, not at all. Jump in!"

And Lovell jumped in, quite relieved that his heroic sacrifice was not accepted.

In the end study, that evening, Arthur Edward Lovell was in a very thoughtful mood. He looked up out of deep reflection at last, to find three grinning glances turned upon him.

Arthur Edward coloured a little.

"That fellow Loring is a splendid chap. I—I'm afraid I've been a bit of an ass," said Lovell. "That—that's all."

"My dear man, that was nothing new for you," said Jimmy, comfortingly. "We all agree—you've been a silly ass! Don't we, you chaps?"

"We do!" said Raby.

"We does!" grinned Newcome.

It was passed unanimously. And Arthur Edward Lovell laughed—his old, good-tempered laugh that his chums were glad to hear.

