

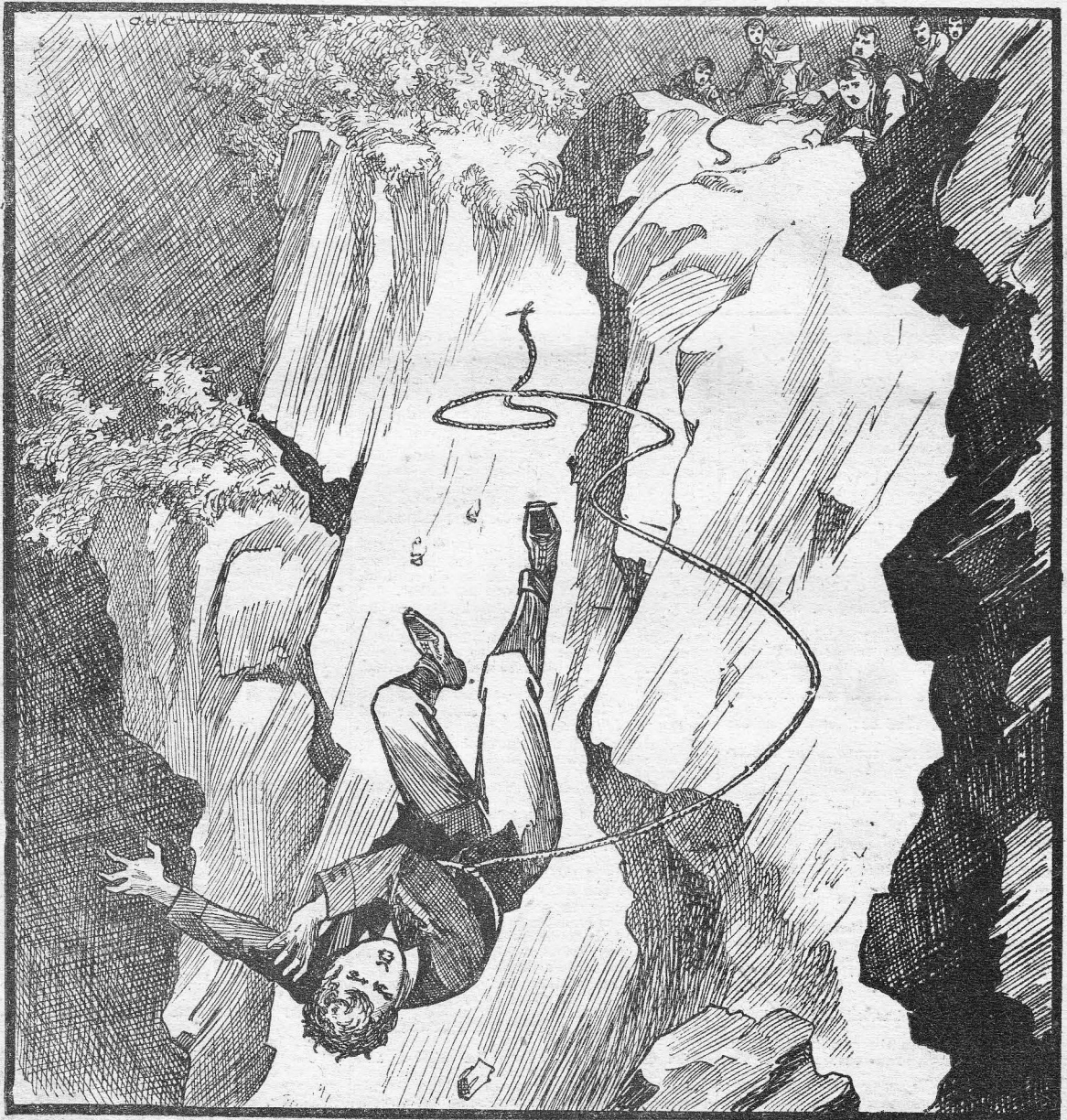
20-PAGE NUMBER! ——— 3 LONG STORIES!

The  
**Penny** → **1½<sup>D</sup>**  
**Popular**

Week Ending  
October 18th, 1919.

No. 39.  
New Series.

Three Long Complete Stories of—  
**HARRY WHARTON & CO.—JIMMY SILVER & CO.—TOM MERRY & CO.**



**DENNIS GARR'S TERRIBLE ORDEAL!**

(A Thrilling Scene in the Magnificent Long Complete School Tale of the Chums of Greyfriars.)



**THE FIRST CHAPTER.**  
**In the Teeth of the Storm.**

**D**EAR me, how it blows!"

It was Mr. Quelch, the master of the Remove Form at Greyfriars, who uttered that ejaculation, as he battled his way across the Close. Truly, the night was a tempestuous one. For hour after hour the storm had been raging with demoniacal fury, and the Remove-master shuddered as he pictured to himself what it must be like out at sea.

"It is inconceivable," murmured Mr. Quelch, "that any boy can be out of bounds on such a night as this!"

There had lately been an epidemic of bounds-breaking at Greyfriars, and it had become customary for Mr. Quelch to take a last look round before retiring for the night.

Boom!

It was the half-hour after midnight. Mr. Quelch was about to turn back into the building, satisfied that everybody was in bed and asleep, when something white, fluttering against a distant wall, arrested his attention.

"What ever can that be?" exclaimed the Form-master.

And he made his way towards the fluttering object.

"Bless my soul!"

Mr. Quelch stopped short with an exclamation of astonishment.

Dangling from one of the upper windows was a rope comprised of knotted sheets.

The rope ended about eight feet from the ground, and it had obviously been employed as a means of escape from the building.

For a moment Mr. Quelch stood spell-bound.

And then as in a flash the truth dawned upon him. He was standing beneath the window of the punishment-room.

"This is Carr's handiwork!" muttered Mr. Quelch. "Bless my soul! The boy must have run away!"

The Remove-master hurried into the building.

He made his way to the punishment-room, unlocked the door, and switched on the light.

It was as he feared. The room was empty! Mr. Quelch compressed his lips.

"Carr is even more reckless and venturesome than I thought!" he exclaimed. "Why, he might have broken his neck!"

It had, indeed, been a daring move on the part of Dennis Carr.

A rope of knotted sheets is but a frail thing at best, and it was almost miraculous that Dennis, by lowering himself from the window, had not come a bad cropper.

But the prospect of imminent expulsion had rendered the junior desperate.

Dennis Carr had, on the previous night, been discovered out of bounds by Mr. Quelch.

In the language of the police-courts, Dennis was an old offender, and Dr. Locke had promptly consigned him to the punishment-room, to await expulsion.

Dennis had weighed everything in the balance. He realised that he could not face the shame of a public expulsion. He realised, also, that he could not face his father.

Mr. Carr would have shown his son no mercy. Dennis would probably have been horsewhipped, and set to work in his father's office. And the life of a tame and timorous City clerk was repellent to the high-spirited, adventure-loving junior.

And so, twenty minutes before Mr. Quelch had arrived in the Close, Dennis Carr had made good his escape.

The storm had not daunted him. Minus his hat and raincoat, he had fared forth into the night.

Mr. Quelch made an examination of the room.

On the table lay a brief note, written by the runaway. The Remove-master perused it with a frown.

"The finder of this message will please note that I have run away from Greyfriars.

"I am sorry to rob the fellows of the pleasure of witnessing a dramatic scene in Big Hall; but doubtless they will be able to reserve their hoots and hisses for the next victim of the Head's displeasure.

"It will be useless to organise search-parties. I shall be miles away by the time this note is found.

"(Signed) DENNIS CARR."

Mr. Quelch crumpled up the missive, and threw it into the Breplace.

He had no intention of taking Dennis Carr's hint with regard to sending out search-parties.

"The foolish lad cannot have gone more than an hour," he murmured. "When

I passed this room an hour ago he was within."

Mr. Quelch did not let the grass grow under his feet.

His first action was to awaken Wingate, the captain of Greyfriars.

Wingate was extremely surprised, and not a little annoyed, at being roused at twenty to one in the morning; but he responded briskly when Mr. Quelch explained what had happened.

"Search-parties must be formed immediately, and Carr must be brought back under escort," said the Form-master. "He cannot have proceeded very far in this terrible storm. Doubtless he has taken temporary refuge somewhere in the vicinity. Six seniors had better search in one direction, and six juniors in another."

"Very good, sir," said Wingate.

"I leave it to you to detail the parties, Wingate."

The captain of Greyfriars nodded.

"I shall be waiting up in my study to learn the result of your investigations," added Mr. Quelch.

The Remove-master then withdrew; and Wingate, hurrying into his clothes, promptly routed out Gwynne and Faulkner, and three other Sixth-Formers.

There was very little keenness on the part of the seniors.

"Faith, an' it's the limit, to send us on a wildgoose chase 'at this time of night!" grumbled Gwynne.

"We shall get simply soaked!" growled Faulkner. "If I were Quelch, I should be inclined to let that silly young ass Carr go to Jericho!"

Although the search was distasteful to the high-and-mighty men of the Sixth, it was hailed with great joy in the Remove dormitory.

Wingate roused the juniors, and explained briefly what was in the wind.

"Carr's bunked," he said, "and he's got to be brought back!"

"My hat!"

"Fancy him bunking!"

"And on a night like this, too!"

Harry Wharton was out of bed in a twinkling. Bob Cherry was a good second. And at least a dozen other juniors followed their example.

Even Billy Bunter ceased his unmusical

score, and took a lively interest in the proceedings.

"I say, Wingate!" said the fat junior. "Did Carr leave any grub behind him in the punishment-room?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Wingate frowned as he noticed that more than half the members of the Remove Form were in the act of dressing.

"You needn't all rush," he said. "I only want half a dozen."

"I'll come, Wingate!"

"Same here!"

"You can't do without me!"

"I, too, will joyfully participate in the searchful investigation!"

"I guess you'll be wise to count me in, Wingate!" said Fisher T. Fish. "You want a sleek American sleuth on the scent—like me!"

"Rats!"

"Dry up, Fishy!"

Wingate ran his eye over the juniors.

"Wharton, Cherry, Bull, Nugent, Hurree Singh, Vernon-Smith!" he rapped out. "That's six. The remainder can get back to bed—sharp!"

The Famous Five and Vernon-Smith were very pleased to think they had been selected. But their delight was not shared by the others.

"Beastly favouritism!" muttered Bolsover major, who was practically dressed.

"The Wharton Select Set every time!" sneered Skinner.

Fortunately, Skinner's remark went unheard.

"Ready, you kids?" said Wingate briskly.

Harry Wharton & Co. nodded.

"Come along, then!"

The two search-parties met together in the Close.

The storm was at its height by this time. It was even possible to hear the angry surge of the sea.

Wingate had to raise his voice to a shout. "Now, listen!" he exclaimed. "The seniors will take the main road to Friardale. You kids will take the road leading to Pegg. Make as thorough a search as you can. It's rather like hunting for a needle in a haystack; still, we'll do our best!"

"Trust your uncles, Wingate!" said Bob Cherry. "We don't come back empty-handed!"

"No jolly fear!"

And then, buttoning their raincoats tightly about their necks, the two search-parties set off. They scaled the school wall, and kept together until they came to the junction of the roads, when they went their several ways.

"Whew! What a night!" gasped Frank Nugent.

"Wind and rain, and as black as pitch!" exclaimed Vernon-Smith.

"Blest if I can see where we're going!" growled Johnny Bull. "We shall be separated if we're not jolly careful!"

The six juniors stumbled along the uneven road, peering into the darkness on either side, and occasionally tripping up on a loose stone.

Now that the search was actually in progress the keenness had worn off. The anticipation had been pleasant enough; the realisation was, in the words of Bob Cherry, "perfectly awful!"

"The chances are a hundred to one against our finding Carr," said Harry Wharton.

"Make it a billion to one!" grunted Frank Nugent.

The juniors began to turn their thoughts enviously to the snug beds they had forsaken in order to start on their quest. They began, also, to share Pat Gwynne's view that the search would prove a wildgoose chase.

Darkness, black and impenetrable, loomed ahead of them. Wind and rain and tempest swept the countryside.

It was the worst storm ever experienced on that part of the coast for many years.

"Groo! I feel like turning back!" said Johnny Bull at length.

"We can't do that," said Wharton. "It wouldn't be fair to Wingate. We expressed ourselves as being jolly keen to undertake the search, and we can't give up yet."

"I'm swamped!" growled Johnny.

"I think we all are!"

The juniors trudged along in the teeth of the storm. A raincoat on a night like this was a mockery.

"Carr's a blackguard of the first water," said Bob Cherry, "but, by Jove, he's got plenty of nerve to bunk from Greyfriars under conditions like these!"

"I can't believe he's out in the open,"

said Wharton. "He must have taken shelter somewhere."

"In any case, it's hardly likely he came this way," said Nugent. "If he went on to the cliffs in a gale like this the chances are he'd be blown over the edge."

"If that happened I can't say I should be sorry," remarked Vernon-Smith.

The Famous Five were silent. They disliked Dennis Carr intensely—hated him, in fact—but they did not go quite so far as to wish that he would be swept to destruction.

"We've simply got to find him somehow!" said Bob Cherry at length. "It's Mark Linley I'm thinking about. Marky was sacked from the school because he was supposed to have stolen your money, Harry; and we've got to get hold of Dennis Carr and make him admit that he was the thief! Then Marky's name will be cleared, and he'll come marching home again. I sha'n't know a minute's happiness till that happens. Poor old Marky!"

The others agreed with Bob. Their friendship for Mark Linley was staunch and true, but it was not so deep and strong as Bob Cherry's. Nevertheless, they all wanted to see the Lancashire lad's honour vindicated.

For a time this consideration outweighed all others, and the juniors trudged on with renewed purpose.

After a time Harry Wharton stopped short.

"What is amiss, my esteemed chum?" inquired Hurree Singh.

"I've got a beastly stone in my shoe!" said Wharton. "You fellows go on. I'll catch you up later."

"All serene!" said Nugent.

Harry Wharton stooped down, wrenched off his shoe, and removed the offending stone. This done, he replaced his shoe, and was in the act of tying it up when the lace broke.

"Confound it!" muttered Harry.

If he continued to walk with a broken lace he would probably lose his shoe. The only thing to be done in the circumstances was to tie the broken lace together, and make it serve.

This proceeding, owing to the intense darkness, occupied some moments.

Wharton hurried in the wake of his comrades, but he neither saw nor heard a sign of them.

He had reached the rugged ascent to the cliffs by this time.

Had the others taken that path, or had they proceeded down to the shore?

The junior stopped short in perplexity. He stood there, amid the discordant elements.

Then, making a megaphone of his hands, he shouted with the full force of his lungs: "Aho! Aho!"

The roar of the wind robbed the shout of its power. No answer was borne back to Harry Wharton on the wings of the storm.

"My hat!" muttered the captain of the Remove. "I'm fairly cut off from them now!"

Again he shouted, and still there was no response.

It was impossible to tell which way the other five had gone.

Harry Wharton debated for a moment, and then he decided to ascend the cliff path.

It was a steep and treacherous ascent, and on the cliff-top it would be positively dangerous.

But Wharton had no thought of danger just then. His one object in life was to expedite the return of the runaway.

And even the cheeriest optimist would have been forced to admit that Harry Wharton had but scant chance of success.

## THE SECOND CHAPTER.

### The Struggle on the Cliffs.

"I'M going to take a hand!" Bolsover major uttered the words with an air of finality.

"You're an ass, Bolsover!" growled Peter Todd.

"Same to you!"

"Look here—"

"Oh, dry up! You make me tired. I'm jolly well going to join in the search! Why should Wharton & Co. collar all the plums?"

"Echo answers 'Why?'" said Skinner.

"Go ahead, Bolsover, old man! I don't blame you."

Bolsover major, who had not removed his clothes since Harry Wharton & Co. had left the Remove dormitory, proceeded to put his shoes on.

"Will you come along, too, Skinney?" he asked.

"Nunno!" said Skinner hastily. "I—I—" "You don't mean to say you funk a gust of wind and a few splashes of rain?"

"It isn't that," said Skinner. "I've got a touch of toothache, and it'll get worse if I go out."

Bolsover snorted.

"First I've heard of your blessed toothache!" he said. "You're chicken-hearted, that's what's the matter with you! What about you, Stott?"

Stott gave a faithful imitation of a snore. The idea of breaking bounds appealed to him even less than it did to Skinner.

"Bah!" growled Bolsover. "You're a pair of white-livered funks! You set too much value on your own precious skins!"

"If you take my advice, Bolsover," said Squiff seriously, "you'll stay where you are. You know what Quelely is. If he spots you out of bounds there will be the very dickens to pay!"

"Br-r-r!"

"I say, Bolsover!" said Billy Bunter. "I'll come along with you. I haven't got a yellow streak in me, like the rest of 'em!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Billy Bunter knew quite well that his offer of companionship would be declined by Bolsover. Consequently the fat junior could afford to be brave.

Bolsover glanced scornfully at the Owl of the Remove.

"You!" he said contemptuously. "Why, you'd never be able to squeeze through the box-room window!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I'll go alone," said Bolsover.

"And if you get it in the neck don't say we didn't warn you!" said Peter Todd.

"Rats!"

Bolsover looked round, as if in search of something. Then he gave vent to an exclamation of annoyance.

"Dash it all! I've left my raincoat in the study!"

"There's one on Carr's bed," said Skinner.

"By Jove! So there is!"

The familiar fawn-coloured coat belonging to the missing junior lay on his bed. Dennis had been obliged to leave Greyfriars without it. When a fellow escapes by night from the punishment-room he has no chance to collect all his belongings. All his concentration is needed for the task in hand.

"This will suit me down to the ground!" said Bolsover, as he fastened the raincoat about him. "Here's Carr's cap, too! I'm in 'clove!"

Bolsover was in the act of leaving the dormitory when Billy Bunter shouted after him.

"I say, Bolsover, old man, will you leave me your penknife?"

The bully of the Remove spun round in astonishment.

"What the thump do you want my penknife for?" he exclaimed.

"You'll have no further use for it—not at Greyfriars, at any rate. You see, you'll be sacked in the morning!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You silly fat chump!" growled Bolsover.

And then, without wasting any more time in conversation, he hurried from the dormitory and passed down the dark staircase.

He chuckled to himself as he went.

"What a score it will be," he reflected, "if I succeed in collaring Carr! And there's no reason why I shouldn't. The search-parties only left ten minutes ago, and the odds are that they've both taken the wrong direction. I think I'll try the cliffs. The others won't dream of searching there."

The wind whistled along the corridor, and when Bolsover opened the box-room window a fierce gust blew into his face.

"My hat! Talk about a giddy typhoon!" muttered Bolsover. "Still, if the others can stick it I can."

He clambered through the window, slammed it down again—there was no need for silence in that night of noise—and made his way across the Close.

The branches of the old elms creaked and swayed under the fury of the storm. The wind whistled and shrieked round the roofs and turrets. Everything seemed to be locked in the grip of the tempest.

Bolsover had plenty of pluck, and he ventured fearlessly into the night, though he was already half regretting his escapade. As in the case of Harry Wharton & Co., he realised that his chances of running Dennis Carr to earth were decidedly slender.

Little dreaming that his schoolfellows had traversed the same route, Bolsover set out along the road to Pegg.

He had proceeded a few hundred yards, when—

Crash!  
Bolsover stopped short, trembling in every limb.

A giant tree had come hurtling down, right across the roadway!

The junior had missed death by a matter of yards.

"Phew! That was a jolly close shave!" he muttered. "Who'd have thought that blessed tree would come crashing down like that?"

Bolsover was so badly shaken that it was some moments before he could proceed.

Then, pulling himself together, he stepped over the massive tree-trunk, and continued on his way.

It would never do to turn back, now that he had come so far. He would be the laughing-stock of the Remove. He had called his schoolfellows a set of funks, and he himself by going back would be demonstrating his cowardice.

"I'll stick it out!" he told himself grimly.

At length he reached the cliff path, which, unknown to him, Harry Wharton had climbed some moments previously.

It was a stiff climb, and Bolsover was puffing and blowing long before he reached the top.

When at last the summit was gained, and the Removite stood fully exposed to the elements, he gave a shudder.

Far below, the giant breakers dashed themselves upon the rugged shore. No ship, Bolsover reflected, could have lived in such a sea. And up on the cliff-top, where he stood, the wind raged with such violence that to walk along the extreme edge of the cliff would be to invite certain death.

"Carr could never have come this way!" Bolsover told himself, with emphasis.

He had set out with the object of scoring off the Famous Five. In the snug shelter of the Remove dormitory, it was easy to contemplate a successful search. But here, on the storm-swept cliff, all hope of finding the runaway speedily evaporated.

"I must give it up!" muttered Bolsover. "Still, it's been an experience. Alone on the top of the cliff, in the biggest storm within the memory of the oldest inhabitant!"

But there Bolsover was wrong. He was not alone on the cliff-top.

Harry Wharton had already patrolled the cliffs, and he was on his way back when he thought he heard, amid the fury of the gale, a voice.

The captain of the Remove stopped short, and peered intently through the gloom.

Presently he discerned the dark outline of a human form.

Wharton's heart beat quickly. One thought leapt to his mind.

Could this be Dennis Carr?  
Creeping up behind the dark figure, Wharton distinguished the fawn-coloured coat which he knew to be the property of Dennis Carr. He distinguished, also, the school cap.

Wharton could not see the face, which was turned in the direction of the sea, and he failed to observe, in the gloom, that the figure was too burly to be that of Dennis Carr.

The fawn-coloured raincoat and the school cap suggested instantly to Wharton's mind that this was the runaway.

The captain of the Remove crouched low, with his eyes fixed upon the figure in front.

The form stood motionless for a few moments, and at the first movement Harry Wharton sprang.

"Got you!"  
His voice rang out through the storm.

So sudden—so altogether unexpected—was the attack that the victim was borne to the ground before he had time to protest.

Once on the ground, however, he fought like a tiger.

"I never knew Carr had such strength!" reflected Wharton in amazement.

He tried to pin his quarry down by planting his knee in the other's chest; but Bolsover major—for, of course, it was he—prevented this by shooting his fist upwards with such force that Wharton was knocked backwards.

Then Bolsover picked himself up, and the struggle began afresh.

Wharton rose to meet his opponent; and, locked together in a tight embrace, the two juniors wrestled and struggled each intent upon gaining the mastery.

And all the time they struggled, they were moving nearer and nearer to the edge of the cliff.

The storm raged around them, and far below the giant breakers continued to hurl themselves upon that broken, treacherous shore.

Although the struggle lasted but three minutes, it seemed an age to the two juniors concerned.

No word having been spoken, Harry Wharton was convinced that he was at grips with Dennis Carr.

As for Bolsover major, he hadn't the remotest idea who had launched that sudden attack upon him, and he didn't particularly care. All he knew was that he was engaged in a fierce hand-to-hand encounter, and that if he wished to overcome his unknown adversary, he must exert himself to the utmost.

Panting, struggling, their breath coming and going in great gasps, the two juniors moved nearer and yet nearer to the edge of the cliffs. Each was so engrossed in his task that the danger was unnoticed.

Presently, Bolsover major managed to break away from his opponent.

Pausing for an instant only, to take breath, he dashed his massive fist full into the chest of his adversary.

Harry Wharton gave a gasp, and stepped backwards. And with that step he was over the edge of the cliff.

He made a frantic attempt to save himself, but the tuft of grass that he clutched was uprooted, and the next instant he was gone—completely vanished from Bolsover major's startled gaze!

A shudder ran through Bolsover's burly frame.

Had his recent antagonist gone to his death?

### THE THIRD CHAPTER.

#### How Dennis Made Good.

FOR perhaps a minute, Percy Bolsover stood as if rooted to the spot.

In the last stage of that tense struggle—just as the fateful blow had been delivered—the bully of the Remove had recognised his opponent.

"Good heavens!" Bolsover's voice rose almost to a shriek. "It was Wharton!"

Bolsover's brain was in a turmoil as he stood there, torn and breathless and dishevelled, peering into the darkness.

There had been a clatter of stones and turf, but no further indications of Harry Wharton's fate. The boom of the sea, the crash and thunder of the tempest—these sounds dominated all others.

"Heaven help me!" panted Bolsover, with his face uplifted to the lowering sky. "It was an accident! I didn't know—"

His voice was lost in the deafening clamour of the gale, which swept him almost to the edge of the cliff.

Bolsover's next impulse was to rush pell-mell from the scene of the disaster—to get away with all speed from that dangerous spot; and, when Wharton's body was subsequently recovered, to deny all knowledge of the affair.

If he told the other fellows what had happened, they would not believe him. They would say that Bolsover had deliberately compassed the calamity.

"They'd never believe it was an accident!" muttered Bolsover. "They know that I'm at daggers drawn with Wharton, and they'd look on this as an act of revenge. Oh, it's awful—awful!"

Bolsover's teeth were chattering. He was a prey to terrible fears.

He was well acquainted with the cliff at that part, and not for a moment did he doubt that Wharton had gone to his death.

How could it be otherwise? The cliff-side was almost sheer for a matter of ninety feet. In spite of his desire to turn and flee, a dreadful curiosity rooted him to the spot.

After a time, when the wind seemed to have abated a little, he crawled on all fours to the edge of the cliff, and looked over.

There was nothing to be seen—nothing save the white foam of the breakers far below.

Bolsover crept back again. He was in an agony of doubt and fear. Large beads of perspiration stood out on his forehead.

"I didn't strike the first blow! I didn't mean him to be hurt! I didn't know we were so near to the edge of the cliff! And they'll never believe me! They'll think—they'll think—"

Bolsover's voice trailed off incoherently. He rocked to and fro in his distress. For a time he was almost delirious.

"The fellows were right!" he muttered at length. "I ought not to have come. I've been a fool—a mad fool! I should have stayed in the dorm."

But it was too late for vain regrets. Heedless of the warnings of his schoolfellows, he had set out on his nocturnal adventure—an adventure which had been crowned with disaster!

And then a faint hope—the merest germ of hope—came to Bolsover.

There was just a chance that Harry Wharton in his descent had found a foothold in the black wall of the cliff.

If that were the case, help must be obtained at once.

The impulse to run away was no longer present.

Whilst there was a chance, however slight, of saving Wharton's life, it must be taken.

Bolsover pulled himself together. "There's a boathouse down on the shore, half a mile this side of Pegg Bay!" he muttered. "I wonder—"

The next moment Bolsover was speeding across the cliff-top, in defiance of the danger which attended his hurried flight.

He did not pause until he reached the narrow, rugged path which descended to the shore.

Then, pausing only to regain his breath, he set off down the path, and in less than ten minutes he had reached the boathouse he sought.

There was no light within. The place was dark and still, and the door was locked.

Nothing daunted, Bolsover opened the little window from without, and started to clamber through. He hoped to find a coil of rope with which he could go to Wharton's aid—provided Wharton was not already past aid.

Whilst Bolsover was squirming his way through a sudden startled exclamation sounded from within.

"Who's that?"  
Bolsover gave a start as he recognised the voice.

"Carr!" he exclaimed. "So you've tracked me down, Bolsover!" said Dennis bitterly. "Thanks to this beastly storm, I had to take shelter here, but I little thought—"

"Get a light, quick!"

Dennis Carr was not slow witted. He saw at once that Bolsover major was greatly agitated, and that he was concerned with quite another matter than the capture of the runaway.

There was an oil-lamp in the boathouse. Dennis promptly lighted it.

Bolsover's face was ghastly. Dennis caught him by the arm.

"Bolsover, good heavens, what's the matter?"

"Wharton's fallen over the cliff. There's just a chance that he was able to hold on to something, in which case we can save him. I—"

Dennis Carr snatched up a coil of rope. "Come on!" he said briskly.

He unlocked the door, and the two juniors emerged into the storm.

As they did so there was a sudden shout. "Hallo, hallo, hallo! Who's there?"

It was the voice of Bob Cherry. Five figures loomed up through the darkness, and the next instant Vernon-Smith's hand fell upon Dennis Carr's shoulder.

"Got him!" he exclaimed triumphantly. "Great pip!" gasped Frank Nugent. "It's Carr!"

"And Bolsover!" said Johnny Bull. "Bolsover's found him!"

Dennis wrenched himself free from Vernon-Smith's grasp.

"Never mind me just now," he said. "Help is wanted for Wharton. He's fallen over the edge of the cliff!"

"What?"  
"You mean to say—"

There was a harsh laugh from Vernon-Smith.

"Don't take any notice of him!" he said. "This is a trick! Carr's trying to escape, and—"

"It's a fact!" jerked out Bolsover. "Wharton fell from the top of the cliff. I—I saw him! It was less than a quarter of an hour ago. Something must be done—"

"Something will be done!" said Dennis Carr grimly. "This way!"

And the seven juniors fairly bounded up the cliff-path.

No word was spoken during the ascent. Dennis Carr clutched the coil of rope, and he made quicker progress than his companions. His athletic abilities had never been so strongly in evidence as now.

When the others eventually caught up to Carr, he was standing on the cliff-top, perilously near to the edge.

"Where did it happen?" he rapped out.



The light from the oil-lamp fell full upon the white face of Bolsover. Dennis Carr caught him by the arm. "Bolsover, good heavens, what's the matter?" he asked. "Wharton's fallen over the cliff!" gasped Bolsover. (see page 7.)

Bolsover major located the spot, whilst the others stood by, white and breathless.

"You—you mean to say Harry fell over here?" panted Bob Cherry at length.

"Yes!"

"Then he'll be killed, as sure as fate!"

Bolsover shuddered.

"I—I thought there might be a chance—just a chance—" he mumbled.

Bob Cherry dropped on his knees, peered down into the abyss, and shouted at the top of his lungs:

"Harry! Harry! Can you hear me?"

There was no reply, save for the roar of the breakers.

"Try again!" muttered Nugent. "It's possible he didn't hear you that time."

Bob repeated his shout, and then strained his ears to listen.

During a temporary lull in the wind a faint response was audible from below.

"Thank heaven!" said Bob Cherry fervently.

"He's alive, at any rate!" said Johnny Bull. "And now—"

Dennis Carr stepped forward. The juniors saw that he had looped one end of the rope round his body.

"I'm going down," he said. "I want you fellows to lower me!"

Vernon-Smith made a hasty examination of the rope.

"Not strong enough," was his verdict.

"It can't be helped," said Dennis Carr. "We should have to go right into Pegg to get another, and by that time goodness knows what might happen to Wharton! He may be at the end of his tether already, unable to hold out much longer!"

"But—"

"I'm going down!" repeated Dennis firmly.

"But—but if the rope breaks!" said Bolsover, with a shiver.

"I must take the risk!"

The hearts of the juniors went out to Dennis Carr at that moment.

Was this the fellow with whom they were at war—the fellow with whom they had been tracking down—whom they had hated as they had hated no one else?

"Heaven help you, Carr!" muttered Frank Nugent.

The juniors hesitated no longer.

They manned the rope, and started to lower their plucky schoolfellow.

"When I give a tug it will be the signal for you to haul up," was Dennis Carr's last message.

And then, very slowly, he descended the face of the cliff.

He groped with his feet as he went, and occasionally he managed to find a foothold.

Not till now did he realise how frail—how terribly frail—was the rope which supported him.

He expected at any moment to go crashing down into the seething cauldron beneath.

But he kept his main object steadily before him.

He was going to rescue Wharton.

He almost laughed aloud at Fate's irony. He had hated Wharton. He had regarded him as a prig, and several other things besides.

He had accused Wharton of favouritism—of rank unfairness. Wharton had never given him a fair chance. And yet he was now on his way to save Harry Wharton's life!

When he was nearly half-way down the cliff, so far as he could judge, Dennis gave a shout:

"Wharton! Where are you?"

The suddenness of the reply quite startled Dennis.

"Here I am!"

Harry Wharton was at his very elbow.

There was a narrow ledge on the face of the cliff, and huddled on this ledge was the captain of the Remove.

Dennis worked his way along until he gained a footing on the ledge; and the fellows up above knew that he must have secured a foothold somewhere.

Dennis Carr bent over the fellow he had come to save.

"Are you hurt, Wharton?"

"Nothing to speak of."

"Thank goodness!"

Wharton peered up at the face of his rescuer.

"Why, my hat, it's Carr!"

Dennis gave a laugh.

"Of course! Whom did you think it was?"

"I thought that Bolsover— But then, Bolsover would never had had nerve enough for this!"

"How did you come to fall over the cliff?" asked Dennis.

"It was an accident."

"You were jolly lucky not to have been killed!"

"I know."

For a moment there was silence. Then Dennis Carr said:

"There are half a dozen fellows up above waiting to haul us up. You're going first."

"Look here, Carr—"

"You're going first, I tell you!"

Dennis unfastened the rope, and made a fresh noose, which he passed over Harry Wharton's body.

"Ready?" he asked.

THE PENNY POPULAR.—No. 39.

"Look here," protested Wharton. "What about you?"

"I can wait."

"But it's awfully treacherous on this ledge!"

"Your life's of more account than mine, I reckon."

Having made Wharton secure, Dennis gave the promised tug on the rope.

Slowly—very slowly—Harry Wharton was hauled up the face of the cliff.

Dennis Carr remained where he was, watching in an agony of apprehension.

He was not concerned for himself. As he had said, his own life was of little account just then. He was an outcast—a runaway from school—a creature sunken in dishonour. What would it matter if he were suddenly precipitated from his perch, to fall either upon the rocks or into the sea below? His going would be deplored by none.

Dennis well knew the fragility of that rope. At any moment he expected Harry Wharton to come hurtling down.

But the juniors up above exercised the utmost care and caution.

They could see that the jagged edge of the cliff-top was cutting into the rope; they knew that Wharton's life hung in the balance; but, with the possible exception of Bolsover major, they kept their heads.

And then, after what seemed an eternity, Harry Wharton's curly head appeared over the edge of the cliff.

Willing hands were stretched out to him, and he was assisted on to the wet grass and safety.

"Oh, Harry!"

Bob Cherry sobbed out the words in his infinite relief.

As for Bolsover major, he had broken down completely. He, the bully of the Remove, stood with his face in his hands, and through his fingers the tears were trickling. He had been afraid—horribly afraid—for the safety of Harry Wharton. And now all his fears were allayed—all the wild suspense of the last half-hour was overpast.

Harry Wharton scrambled to his feet.

"Buck up!" he muttered. "There's Carr!"

Yes, there was Carr.

In their intense relief at the safety of their rescued chum the juniors had almost forgotten his rescuer.

Clinging to the cliff—stationed, as it were, between the sky and the sea—was the gallant junior who had risked his life for another. He was waiting—waiting for the rope to come dangling down within his reach, so that he, in turn, might be hauled up to safety.

And still the wind raged and the sea roared. And still the breakers burst with angry violence upon the rocks below.

Then down came the rope!

It went far wide of the mark, and had to be hauled up again.

A second time it missed its objective, and Dennis was beginning to wonder whether he could hold out much longer. His head was throbbing painfully, strange lights danced before his eyes. He felt puny and helpless on that slippery ledge. He was between life and death, and he wished that one or the other would claim him soon. Anything—anything was better than this harrowing suspense.

For the third time the rope came fluttering down.

Dennis groped for it, missed, groped again, and this time he was successful in grasping it.

It seemed a tedious business forming the noose and making it secure around him. The junior's fingers were numbed and icy, and his senses were beginning to swim.

The task was accomplished at length, and Dennis gave the signal which was now so familiar to those up above.

Slowly he found himself being raised from the ledge. Slowly, ever so slowly, he mounted upwards.

The rope creaked under the strain. Why didn't these fishermen fellows keep stouter coils? Dennis reflected. What was the use of a skimpy rope like this? It was so thin and worn in parts that it was little more than miraculous how it could support the weight of a human body.

Still, he was rising. He was getting near to the top now.

In his heart he had not expected to be saved. But the gods were good.

He had squandered his life, he reflected. He deserved to lose it. But it was being spared him, and perhaps in the future he would make better use of it.

These reflections were cut short by a startled cry from above.

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For one giddy instant the rope swayed, and then it suddenly severed at the part where the jagged edge of the cliff had worn it through.

Dennis Carr felt himself falling—descending with terrible velocity into space.

He clutched wildly as he went, but his hand encountered nothing but the hard surface of the cliff.

And then the earth seemed suddenly to rise and strike him in the face, and all was darkness and oblivion.

#### THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

##### In the Valley of the Shadow.

THE storm subsided as if by magic.

The wind dropped, and the waves became so subdued that it was impossible to think of them as something which caused danger and devastation.

High on the cliff-top the seven juniors stood stunned.

In spite of their efforts, the frail rope had snapped, and Dennis Carr had gone to his fate.

It was Bob Cherry who broke the long silence.

"Poor old Carr!" he said, with a catch in his voice. "He—he'll be killed!"

"I'm afraid so," said Harry Wharton gravely. "It isn't likely he'll have the luck that I had."

"What's to be done now?" exclaimed Bolsover major. There was despair in his tone.

"Now that the sea's calmer," said Vernon-Smith, "we must get a boat from Pegg, and row round to the foot of the cliffs. There's just a chance that the worst hasn't happened."

Harry Wharton nodded. All the same, he entertained no hope of finding Dennis Carr alive.

This might have been one of the most adventurous within the recollections of the Greyfriars juniors. And it now seemed as if tragedy had mingled with the adventure.

But there was no time to be lost. If Dennis Carr were still alive—if he lay badly injured at the foot of the cliff—he must be conveyed to Greyfriars with all speed.

The juniors set off at a run in the direction of Pegg.

It was nearly three o'clock in the morning, and there were no fishermen to be seen. However, there was a boat available, and Harry Wharton & Co. were expert oarsmen.

"This is a rotten old tub!" growled Johnny Bull, eyeing the boat with extreme disfavour.

"Can't be helped," said Wharton.

"She wants baling out."

"We can't stop for that now."

"I will do the esteemed balefulness as we go along," murmured Hurrec Singh.

The Famous Five sprang into the boat, and Vernon-Smith and Bolsover pushed it off.

"There's only room for one more," said Bob Cherry.

Bolsover major stepped back.

"You go, Smithy!" he muttered.

Bolsover felt that he could not face the sight of Dennis Carr lying huddled on the rocky shore.

"Wait here till we get back," said Vernon-Smith. And then he jumped into the boat. The stupor broken, the juniors pulled vigorously on their oars.

It was truly wonderful how swiftly the sea had calmed down.

Only a short time since the billows had seemed mountainous. No rowing-boat could have lived in such a sea. And now, the wind having abated, there was nothing but a mild swell, on the bosom of which the boat rose and dipped alternately.

The distance was over a mile, and it was covered in record time, the juniors taking turns with the oars.

Bob Cherry strained his eyes in the direction of the ridge of rocks at the foot of the cliff.

In the uncertain light he at length detected a dark figure, over which the waves were gently lapping.

"There he is!" said Bob, in an unsteady voice. "Pull this way!"

Harry Wharton and Frank Nugent happened to be rowing, and they pulled hard in the direction indicated by their chum.

In a very short space of time the juniors were clambering out on to the rocks.

Dennis Carr was discovered lying on his face.

Gently his schoolfellows turned him over. His face was deathly pale, and the blood trickled from a wound in the forehead. One arm seemed to be broken.

"Poor kid!" murmured Bob Cherry, in great distress.

Harry Wharton opened Carr's coat and waistcoat and undid his shirt. Then he put his ear to the junior's heart. It was beating faintly—ever so faintly.

"Lift him into the boat," muttered Wharton.

The juniors found great consolation in the fact that Dennis Carr was alive. They knew, however, that he was very near to death's door.

"Something must have checked the force of his fall," said Nugent.

Johnny Bull nodded.

"I honestly didn't expect to find him alive," he said.

Gently, ever so gently, Dennis Carr was lifted into the boat.

Harry Wharton and Bob Cherry got in first, and supported Dennis on their knees, while Johnny Bull and Vernon-Smith took the oars.

Had the storm been still in progress, it would have been a sheer impossibility to row back to Pegg. The tide would have bumped the boat against the base of the cliffs.

But the storm had happily abated, and Johnny Bull and Vernon-Smith pulled with strong, stalwart strokes. Never had they rowed so hard and untiringly before—not even when taking part in a boatrace with a rival school on the River Sark.

At length the boat was run aground on the shifting sands of Pegg.

"Where's Bolsover?" exclaimed Vernon-Smith.

"Gone to get help, perhaps," said Bob Cherry.

Bob was correct.

Bolsover major, who had not been able to endure the suspense of waiting for the return of the boat, had sped off to Friardale, and summoned Dr. Short.

Even as the juniors landed there came to their ears the purr of an automobile.

A few hundred yards away, at the end of the main road, Harry Wharton & Co. could distinguish the gleam of headlights.

The car, which could come no farther, was waiting for them.

Harry Wharton and Bob Cherry lifted the unconscious Dennis, and bore him away towards the vehicle. The others followed.

The doctor sat in the driver's seat, and Bolsover major, pale and agitated, was standing beside the car as the party came up.

"You—you've got Carr?" he faltered.

Harry Wharton nodded.

"Is—is he dead?"

"Not by long chalks!" said Bob Cherry. But this was said solely with the object of calming Bolsover. As he glanced at the pale, wan face of Dennis Carr, Bob knew that the lamp of life was fluttering very low.

Dr. Short took in the situation at a glance, and he realised its gravity. He did not stop to ask a lot of needless questions.

"Lift him in," he said quietly.

And the car, laden with juniors, moved off in the direction of Greyfriars.

Wingate, and the members of his search-party, had already returned when the car arrived. They were explaining to Mr. Quelch that their search had proved futile.

"Bless my soul!" exclaimed the Remove-master, as the car came to a halt outside the school gates. "What can this mean?"

"Looks as if there might have been an accident, sir," said Wingate.

"Heaven forbid!"

Mr. Quelch hurried to the gates, and unlocked them. They were swung open, and the vehicle rolled through the Close.

"Wharton," said Mr. Quelch, as the captain of the Remove alighted, "what has happened?"

"We've brought Carr back, sir!"

"Ah! You have discovered the whereabouts of that reckless and misguided boy?"

"Carr's one of the best, sir," said Wharton simply. "He saved my life!"

"Wharton!"

In a few terse sentences, Harry Wharton described the scenes of that adventurous night. He did not, of course, mention that he had been accidentally pushed over the top of the cliff by Bolsover major. Mr. Quelch might not have regarded such an incident in the light of an accident. But Wharton emphasised Dennis Carr's heroism.

"Dear me!" murmured Mr. Quelch, in great concern. "Carr must be removed to the sanatorium at once."

This part of the programme was already being carried out by Bob Cherry and Frank Nugent. The doctor accompanied them.

"May we stay and hear the verdict, sir?"

asked Harry Wharton.

"Certainly, my boy!" replied Mr. Quelch. "I will inform you in a few moments as to Carr's condition."

And the Remove-master hurried in the wake of Dr. Short.

When he returned to the Close, twenty minutes later, his face was very grave.

"Is the kid badly hurt, sir?" inquired Wingate.

Mr. Quelch nodded.

"So badly, Wingate, that little hope can be entertained of his recovery!"

"Oh!"

"Carr appears to have broken his arm," said Mr. Quelch. "That, in itself, is a trifle. But the injury to his forehead is far more serious. It will be impossible to get into touch with the poor boy's father until the post-office opens at eight o'clock. By that time, the doctor tells me, the crisis will be past. And now, my boys, you had better get to bed. This has been a terrible experience for you, I fear!"

"We shouldn't mind a scrap, sir," said Bob Cherry miserably, "if—only Carr could be spared!"

"We must hope for the best," said Mr. Quelch.

Seniors and juniors then retired for what was left of the night.

Several fellows were awake when Harry Wharton & Co. entered the Remove dormitory.

All sorts of questions were fired at the Famous Five, and at Bolsover and Vernon-Smith.

"Did you find Carr?"

"Where on earth have you been?"

"Do you know that it's nearly dawn?"

The juniors recounted the experiences through which they had passed, and a hush fell upon the dormitory when it was generally known that Dennis Carr lay at the door of death.

Even those who had hated Dennis the most felt sorry that matters had come to this tragic pass. And pride was mingled with their sorrow. They were proud of Dennis Carr for the heroic part he had played.

The chums of the Remove were dead-beat—utterly exhausted by the strenuous happenings of the past few hours; but sleep was denied them.

How could they possibly compose themselves to slumber when Dennis Carr hovered between life and death in the sanatorium?

They knew that the crisis was approaching—that within an hour or two the issue would be determined by Providence.

And each one of them prayed that Dennis Carr might be spared—that he might win through in that stern tussle against the reaper whose name is Death.

## THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

### The End of the Drama.

**D**ENNIS CARR had recovered consciousness. But it was only to pass into a state of delirium.

Patiently watching by the bedside of the injured boy were Dr. Short and the headmaster of Greyfriars.

Dr. Locke's face was lined and haggard.

The medical man had held out but little hope of Dennis Carr's recovery; and the kind-hearted Head was moved by a deep concern for the fate of the boy who, but a short time since, had been awaiting expulsion in the punishment-room.

Presently the delirium passed, and Dennis Carr's eyes wandered round the room, taking stock of his surroundings.

"My poor boy!" murmured the Head softly.

Dennis looked intently at Dr. Locke. He seemed to be trying to collect his thoughts.

"I—I've something to say to you, sir," he whispered at length.

Dr. Locke bent over the pillow.

"Yes, my boy?"

"You—remember the affair of Wharton's ten pounds, sir?"

The Head started.

Why should Dennis Carr wish to resurrect such an unpleasant subject? Could he still be delirious?

"For the theft of that money, Carr," said Dr. Locke quietly, "Linley was expelled from the school."

"Yes," said Dennis. "He was expelled—for my sake!"

"For your sake, Carr? I do not understand."

Dennis Carr looked the Head full in the face.

"It was I who stole the money, sir."

"You! But—but Linley stood self-con-

fessed—"

"He made a false confession, sir, to save me. He was my chum, and he stood by me through the whole sorry business. I told him I couldn't bear the thought of expulsion—that I couldn't face my father afterwards. So he volunteered to take the blame, and he was sacked!"

"Then—the theft was committed by you, Carr?" said the Head.

"Yes, sir. There's no sense in withholding the facts any longer. I'm dying, and—"

"Hush, my boy! You must not talk like that!"

"But it's true!" said Dennis. His eyes threw out a challenge to Dr. Short, and the doctor lowered his own, unable to meet the junior's gaze.

"I've been a cad and a waster, sir," Dennis went on, turning to the Head. "I suppose I was no worse than the average fellow when I came to Greyfriars. I meant to do well, but somehow everything went wrong. The fellows didn't approve of my methods. I don't blame them. They've got a code of their own, and I acted outside that code. My first mistake was to kick Bolsover major during a fight. I can see now that I was a beastly hooligan, but the affair didn't strike me in that light then. I considered that all was fair in war. The main object of a fight is to pulverise your man—and I thought that it didn't matter how you did so long as it was done!"

The Head looked very distressed.

"You need not recount your acts of folly to me, at a time like this, Carr," he said gently.

"But I'm dying," repeated Dennis, with conviction. "And I want you to understand everything before—before I go."

"My dear boy, you are overwrought. You do not realise—"

"I realise everything only too well, sir. As I say, I meant to do well when I first came to Greyfriars, but the affair with Bolsover set the fellows against me; and other things followed. I began to think that it wasn't worth while playing with a straight bat; and when my mother died I made up my mind to go to the dogs. I got mixed up with a set of cads outside the school, and I smoked and gambled, and goodness know what. I got into money difficulties; I owed some fellows ten pounds, and I was tempted to steal. I ought to have trampled down the temptation. I ought to have faced the music. Instead of that I urged Mark Linley to face it for me, and he did. Linley was a brick. I wasn't worth such a sacrifice. I hope you'll let him come back to Greyfriars, sir."

"Most assuredly I shall," said the Head. "He shall be wired for as soon as possible."

Dennis Carr's head sank back upon the pillows. An expression of relief passed over his face. If he were indeed dying—and he believed such was the case—he had at least vindicated Mark Linley's honour before it was too late. Mark would come back to Greyfriars now, to win fresh honours in class and playing-field.

"Good luck to him!" thought Dennis. "If ever a fellow deserved to get on it's Mark Linley."

A strange feeling of weakness came over him. He felt that his life was ebbing away.

Well, let the worst come. It was part of the scheme of things, he supposed. He had misused his life; he had perverted the talents entrusted to him by Providence. And that same Providence Whom he had thought so little about was not disposed to give him another chance.

But he would keep a stiff upper lip. He had never been wanting in physical courage, at any rate, and he would show these people—this kindly old Head and this sympathetic doctor—that he could be game to the last—that he knew how to die!

And yet—

It was a little hard, he reflected. It was rough luck. He was not yet in his fifteenth year; he had been snatched untimely from a world which, although honeycombed with trouble, still had possibilities.

If only Providence would be kind, and give him another chance, he would make good. He felt sure of it. He had learnt his lesson. He could see his past follies as clearly as through a mirror. If only he could start afresh, he would know the things to grasp and the things to shun. The old Dennis Carr would perish; the new Dennis Carr would spring into being.

Was it worth while making a fight for life?

Dennis wrestled with this problem, and the Head's next words solved it for him.

"You have been reckless and perverse, Carr. You have done many things which

you ought not to have done. But the pluck—the almost incredible pluck—which you displayed in saving the life of your schoolfellow has amply atoned for all your previous lapses and failings. Do not reproach yourself, my poor boy! We are all of us prone to temptation. Not one of us is fit to cast a stone. When you have pulled through this critical period—and I feel sure you will do so—you will be able to reconstruct your life. Look not at the past, but at the future!"

Those words—spoken with sincerity by the grey-haired scholar at his bedside—not only served as a stimulant to the stricken junior, but they solved his problem.

He would make a fight for life!

There was no rising-bell that morning. All Greyfriars knew that the life of Dennis Carr hung by a thread. Some, indeed, feared that the worst had happened, and that Dennis might no longer be in the land of the living.

Dennis Carr had certainly fallen asleep, but it was not the sleep that knows no waking.

At length the junior opened his eyes.

Dr. Locke threw a questioning glance at his companion.

The medical man smiled.

"He will live," he said.

Harry Wharton & Co. learned the verdict after breakfast.

Subsequent bulletins, issued during the morning, stated that Dennis Carr was not only out of danger, but was progressing favourably.

The Removites had quite recovered their normal spirits by the afternoon.

And with the arrival of tea-time came Mark Linley, tired after a long journey from Lancashire, but glowing with delight at the reunion with his chums.

"Blessed if I can understand it at all," said Mark, as he shook hands with the Famous Five in the Close. "I got a wire from the Head saying that my innocence was established, and that I was to return to Greyfriars at once. What has happened?"

"Come along to Study No. 1 and I'll tell you the whole story," said Bob Cherry. "But we refuse to give you a single word of information until you've had a square meal!"

Mark Linley smiled, and he accompanied Harry Wharton & Co. to Study No. 1, where a feast fit for a king had been provided.

On the conclusion of the meal, Mark Linley listened breathlessly while his chums recounted the thrilling events of the past twenty-four hours.

"I always said Dennis Carr had the right stuff in him," said Mark Linley, when the narration was finished. "He'll be able to start life under fresh conditions now, and we must make up our minds to be decent to him, and to give him every chance."

"Yes, rather!"

"But—but he may not stay here any longer," said Frank Nugent. "He's confessed, of course, to stealing that money of yours, Harry, and it's quite on the cards that he'll be expelled."

"I hardly think the Head will go so far as that after what's happened," said Wharton.

And he was right.

Dr. Locke had decided to allow Dennis Carr to resume his place in the Remove, but some time was likely to elapse before this could come about.

Although on the road to recovery, Dennis was still very weak; and as soon as he could be moved he was conveyed to his home in London, there to enter upon a long period of convalescence.

Before he went, however, the Famous Five, Mark Linley, and a few others, had permission to see him in the sanary.

Dennis was inclined to be remorseful at first; but, under the genial influence of Bob Cherry he quickly brightened up.

"We've been beasts to you, Carr," said Bob. "And as soon as you get strong enough, we want you to kick us—hard!"

Dennis tried to speak, but his voice failed him.

These were the fellows he had hated—whose motives he had misunderstood.

How decent they all were!

He would repay them for this later on. He would show them that he could play a straight game with the same thoroughness with which he had played a crooked one. In a word, he would "make good."

And, with this resolve, Dennis Carr bade au revoir to Greyfriars—au revoir, but not good-bye!

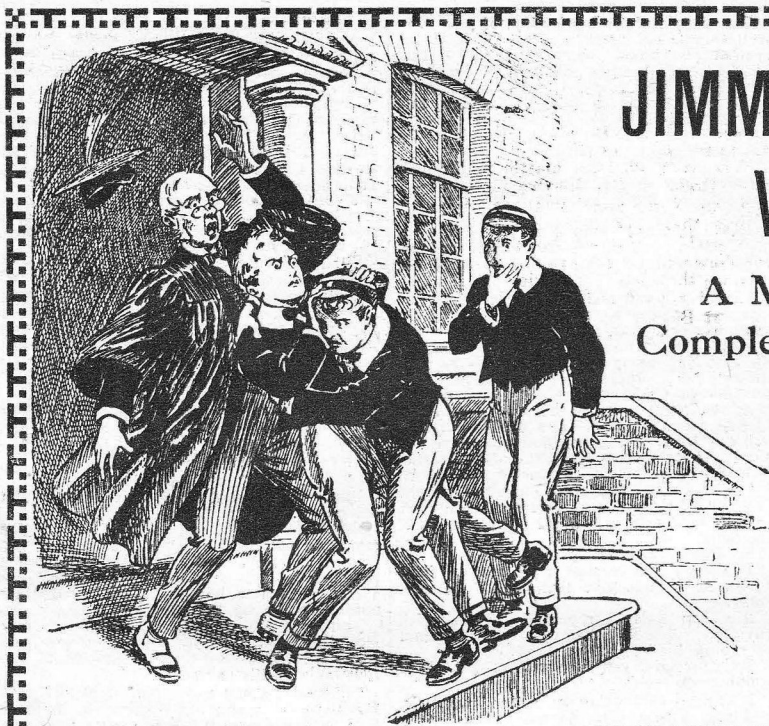
THE END.

(Another grand long complete story of Harry Wharton & Co. next week, entitled "Wanted—A Leader!"—Order your copy in advance.)

# JIMMY SILVER & Co's. VISITORS!

A Magnificent Long  
Complete Story of JIMMY  
SILVER & Co.,  
the Chums of  
Rookwood.

By OWEN  
CONQUEST.



## THE FIRST CHAPTER. Jimmy Silver Brings News.

**W**HAT'S the trouble?"  
"What's the row?"  
"What's the chivvy about?"  
Lovell and Raby and New-  
come, of the Fourth Form at Rookwood  
—Classical s'de—asked those questions  
together, as Jimmy Silver came into the  
end study.

Jimmy Silver had a most portentous  
expression upon his face.

If a Zeppelin had been hovering over  
the ancient roofs of Rookwood Jimmy  
Silver could hardly have looked more  
portentous.

It was evident that he had news.

But he did not seem in a hurry to reply  
to the questions showered on him by his  
chums. Perhaps the news was too terri-  
ble to be broken suddenly.

"What the dickens is it?" demanded  
Lovell, laying down his pen. "Are the  
Modern cads on the warpath?"

Jimmy Silver shook his head.

"Been ragging the Bagshot  
bounders?"

Another shake of the head.

"Herr Kinkel found out that you put  
the jam in his socks?"

"Worse than that!"

"Then what the dickens is it?" de-  
manded Lovell.

"Prepare for a shock!" said Jimmy  
Silver tragically. "Brace up! Square  
your shoulders, and take a deep breath!"

"Oh, don't be a goat, you know!"

"As Shakespeare remarks somewhere,  
if you have tears, prepare to shed them  
now!" said Jimmy Silver.

Lovell picked up a ruler, and rose to  
his feet.

"You'll jolly well be shedding tears  
soon if you don't get it off your silly  
chest!" he exclaimed. "Now, what's  
the row?"

"Sure you can stand it?" asked Jimmy  
Silver anxiously. "Yah! Oh, keep that  
ruler away, you frabjous ass!"

"Out with it!" said Lovell, flourishing  
the ruler, which had just come into  
sharp contact with Jimmy Silver's head.

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Jimmy's head was hard, but the ruler  
was harder, and Jimmy rubbed his head  
and glared.

"You fathead—"

"What's the news?" roared Raby.  
"Give him another, Lovell!"

Crack!

"Yarooooh!"

The next moment Jimmy Silver and  
Lovell and the ruler were rolling on the  
carpet of the end study together. Lovell  
was under-dog, and Jimmy Silver sat on  
his chest and possessed himself of the  
ruler.

"Now, you fathead—"

"Lemme gerrup, you duffer!" roared  
Lovell, wriggling. "I'll pulverise you!"

Crack!

"Ow! Oh, crumbs!"

"You keep quiet!" said Jimmy Silver,  
brandishing the ruler in his turn. "Don't  
keep on interrupting me when I'm telling  
you the startling news!"

"You—you—Groo!" gasped Lovell.  
"Keep that ruler away, you chumps!  
Rescue, you two silly cuckoos! Why  
don't you draggimoff?"

Raby and Newcome advanced to the  
attack, but the ruler drove them back.  
It was a big round ebony ruler, and it  
was dangerous at close quarters.

"Now, be good!" said Jimmy Silver,  
settling himself a little more comfortably  
on Lovell's chest. "I'm going to tell  
you the news—the startling news! Are  
you prepared for a shock?"

"Groo! I'll shock you!" mumbled  
Lovell. "You wait till I gerrup!"

"I've just heard it from Bootles," said  
Jimmy Silver, unheeding. "The Modern  
cads know it already. I saw them cack-  
ling, and wondered what was up—Tommy  
Dodd and the rest. They're enjoying it,  
of course."

"Enjoying what, you frabjous fat-  
head?" roared Newcome. "Why don't  
you explain?"

"Ain't I explaining as fast as you'll let  
me?" exclaimed Jimmy Silver. "You  
keep on interrupting me, and Lovell  
keeps on wriggling—"

"I'll spifficate you!" came in mum-

bling tones from Lovell. "I'll take you  
into a corner and suffocate you! I'll—"

"How's a chap to explain when Lovell  
keeps on like that?"

"I'll slaughter you! I'll scalp you!  
I'll—"

"Yes, shut up, Lovell, and let's hear  
the news!" said Raby.

"Draggimoff!" yelled Lovell.

"How can we drag him off when he's  
got your ruler? Do be reasonable! But  
if he don't explain at once we'll swamp  
him with ink!" said Raby, taking up the  
inkstand.

Lovell gave a roar.

"Keep that ink away, you fathead!  
You'll swamp me, too!"

"Well, that can't be helped."

"You—you—"

"Hold on!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver.  
"I'll explain fast enough if Lovell will  
leave off interrupting! We're fairly up  
against it this time!"

"What's the matter?" demanded  
Raby.

"You know we've ragged the Bagshot  
fellows till they don't know where to  
hide their diminished heads—"

"Well?"

"And they've ragged us till—"

"Oh, get on!"

"And you know they've got influenza  
at Bagshot School—"

"I know! Pankley told us so. What  
does it matter to us?" demanded Raby.  
"You don't want us to go and nurse 'em,  
I suppose?"

"They're sending away all the chaps  
who're not down with it, so that they  
won't catch it," said Jimmy Silver.

"Well, suppose they are," said Raby,  
exasperated, and clutching the inkstand  
again. "Do you mean to say that that's  
your blessed news?"

"That's it."

"You frabjous ass!" yelled Lovell.  
"What does it matter tuppence to us if  
they're sending away all blessed Bag-  
shot? I don't care a brass farthing if  
they're sending them to Jericho or to  
Chicago! You silly chump!"

"But—"

"So that's the news, is it?" said Raby.



"You come along with a face like a kite, and that's all the news, is it? Then you get the ink!"

"Hold on! I haven't—"

"Hold on!" yelled Lovell.

But the exasperated Raby did not hold on. His hand swept forward with the inkpot, and the ink came out in a shower. Jimmy Silver made a bound just in time and escaped. But Lovell was not in a position to make a bound. He sat up just in time to catch the ink with his head.

"Yurrrrrrrrrp!" came from Lovell.

"Oh, crumbs!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Jimmy Silver. "Behold, he is black but comely! Ha, ha, ha!"

Lovell scrambled up wildly.

"Where is he?" Lovell gouged ink from his eyelashes. "Lemme gerrat him! Groo! Lemme gerrold of him!"

"There he is!" said Raby. "Hallo! Wharrer you at? This is me!"

"I know it's you," said Lovell, grasping Raby and imparting ink to him from his flowing countenance, and pommelling him at the same time. "You've smothered me with ink, you frabjous burler! Take that, and that!"

"Why, you fathead, take that!"

Jimmy Silver stepped out into the passage.

"I'll come back and tell you the news when you're calmer!" he remarked.

"Good-bye!"

"Collar him!" yelled Lovell.

Jimmy Silver slammed the door and retreated. His chuckle died away down the passage, and he was gone by the time Raby and Lovell and Newcome rushed out in pursuit. And the great news was still untold.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

A Bolt from the Blue.

**T**OMMY DODD & CO., of the Modern side of Rookwood, seemed to be enjoying themselves.

Tommy Dodd and Tommy Cook and Tommy Doyle were wearing beatific smiles. The three Tommies were evidently in possession of the great news, and they seemed to find great enjoyment in it.

The Classical Fourth, on the other hand, did not look as if they were enjoying it. Quite the reverse.

Smythe & Co. of the Shell, though also Classicals, were smirking with satisfaction. They found the situation as amusing as the Modern fellows did. The trouble, whatever it was, had evidently fallen only on the shoulders of the Classical Fourth.

Lovell and Raby and Newcome came downstairs, with wrathful looks. They had not heard, the news yet, owing to Jimmy Silver's peculiar methods of imparting information.

Lovell and Raby had been for some time very busy in washing off ink. Now they were looking for their study leader. They wanted to see Jimmy Silver, and they wanted to see him badly.

Tommy Dodd & Co. set up a cackle as the Classical juniors came out into the quadrangle.

"Heard the news?" chuckled Tommy Dodd.

"Blow the news!" growled Lovell.

"Hang the news! Where's Jimmy Silver? Have you seen a silly idiot, with a face like a kite, knocking about?"

"Only yourself, old chap!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"They haven't heard the news!" chortled Cook. "They haven't heard it! They don't know that Bagshot—"

"Blow Bagshot!" said Lovell, with a grunt. "What the thunder does it matter

to us? I don't care if they've all got flu from the Head down to the boot-boy!"

"But—"

"And I don't care if the silly asses who haven't got it are being sent away from the silly asses who have got it!" growled Lovell. "They can send them to Timbuctoo for all I care!"

"Yes, that wouldn't matter!" grinned Tommy Dodd. "But they're not sending them to Timbuctoo, you see. They're sending them here!"

"Here!" exclaimed Lovell and Raby and Newcome together.

"Sure they are!" chuckled Doyle. "A dozen of them—a dozen of the Fourth Form at Bagshot. Their headmaster has asked Dr. Chisholm to take 'em in, and he's taking 'em in!"

"Oh, my hat!" said Lovell.

"And as Bagshot is a classical school—a mouldy old grammar-school—a place where you grub up Latin roots, they are coming to the Classical side here!" howled Tommy Dodd.

"Oh!"

"And as they're in the Fourth, they're going to be planted on you."

"Us!"

"Ha, ha! No room for them on the Modern side!" grinned Tommy Dodd. "They don't want to learn German and book-keeping and stinks. No jolly fear! They're going to be on the Classical side while they're here—they're going to whack out your lessons with Bootles—"

"And dine with you in Hall," said Tommy Cook.

"And share yer studies intoirely!" howled Doyle.

Lovell jumped.

"Share our studies!" he roared. "Ha, ha! Yes! You'll get Pankley in the study, perhaps."

"Share our studies with the Bagshot bounders!" roared Lovell. "Have those worms shoved into our studies! Why, we'd rather have you Modern cads there—almost!"

"We won't stand it!" hooted Raby.

"A couple of 'em to every study, by gad!" said Smythe of the Shell. "You'll be rather crowded for room—what! And you get on so nicely with the Bagshot fellows—like Kilkenny cats, by gad! Ha, ha, ha!"

"What a rotten plant!" growled Lovell, in dismay. "We won't stand it! If Pankley of Bagshot comes into the end study, he'll go out on his neck! We're not going to house a lot of vagrants. Here, you chaps, let's go and see Bootles. Let's go and tell him it can't be done!"

"Ahem!" said Raby.

"Hum!" remarked Newcome.

"Will you come and back me up or not?" bawled Lovell. "I'm not going to stand it for one. Come on, I tell you!"

Lovell was a somewhat hot-headed youth. He started back into the School-House at once, and Raby and Newcome followed him somewhat hesitatingly.

They left the Modern juniors howling with laughter. That bolt from the blue, that awful misfortune which had fallen upon the Classical Fourth, evoked no sympathy from their old rivals. Tommy Dodd & Co. were quite heartless.

"Hallo, here's Silver!" exclaimed Lovell, as he spotted Jimmy in the passage. "Silver, you silly ass—"

"Pax!" said Jimmy.

Lovell snorted.

"I'm not going to scrag you now, you jabberwock! Something more important to do now than to scrag a howling jack-ass! Have you heard that the Bagshot bounders are going to be planted on us—shoved into our studies, by Jove—"

"That's what I came to tell you when you interrupted me."

"Well, I'm going to tell Bootles it won't do. Come on!"

"I—I say, hold on!"

"Rats!"

Lovell marched on furiously to his Form-master's study, and Jimmy Silver followed, with Raby and Newcome. Lovell knocked at the door, and marched in. The other three discreetly remained in the doorway.

Mr. Bootles, the master of the Fourth Form at Rookwood, looked up with his usual benevolent smile as the Fistical Four appeared.

"Ha!" said Mr. Bootles. "I am glad to see you, my boys! In fact, I was going to send for you. What—what!"

"I say, sir, we've heard—" began Lovell.

"Yes, I have no doubt that you have heard. Owing to the lamentable outbreak of illness at Bagshot School, the boys who are not down with influenza are being sent away—a very necessary precaution, very necessary. They are—ah—being sent to various places—ah—and Dr. Chisholm has kindly consented to take in a dozen members—ah—of the Fourth Form. You are—ah—acquainted with the juniors of Bagshot, I believe—"

"We are!" murmured Jimmy Silver, adding in a lower tone: "We is!"

"They will share your work in the Form-room while they remain here," purred Mr. Bootles. "Their studies are—ah—of a classical nature. I trust you will get on exceedingly well with them—ah—exceedingly well. They will be distributed among the junior studies—ah—and that is why I wished to see you, my boys. I—ah—wished to request you to be very careful—ah—to give the Bagshot youths a very warm welcome—ah—and show them true Rookwood hospitality."

"Oh!"

"I am sure that you will carry out my wishes in this respect," said Mr. Bootles benevolently. "If there are any disputes, I shall be under the painful necessity—ah—of administering severe punishment—ah—and I am sure you will not cause that painful necessity to arise—what—what! Pray be extremely courteous to Pankley and the rest, and in this you will—ah—oblige me. That is all, my boys. You may go."

Mr. Bootles made a gesture of dismissal.

Lovell opened his mouth, and closed it again. He followed his chums from the study without a word. When the door was closed the Fistical Four looked at one another with glum, grim looks.

"You—ahem—you didn't mention to Bootles that it wouldn't do, Lovell," murmured Jimmy Silver.

"You forgot to mention that we wouldn't stand it, Lovell," remarked Raby.

Lovell gave a snort.

"What's the good of talking rot? It's settled. They haven't asked us. Don't talk out of the back of your neck. We've got to stand it."

"Bootles has asked us to give them a warm welcome!" said Jimmy Silver.

"And we're going to give them a warm welcome—so warm that they will find it quite hot!"

Lovell and Raby and Newcome stared for a moment, and then their faces relaxed, and they grinned. And as the Bagshot juniors were to arrive that afternoon the Fistical Four lost no time in preparing a warm welcome.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

The Intruders.

**A**LL the Classical Fourth at Rookwood agreed that it was too thick.

There had always been a keen rivalry between Rookwood and Bagshot Schools, especially among the juniors. The two schools were quite close to one

another, and the fellows often met—seldom without an exchange of compliments. If there was one matter the Moderns and Classics could unite upon, it was in "going for" the Bagshot bounders. Not that Pankley & Co. of the Fourth Form at Bagshot were not decent fellows enough. They were all right in their way. But the hatchet was never buried—it was, as Jimmy Silver put it, war to the knife and fork.

Moreover, the Bagshot bounders had a way of assuming superior airs—chiefly because they generally "whopped" Rookwood on the playing-fields. That was due to the fact that the Rookwood junior club had been in the hands of the slackers—Smythe & Co. Since there had been a change, Tommy Dodd now being junior captain. But that was quite recent, and the Bagshot bounders had not had time to get used to it, and their superior airs continued undiminished.

In spite of Mr. Bootles' expressed wishes on the subject, it was certain that there would be trouble in the Fourth-Form passage.

There was no room for the new-comers, for one thing. Space was limited already.

The Classical Fourth went three or four to a study. Where were they to find room for a dozen new bounders in their quarters?

If the Bagshot fellows could have been relied upon to be very quiet and meek, and to play second fiddle in a proper and becoming manner, it would have been different. But if there was one thing that Pankley & Co. were certain not to do it was playing the second fiddle.

It was much more probable that Pankley & Co. would seek to take the upper hand—indeed, it was probable that they would expect to take the upper hand, as a matter of course.

And that bare thought was enough to excite the Fistical Four, and the rest of the Classical Fourth.

So they waited for the arrival of the Bagshot Bounders, as they always called the Bagshot fellows, in a grim humour.

They arrived about tea-time, in a brake. Old Mack, the porter, and Sergeant Kettle, were very busy for some time carrying boxes and bags. Evidently the new-comers were to stay for some time. Cecil Pankley, the captain of the Fourth-Form at Bagshot, strolled to the house after the porter, with his hands in his pockets, his cap on the back of his curly head, and a smile on his face.

He nodded serenely to the Fistical Four.

"How de do?" said Pankley affably. "Here we are again! Who'd have thought that we should ever be buried here, what!"

"You may be in need of being buried somewhere, if we have any of your rot," said Lovell.

Pankley smiled. "That's your way of welcoming a little stranger?" he asked. "I say, Poole, what do you think of Rookwood manners?"

Poole of Bagshot shook his head. "What do you expect, Panky?" he said disparagingly.

Lovell breathed hard through his nose. He did not mean to exhibit manners that were open to criticism, really. But it was rather too much of a strain to conceal his real feelings on the subject.

"Peace, my infants," said Pankley. "You're going to find us quite nice. We're going to show our keen appreciation of the hearty hospitality you're extending to us."

The Bagshotters grinned, and the Fistical Four looked a little sheepish. It dawned on them rather late that it was up to them to show some hospitality.

"Ahem!" said Jimmy Silver. "Exactly," agreed Pankley. "Ahem!"

We're going to get on first-rate. And I'll tell you what—in consideration of your hearty welcome, and all that, we're going to teach you how to play football.

"Wha-a-at!"

"I mean it," said Pankley generously. "We'll begin to-morrow."

"Why, you—"

"You come down to the ground as early as you like, and we'll put you right through it," said Pankley. "Won't we, you chaps?"

"Certainly," said Poole. "Pleased."

"You—you—your silly jays!" said Lovell explosively. "So that's how you're going to begin, is it?"

"Yes," said Pankley, misunderstanding. "We're going to begin by teaching you to play football. There's no reason why anybody shouldn't learn, if he sticks to it, you know, with a good instructor. After a time, we'll take you on in a game—our eleven against a Rookwood Twenty-two."

"That's done it!" said Lovell. "Bump 'em!"

"Hold on— Bootles!"

"Blow Bootles!"

Pankley dodged as the wrathful Lovell rushed upon him. But there was no escaping Lovell. The mere suggestion that a Bagshot eleven should play a Rookwood Twenty-two was too infuriating. Lovell and Pankley staggered on the School House steps, locked in a loving embrace.

It was at that precise moment that Mr. Bootles chose for coming out to speak a word of welcome to these cheery new additions to his Form.

"Ha! You are here—ah!—I—why—what—what! Oh, dear!"

Mr. Bootles got no farther. Lovell and Pankley blindly bumped into him, and the master of the Fourth sat down on the steps.

"B-b-bless my soul!" gasped Mr. Bootles.

"Oh, my hat!"

"Great pip!"

Mr. Bootles staggered to his feet. "Lovell!" he thundered. "You were fighting with Pankley! After my most particular request to you, I find you—"

"Oh, dear!"

"Pankley, I am sorry you should have met with such an ill-mannered reception at Rookwood," said Mr. Bootles, gasping.

"Oh, don't mench, sir!"

"As for you, Lovell, you will go to my study. Wait for me there."

"I—I say, sir," said Pankley, "it was really my fault—"

"That will do, Pankley. Wait for me in my study, Lovell. Come in, boys, and I will show you to your quarters here."

The Bagshot boys trooped in, and Mr. Bootles led them away to the Fourth Form quarters. He showed them the Form-room and the dormitory, which was provided with a dozen additional beds, and the study passage. He apportioned them to the studies—Pankley and Poole, at their own particular request, being put into Jimmy Silver's study, because, as they explained to Mr. Bootles, they knew Jimmy Silver well.

Then Mr. Bootles returned to his study, where Lovell was dolorously waiting for him. Silver and Raby and Newcome were waiting in the passage. There was the swish of a cane in the study, and Lovell came out, looking very red and very furious.

"Nice beginning!" remarked Jimmy Silver.

Lovell gasped.

"Never mind—we'll scrag those Bagshot bounders. Let's go up and have tea and a pow-wow."

And the Fistical Four proceeded to the end study.

## THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

### A Happy Tea-Party.

"WHY—what—"

"What are you bounders doing here?"

The Fistical Four stared at the two juniors they found in the end study. Pankley was reclining in the armchair. Poole was seated on a corner of the table, with his feet on a chair. The two heroes of Bagshot had made themselves quite at home already in the quarters of the Fistical Four.

"Come in!" said Pankley.

"Eh?"

"You're quite welcome!"

"W-w-w-welcome!" stammered Lovell.

"Welcome in our own study!"

"You don't mean to say that Bootles has planted you two here!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver, in dismay.

Pankley nodded cheerfully.

"We specially asked Bootles for this study," he said. "You fellows were lucky to bag it—it's the best in the passage. Two windows, by gum! And a fireplace! We told Bootles we knew you chaps, so he let us come in here."

"Oh, you spoofing rotter!"

"Well, we must be somewhere," urged Pankley. "Be reasonable! 'Tain't our fault our blessed school is down with the flu. I'll tell you what—we're willing to bury the hatchet while we're here, and live in peace like little lambs in a fold."

"Hear, hear!" said Poole solemnly.

Jimmy Silver made an effort. He felt that so far the Classical Fourth had not upheld the reputation of Rookwood for hospitality.

"Well, we—we'll try it," he said. "Of course, we mean to be hospitable. We—we—we'll make you welcome."

Lovell snorted.

"It's up to us, Lovell," said Jimmy Silver heroically. "Let's do the decent thing, if we bust a boiler. Gentlemen, you are welcome to Rookwood."

"You fathead—" began Lovell.

"Yes, let's do the decent thing," said Raby and Lovell, following Jimmy Silver's noble example. "Gentlemen, you are welcome to Rookwood."

"Now, that's what I call really nice!" said Pankley approvingly. "Your manners are improving already."

"Wha-a-at?"

"You see the benefit you've got already through our coming here," said Pankley.

"Why, you thumping crackpot—" bellowed Lovell.

Pankley wagged an admonitory fore-finger at him.

"Shush! Now you're going back to your rude Rookwood manners again," he said chidingly.

Lovell glared at his chums.

"Are we going to stand this?" he demanded, in sulphurous tones.

"We'll try," said Jimmy Silver resignedly. "I've been thinking over it. Bootles was right. It's up to us. We'll try to stand 'em. Pankley, would you like to have tea with us?"

Pankley reflected. Poole grinned. The Fistical Four stared at Poole. They did not see why an invitation to tea should make Poole grin. It was more than he had a right to expect, under the circumstances.

"You're awfully good," said Pankley at last.

"I should jolly well think we are!" growled Lovell.

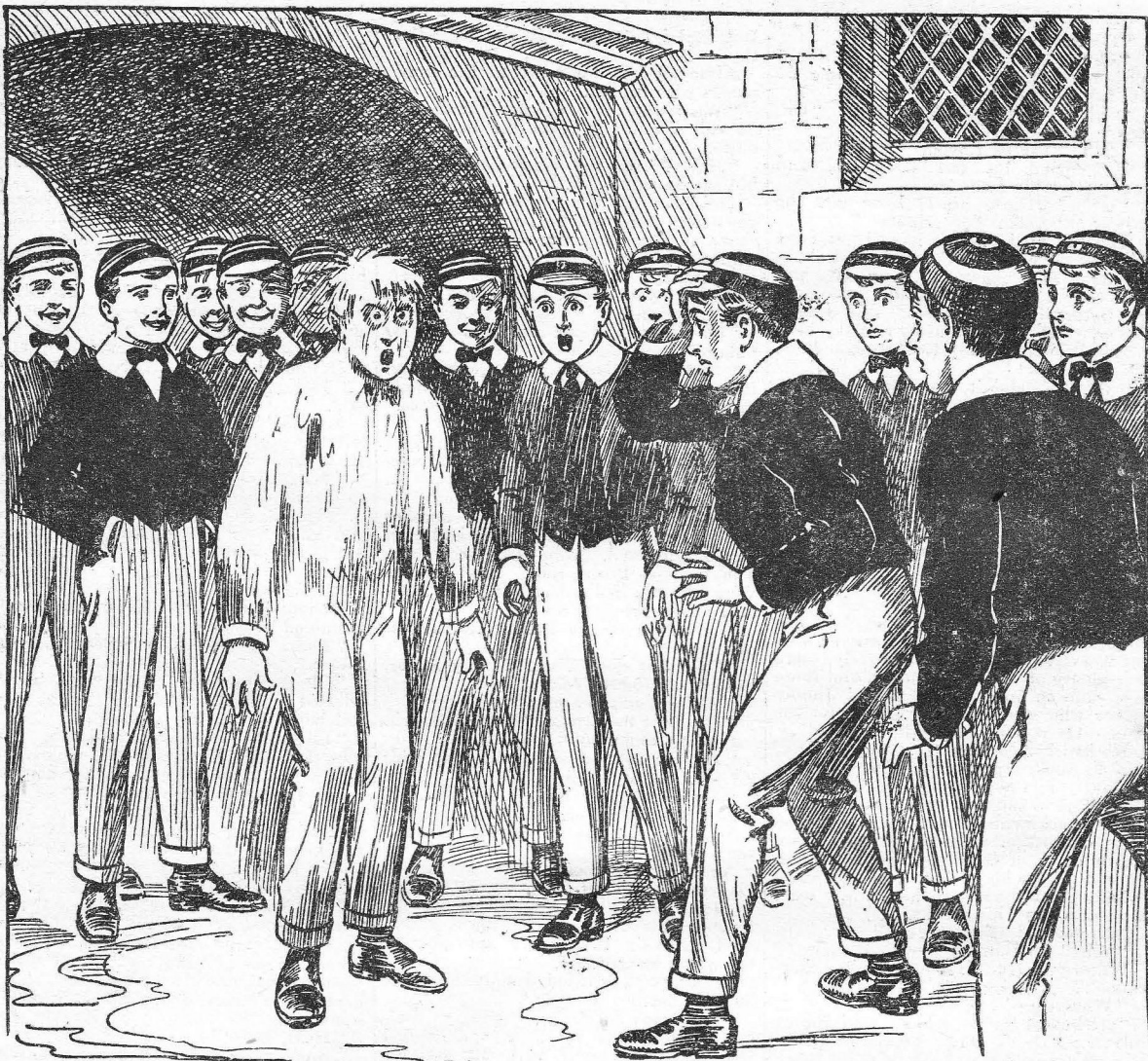
"Well, we should like to accept your kind invitation," said Pankley, with a glance at Poole, "but—we're rather particular at Bagshot."

"Eh?"

"So I suppose you wouldn't mind putting on clean collars?"

"What?"

"And washing your necks?"



"That idiot Silver sent the wrong chap through the gate!" howled Lovell. "Where is he?" "Gerroog! I'm Silver, you frabjous burbler!" came in a gurgle from the unhappy recipient of the whitewash. Lovell almost fell down! "Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the crowd. (See page 14.)

"Why—I—we—"

"And then we'll be delighted to have tea with you," said Pankley beamingly.

The Fistical Four stood quite silent for a moment. Under the influence of what was due to Rookwood hospitality, they had offered to bury the hatchet, and to make the invaders welcome. Instead of hurling them forth from the study on their necks, they had asked them to tea! And this was their reward!

They did not speak. Words were useless.

They made a rush at Pankley and Poole. Hospitality could look after itself. Just at that moment they had only one thought, and that was to give the Bagshot juniors the bumping of their lives.

Pankley and Poole promptly dodged round the study table, with the Fistical Four after them.

Through the open doorway the two Bagshot fellows went with a rush, and down the passage they fled at top speed.

"Hold on!" said Jimmy Silver, as his chums were rushing in pursuit. "We shall run into Bootles! They've gone anyway."

The Fistical Four returned into the study. They were glad to be rid of the intruders, but they were considerably puzzled by the flight of Pankley and Poole. Those two young gentlemen were generally great warriors.

"Well, we can have tea in peace, I suppose?" growled Lovell. "What frightful bounders! Checking us like that when we were going to be nice to them!"

"It's no good," said Jimmy Silver; "we shall have to keep them in their place. I can see that. Bootles is an ass!"

The Fistical Four proceeded to get tea. They had ample supplies for tea in the cupboard, and they could have stood a quite handsome feed to the Bagshot visitors if Pankley and Poole had been a little more amenable. Jimmy Silver took the teapot, which was warming in the fender, and made the tea. Lovell set out the ham and the cake, and Raby cut the bread-and-butter, and Newcome trotted out the watercress and opened the jam.

"Hallo! What's the matter with that tea?" asked Lovell, as Silver began to pour it out.

Jimmy Silver looked at it in surprise.

"Looks rather strong, doesn't it?" he said. "I put in only the usual amount."

"Groo! It tastes poisonous!" said Raby, sipping it and making a wry face. "You can't make tea, you ass!"

Jimmy uttered a wrathful exclamation.

"There must have been something in the pot. There's ink in it!"

"Ink!" yelled Lovell.

"Marking-ink, by Jove!"

"Those—those rotters!"

"Oh, my hat!"

"That's why they wouldn't have tea with us!" yelled Lovell. "They'd fixed that teapot up ready for us!"

Jimmy Silver, with feelings hardly expressible in words, set down the teapot. When the cups were washed purplish stains remained inside them. Nobody was inclined to have tea from that pot again. The Fistical Four had to content themselves with milk-and-water.

Newcome was the first to take a drink. He did not take a deep drink. He had swallowed about a mouthful and a half of milk-and-water when he dropped the cup with a crash and began spluttering wildly.

"Gerrrrrrooooooohh!"  
 "Great Scott! What's the matter?"  
 exclaimed Jimmy Silver. "There's no  
 ink in the milk!"  
 "Salt!" stammered Newcome. "Oh,  
 groo! Yoooooop!"

"Salt!" roared Lovell.  
 He sipped his milk-and-water, and  
 made a terrific face.

"Groo! Those beasts have put the  
 salt in the milk! Oh, crumbs!"

The Fistical Four looked at one  
 another. Pankley & Co. had been about  
 an hour at Rookwood. And this was  
 how they were going already!

"Better drink the water," said Jimmy  
 Silver. "If you silly asses say anything  
 more about hospitality to those bouncers,  
 I'll scrag you!"

"Why, we didn't, you fathead! You  
 did!"

"Oh, don't jaw! Pass the cake!" said  
 Jimmy Silver morosely. "I'm not going  
 to touch that ham!"

"What's the matter with the ham?"  
 demanded Lovell. "My aunt sent that  
 ham."

"Well, you can scoff it if you like—if  
 you're fond of mustard and pepper."

"M-m-mustard! P-p-pepper! Oh, my  
 hat!"

The ham was left untasted. The  
 Classical Four were glad they had dis-  
 covered in time the kind attention Pank-  
 ley had devoted to it. Fortunately, there  
 was plenty of bread-and-butter, and there  
 was cake to finish with. It was Jimmy  
 Silver who was the first to start on the  
 cake. He was also the last.

He had helped himself to a large piece,  
 and he took a good mouthful. He was  
 hungry. The next instant he had leaped  
 to his feet so suddenly that his chair went  
 flying backwards, and the table rocked  
 from concussion with his knees. There  
 was a crash of crockery. Jimmy Silver  
 danced on the hearthrug, wild and weird  
 sounds proceeding from him, while tears  
 streamed down his cheeks.

"Grooooooh! Yurrrrgggg!"

"What the thunder—"

"Yowwww! Groo! Atchoo-choo-  
 oooooh!"

"Wha-at—"

"Atchoo-choo-chooop!" sneezed Jimmy  
 Silver. "Ow! Oh! Pepper! Groo!  
 It's soaked in pepper! D-d-d-don't touch  
 it! Yooooon! Atchoo! Atchoo-oo!"

Jimmy Silver collapsed into the arm-  
 chair, gur-gurging and groo-grooing as  
 if for a wager. His chums stared at  
 him. It was ten minutes at least before  
 Jimmy Silver recovered sufficiently to  
 stagger to his feet and pick up a cricket-  
 stump.

"Come on," he said weakly, "come  
 on! Let's go and look for 'em!"

And the Fistical Four left the end  
 study to look for Pankley and Poole,  
 breathing fire and slaughter.

#### THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

##### No Luck!

**J**IMMY SILVER & Co. looked for  
 Pankley and Poole for a whole  
 hour.

They inquired for them up and  
 down the School House, they looked  
 up and down the quadrangle, they  
 searched the gym and the school shop,  
 and they even visited the Modern  
 quarters.

But the two offenders had vanished.

As it was time to get on with even-  
 ing preparation, the Fistical Four gave  
 it up at last, and returned somewhat  
 tired and greatly enraged to the end  
 study.

"We'll smash 'em up after prep!" said  
 Jimmy Silver. "I want a bit of a rest,  
 anyway—Hallo! What's the matter  
 with this door?"

He pulled angrily at the study door.

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But it did not open. It was locked on  
 the inside.

Jimmy Silver thumped on the upper  
 panels with his fist.

"What silly ass is locked in here?"  
 he called out. "Open the door, you  
 duffers!"

"Hallo!" came a voice from within.  
 "What do you want?"

The Fistical Four jumped. For the  
 voice was the voice of Pankley of Bag-  
 shot. A chuckle followed, which they  
 recognised as belonging to Poole.

"Pankley!" yelled Jimmy Silver.  
 "Pankley, you worm! You there?"

"Yes, thanks!"

"How long have you been in there, you  
 villain?"

"About an hour," said Pankley cheer-  
 fully. "Just about an hour. We came  
 in a minute or two after you went out."

"Why, you—you—"

"We were waiting in the next study,"  
 explained Pankley through the keyhole.  
 "As soon as you cleared we came in.  
 We've got our prep to do, you know."

The Fistical Four gave one another  
 sickly looks. All the time they had been  
 hunting up and down the school for  
 Pankley and Poole those two cheerful  
 young rascals had been in the end study  
 doing their preparation.

The chums of the Fourth felt almost  
 overcome.

"Open the door!" said Jimmy Silver,  
 in quite a subdued voice.

"We're doing our prep."

"We want to do ours!" howled Lovell.  
 Pankley and Poole chuckled.

"Do you generally do your prep with  
 a cricket-stump, Jimmy Silver?"

"We're going to give you a hiding!"  
 roared Jimmy Silver.

"Then you'll have to give it through  
 the keyhole."

Again the Fistical Four exchanged  
 glances. They had to get into the study  
 to do their prep, or there would be  
 trouble with Mr. Bootles in the morning.  
 And certainly they could not get in  
 through a locked door.

"It's pax!" growled Jimmy Silver at  
 last. "Pax in the study."

"Right-ho!"

Pankley opened the door, and greeted  
 the Classical chums with an amiable  
 smile.

Jimmy Silver & Co. came in without  
 a word. They had made it pax, and  
 pax was sacred. But never had they  
 felt so strongly tempted to break that  
 sacred compact.

But they resisted the temptation, and  
 sat down to their preparation.

Pankley and Poole had nearly finished.  
 There was not much room at the study  
 table for six, but that could not be  
 helped. Pankley and Poole were in high  
 good humour, and their smiles had an  
 irritating effect on the Fistical Four.

But they worked away grimly without  
 a word.

Their preparation finished, the two  
 Bagshot fellows lounged out of the study,  
 and the Classical quartette were left to  
 themselves.

"What do you think of 'em?" gasped  
 Lovell, when they were alone. "After—  
 after the ripping welcome we gave them,  
 too!"

"Offering them hospitality and all  
 that!" said Raby.

"They've actually come here expecting  
 to be cocks of the walk," said Jimmy  
 Silver, breathing hard. "Kindness is  
 wasted on 'em. We've been too kind.  
 Let the awful rotters wait till lights  
 out!"

And the Classical Four were somewhat  
 comforted by the prospect of what  
 should happen in the Fourth Form dor-  
 mitory after lights out. In fact, they  
 were anxious for bedtime.

Bulkeley of the Sixth shepherded the  
 Classical Fourth off to bed with the  
 dozen Bagshot juniors. Bulkeley was  
 looking somewhat serious. He knew all  
 about the continual alarms and excursions  
 between the Rookwood juniors and the  
 Bagshot bouncers, and perhaps he  
 anticipated lively scenes in the dormitory  
 that evening.

"No rags here to-night, you kids!"  
 said the captain of Rookwood warningly.  
 "I shall keep an ear open for you."

"Oh, Bulkeley!" murmured Jimmy  
 Silver.

From Jimmy Silver's look it might  
 have been supposed that he had never  
 so much as heard of a rag. But the  
 captain of Rookwood knew him pretty  
 well, and he shook a finger at him.

"Just you look out, that's all!" he  
 said.

And Bulkeley put the lights out and  
 left the dormitory. Then Jimmy Silver  
 sat up in bed.

"We'll give old Bulkeley ten minutes  
 to clear," he remarked.

"By gad, we don't want any rags here,  
 you know!" said Townsend, the slacker  
 of the Fourth. "You heard what  
 Bulkeley said."

"Bow-wow!"

"There'll be a row, Silver, you ass!"  
 mumbled Topham.

"There will—soon," agreed Jimmy  
 Silver.

"Oh, go to sleep like a good boy!"  
 advised Pankley. "Is that what you  
 call being hospitable, Silver?"

"I'll give you hospitality in ten  
 minutes!" said Jimmy Silver grimly.

The ten minutes had barely elapsed  
 when Jimmy Silver jumped out of bed  
 and lighted a candle-end. The light  
 flickered through the big dormitory on  
 the faces of the juniors, who were all  
 sitting up in bed.

Jimmy Silver caught up his pillow.

"Gentlemen of the Classic side," said  
 Jimmy Silver, "we have been invaded  
 by a gang of no-class Bagshot bouncers.  
 After the hearty hospitality and warm  
 welcome extended to them, they have  
 made themselves obnoxious and objec-  
 tionable—"

"Hear, hear!"

"Bow-wow!" came from the Bagshot  
 juniors.

"And there won't be any peace till  
 they've been put in their place. For  
 their own good we're going to give them  
 a good swiping with pillows. If they  
 take it quietly we'll let 'em off lightly."

"Catch us taking it quietly!" grinned  
 Pankley. "Why, we could wipe up this  
 whole dormitory, and not half try!"

"You cheeky Bagshot worm!"

"You silly Rookwood ass!"

"Oh, it's no good talking to you!" ex-  
 claimed Jimmy Silver. "Kindness is  
 thrown away on you. Out you come!"

Jimmy Silver made a rush at Pankley's  
 bed, whirling up his pillow. Pankley had  
 his hand behind him on his pillow, and  
 as Jimmy rushed forward Pankley's  
 hand came forward suddenly, and his  
 pillow swept through the air. It caught  
 Jimmy Silver fairly under the chin, and  
 bowled him over like a ninepin.

Bump!

Jimmy Silver jumped up furiously. At  
 the same moment the dormitory door  
 opened.

"Cave!" gasped Lovell.

"But 'Cave' came too late. Bulke-  
 ley strode into the dormitory with a cane  
 in his hand. Jimmy Silver blinked at  
 him.

"You're out of bed, Silver," said the  
 prefect.

"Ye-e-es," murmured Jimmy Silver.  
 "I—I'm out of bed, Bulkeley. I—I  
 just got out, you know."

"Hold out your hand!"

"I say, Bulkeley—"

Swish! Swish!

"Now turn in, and if there's a whisper from the dormitory again to-night I'll come right back," said Bulkeley. "Any more row, and I'll ask Mr. Bootles to detain the whole Form for Saturday afternoon."

Bulkeley walked out, taking the candle with him.

There was no ragging in the Fourth Form dormitory that night.

Jimmy Silver was the last to go to sleep. His palms were smarting and his thoughts were most uncomfortable. The Bagshot bouncers had not only invaded Rookwood, their leaders had not only planted themselves in the end study, but the obnoxious new-comers had scored over the Fistical Four on their native heath, so to speak. Jimmy Silver went to sleep at last, to dream of the morrow and vengeance.

#### THE SIXTH CHAPTER. Fun in the Form-Room.

**P**ANKLEY & CO. came into the Form-room along with the Fourth on the morrow.

There was about Pankley & Co. none of the modest shyness that might have been expected of fellows who were at Rookwood for the first time, and who were "planted" upon a Form that writhed under the infliction.

They came into the Form-room as if it belonged to them. It would not have been so bad if it had not been so impossible to catch Pankley & Co. napping. But the Bagshot bouncers were "all there." Pankley himself was particularly up to snuff, and all the Co. were like Pankley in that respect.

Tommy Dodd & Co. had chuckled over what they had heard of that tea in the end study. They grinned over the suppressed fury of the Classics. But Tommy Dodd kindly determined to show the Classical duffers how to deal with the intruders.

When Mr. Bootles' back was turned in first lesson Tommy Dodd shied an inky pellet at Pankley, to catch him on the ear. It was a nice fat pellet of blotting-paper and ink, and if it had caught Pankley on the ear he would have been very inky.

But the exasperating Pankley seemed to have eyes even in the back of his head. He put up his exercise-book and used it as a racket, and the pellet was knocked away, and landed in Tommy Cook's eye instead of Pankley's ear.

Tommy Cook gave a yell of astonishment.

"Oh! Garrogh! What silly idiot—"  
"Oh, my hat!" murmured Tommy Dodd, in dismay.

Mr. Bootles spun round.

"Cook—Cook, you dirty boy! How dare you ink your face like that!" exclaimed Mr. Bootles angrily.

"Gerrooh!" spluttered Cook, blink-out of one eye and gouging at the other.

"I didn't! Yow-ow-ow!"

"Ah, I understand! Someone has hurled a missile— Ah!" said Mr. Bootles. "What boy has so far forgotten the decorum of the class-room as to—ah—hurl a missile of an—ah—inky nature at another boy?"

There was no reply, only a "Groooh!" from Cook.

"I call upon the delinquent to speak up!" said Mr. Bootles severely. "I will not—ah—allow this horseplay in the class-room! I shall—ah—detain the class—"

The Fourth Form gave Tommy Dodd expressive looks. It was time for the Modern junior to own up.

"Please, sir, it was me!" said Tommy Dodd meekly.

"Indeed! It was you, Dodd?"

"Yes, sir."

"You should not say it was me, Dodd."

"I didn't, sir," said Tommy Dodd, in astonishment. "I said it was me, sir!"

"Dodd, you are stupid! What I am trying to make you understand is that you should have said it was I."

"Very well, sir; only I should have thought it was cheeky to say that it was you, sir. Besides, it wasn't you, Mr. Bootles."

"Dear me! The boy seems impenetrably stupid!" said Mr. Bootles, while the juniors grinned. They fancied that Tommy Dodd was not quite so stupid as he made out, and that he was, as a matter of fact, gently pulling the Form-master's leg. "Listen to me, Dodd! You should have used the nominative, and not the accusative. You should say 'It was I,' not 'It was me,'"

"Certainly, sir, if you say so!" said Tommy Dodd submissively.

"Now repeat your sentence correctly, Dodd!"

"Yes, sir. It was you, sir."

"What!"

"It was you, sir."

"I did not tell you to say 'It was you!'" shouted Mr. Bootles.

"I didn't, sir. I said it was you, as you told me!"

Mr. Bootles looked round at the grinning class. Then he looked very fixedly at Tommy Dodd. Then he picked up a pointer.

"Ha! Either you are very stupid, Dodd, or you are—ah—exercising a misdirected sense of humour—ah—at your Form-master's expense! What, what! You will hold out your hand, Dodd!"

Whack!

Tommy Dodd was not humorous any more.

After first lesson the Modern portion of the Form departed, to take "sinks," as the Rookwooders called the chemistry lesson, on their own side, with Mr. Manders. The Classics remained for the rest of morning lessons, and the Bagshot Bouncers with them.

When Pankley stood up to construe, Jimmy Silver leaned over from his desk and slid an ancient and squashy jam-tart on to Pankley's form, all ready for him to sit down on when he had finished his construe.

The Classics who had seen Jimmy's surreptitious action waited with suppressed merriment for Pankley to sit down.

Whether Pankley received some signal from another Bagshot bouncer, or whether he could see with the back of his head, or whether he was suspicious—whatever the reason, when he was told to sit down he turned and picked up the tart, just as if he had seen it placed there. He slid it on the shelf under the desk, and sat down calmly. Lovell was next to him, and Lovell was called upon to construe next, and he rose and wrestled with the adventures of the pious Æneas in his turn. When Lovell sat down, Pankley's hand whipped from under his desk just in time.

Squash!

"Ow!" gasped Lovell, as he felt himself sinking into something soft and sticky.

Jimmy Silver's face was a study. Lovell spun round and glared at the remnants of the squashed tart on his seat. Most of the tart was adhering to Lovell's trousers, and as he spun round it came full into the view of Mr. Bootles.

"Bless my soul!" exclaimed Mr. Bootles. "I will not have these foolish tricks! Lovell, how dare you bring tarts into the Form-room and sit on them in that foolish and disgusting way!"

"Tain't my tart!" roared Lovell. "Do you think I like sitting on jam-tarts? Grooh!"

"Don't raise your voice in speaking to me, Lovell, or I shall—ah—punish you severely! A most disgusting trick!" said Mr. Bootles. "Go away and clean your—ah—nether garments immediately, Lovell! Which boy brought that tart into the Form-room? I will detain the whole Form this afternoon!"

"Oh, crumbs!" said Jimmy Silver. "It was mine, sir!"

He looked daggers at the grinning Pankley.

"It was yours, Silver? You will take a hundred lines, Silver! Silver, you are—ah—a disgusting boy!"

After that there were no more little jokes on Pankley in the Form-room. The almost unearthly way Pankley had of turning a joke against the joker caused the Classical juniors to feel fed-up with japing Pankley.

When the class were dismissed, Pankley & Co. walked out smiling, and the Fistical Four wore grim looks. In the passage Lovell shook his fist under Jimmy Silver's nose.

"You burbling ass!" howled Lovell. "What are you japing your own pals for? Think it's funny to make a chap sit on a jam-tart—what!"

"It wasn't me, fathead! It was Pankley!" said Jimmy Silver. "I put it on his seat, and he put it on yours!"

"Oh, well, you were an ass not to stop him!" growled Lovell. "It seems to me that we are getting done in the eye all along the line by those Bagshot rotters! We may as well throw up the sponge at once at this rate!"

Jimmy Silver snorted.

"We're going to down 'em!" he growled. "The fellows expect it of us. Life won't be worth living if we don't put those cheeky rotters in their place! We're more than their weight, anyway, if we set our wits to work. Lets have a pow-wow!"

And the Fistical Four retired to the quadrangle for a pow-wow, and, as the pow-wow ended in a burst of gleeful chuckles, it was to be concluded that the Fistical heroes had evolved a scheme for "downing" the obnoxious Pankley.

#### THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

##### Fairly Caught!

**J**IMMY SILVER & CO. were very busy after dinner.

Most of the fellows had gone down to football, and the Fistical Four were able to carry out some little preparations unobserved—at all events, they hoped so.

The "warm welcome" that Mr. Bootles had recommended was to be bestowed at last upon the invaders from Bagshot.

The Fistical Four strolled down to the stables in a careless sort of way. Old Mack had lately been whitewashing there, and Jimmy Silver had noted a pail still half-full of whitewash in the cobbled yard. The Classical Four selected a moment when Mack and the coachman were both out of sight, and they possessed themselves of the pail, and scurried off with it.

That was the first step.

Keeping round the whitewash bucket, to screen it as much as possible from observation, the juniors smuggled it across the quad and into the archway that led into Little Quad. Little Quad was deserted; the Fistical Four had it all to themselves just then.

Over the archway, on the Little Quad side, there was a broad stone ledge, wide enough for anybody to stand or sit upon.

It was not the first time that the ledge had been used by humorous juniors for the purpose of playing tricks on fellows passing underneath.

The bucket was hoisted upon the stone ledge, and Lovell and Raby and Newcome mounted after it.

Jimmy Silver remained on the ground.

"Got it safe?" he asked.

"Safe as houses!" said Lovell.

"Keep on the ledge. If the rotter spots you as he comes along, he will smell a rat at once," said Jimmy Silver.

"Rely on us! You get him to come through the archway, and we'll do the rest!" grinned Raby. "Easy as falling off a form!"

"I'll get him here all right," said Jimmy Silver confidently. "If it takes a little time, you can wait. But he'll come through fast enough when I get after him with a hockey-stick!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"That's all right!" said Lovell. "As soon as we see the beast's head, he gets this on his blessed napper! I don't see how anything can spoil this. It will show the Bagshot cads that we know how to deal with them!"

"As soon as you've swamped the beast," said Jimmy Silver, "give a yell, to bring all the fellows to see him! I've passed the word round!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

And Jimmy Silver disappeared through the stone archway into Big Quad, leaving the three grinning Classicals ambushed on the ledge over the arch.

Jimmy Silver came out into the Big Quad to look for Pankley. Pankley was to be chased through the archway with the business-end of a hockey-stick behind him, and then— Jimmy chuckled at the thought of what was to happen then. It would more than repay all that had been suffered at the hands of the irrepressible Pankley.

As it happened, Jimmy hadn't far to look for Pankley. For, as he came out into Big Quad, he fairly ran into the arms of Pankley, Poole, and Putter, and two or three other Bagshot fellows.

They were all grinning.

And they all had hockey-sticks in their hands. And they closed round Jimmy Silver, and seven or eight sticks jabbed at him at once.

"Here, sheer off, you duffers!" exclaimed Jimmy, in angry astonishment. "What's the little game?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Where did you get that whitewash on your bags from?" chuckled Pankley. "Has the naughty boy been playing with whitewash?"

"Naughty, naughty!" grinned Poole. "Naughty! Planning some naughty trick on a simple and unsuspecting visitor! Dear me!"

"Chuck it—yaroo! Stoppit—oh!—ah!"

"Give him beans!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The whole crowd of Bagshot fellows

rushed on Jimmy Silver, and the hockey-sticks prodded him on all sides. Jimmy backed away into the arch, and the Bagshot juniors followed him, prodding away mercilessly. The Classical junior fairly took to his heels at last, and dashed through the archway.

Lovell and Raby and Newcome pricked up their ears at the sound of rapid footsteps in the arch.

"Here he comes!" breathed Lovell.

"Ready!"

From under the arch a head came in sight.

"Go!"

The bucket was tilted over.

Swoosh!

Down went the whitewash in a snowy stream over the head and shoulders of the junior as he emerged from under the arch.

Splash!

"Goooooog!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the Classical three. "Ha, ha, ha!"

"Good shot! Ha, ha, ha!"

They screamed with laughter as they looked down at the staggering whitewashed figure. The junior who had received the whitewash was utterly unrecognisable.

Whitewash covered him from head to foot.

His head, his hair, his face, his clothes, all had disappeared under it, and he was white as the untrodden snow from the crown of his head to the toes of his boots.

"Ha, ha, ha, ha!"

"Gug-gug-gugg!"

Lovell gave a yell—the signal to the Classical juniors that the enemy had been caught in the trap. There were footsteps from all sides.

The three Classicals scrambled down from the ledge, and stood round the ghastly whitewashed figure, holding their sides, and roaring with mirth. The victim was uttering weird and unearthly sounds.

"Grooogh! Gug-gug-gug! Oh, you thilly athes! Grooogh!" came in gurgling, suffocated tones from the unhappy victim.

"Take him away and clean him!" yelled Lovell. "This is how we make cheeky bounders sit up! Ha, ha, ha!"

"Rather rough, ain't it?" said a chuckling voice.

Lovell spun round, and looked at Pankley as if his eyes would start from his head.

Pankley came lounging carelessly through the arch, smiling. If he had been a grim and grisly spectre, he could not have startled the Classical three more. Their laughter died away suddenly.

"Pook-Pook-Pook-Pankley!" stuttered Lovell.

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the Bagshot crowd.

"Faith, and who is it?" yelled Flynn, arriving on the scene with a crowd of Classic juniors. "Sure you haven't bagged Pankley—there he is intoirly!"

"Mum-mum-my hat!" stammered Raby. "We—we've got the wrong chap!"

"That idiot Silver sent the wrong chap through!" howled Lovell. "Why, the silly ass, where is he? Where's that howling ass Silver?"

"Gerroooggg! I'm Silver, you frab-jous burbler!" came in a gurgle from the unhappy recipient of the whitewash.

Lovell almost fell down.

"What—wha-a-a-at did you—you come and take the whitewash for, then?" he gasped. "You—you told us to wait here for that Bagshot beast—"

"Gug-gug-gug!"

"Then you come yourself—you awful ass—"

"Gug-gug! Groooh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Bagshot juniors rocked with laughter. The Rookwood fellows joined in—they could not help it. Little Quad rang with hysterical yells. Only Lovell and Raby and Newcome looked utterly flabbergasted, and Jimmy Silver, struggling with the whitewash, foamed with wrath.

"Well, of all the asses!" gasped Lovell.

"Really, Silver, I must say—"

"Gug-gug-gug!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

To shove your own head into your own trap like that. Here, I say, keep off!" howled Lovell, as the infuriated Jimmy, having got some of the whitewash out of his eyes, made a rush at him. "Keep off! Gerraway! You'll spoil my clobber!"

"Gerraway!" shrieked Raby and Newcome.

But the infuriated leader of the Fistical Four did not "gerraway." He fairly bounded at his dismayed pals. Lovell and Raby and Newcome dashed across Little Quad, with Jimmy Silver after them, streaming with whitewash, and leaving a white track after him wherever he moved.

The Classical three dodged into the archway, and fled for their lives towards Big Quad, with Jimmy Silver streaming with whitewash and raging with wrath on their track. The crowd of juniors gasped with merriment as they disappeared. Pankley wiped his eyes, and sank weakly against the wall.

"Oh, carry me home, somebody!" he moaned. "These Rookwood kids will be the death of me—I know they will!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

It was a long, long time before Jimmy Silver was seen again.

And when he appeared to the public gaze once more there were still traces of whitewash about him. And sounds of strife and discord had been heard in the end study.

It was not long before the Fistical Four were on the warpath again. But for the present even Jimmy Silver had to admit that the honours were with the "Bagshot Bounders."

THE END.

## NEXT FRIDAY!

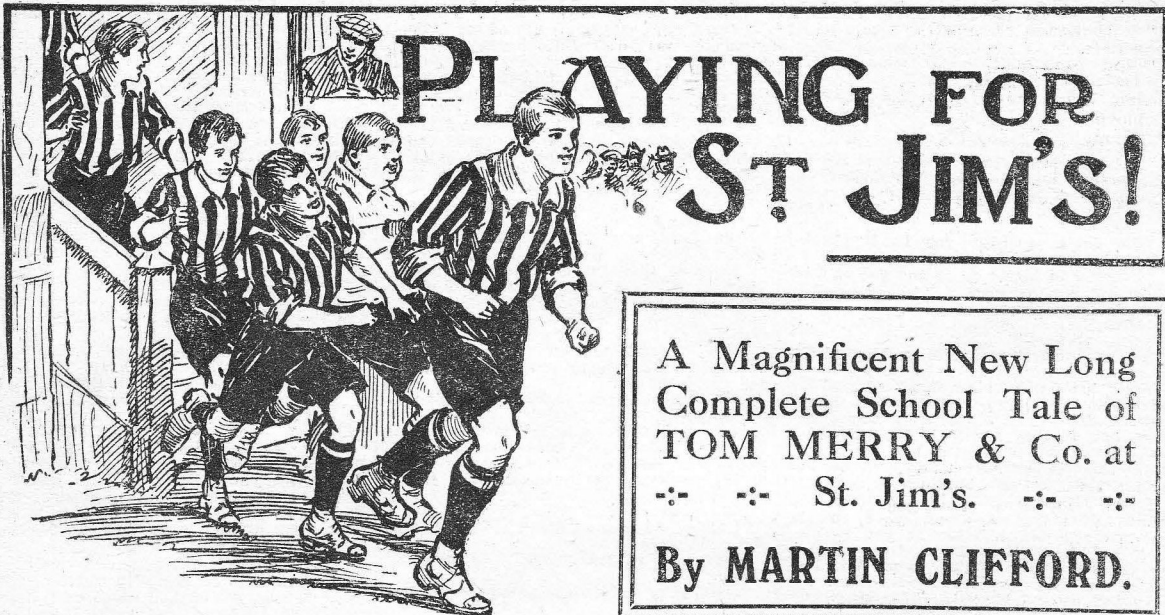
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**THE FIRST CHAPTER.**

**School House v. New House.**

"**C**ALL, Figgy!"  
"Heads!" called George Figgins, skipper of the New House junior eleven, as Tom Merry, the School House captain, spun a florin in the air.

Tom caught the coin on the back of his hand, covered it for a second, then showed it.

"Heads it is!" he said. "But after all there's not much in it."

And there really was not much in it. Hardly a breath of air stirred. The corner-flags drooped on their poles. It was one of those perfect, calm days that come sometimes in October—full of sunshine, yet not too hot for footer.

Little Side looked at its best. Later on in the season there would be bare patches here and there on its surface, and everywhere the turf would show the marks of hurrying feet. But now the whole expanse of the field of play looked like a well-tended cricket-pitch.

Both sides had strong teams out. Herries kept the School House goal, though it was a fair question whether he was better than Glyn. Perhaps he was more level in his play, but he was hardly as brilliant as Glyn at his best.

Kangaroo and Clifton Dane were at back, the Australian, perhaps the heaviest man at a hard charge on either side, the Canadian with a rare turn of speed that justified his getting farther up the field than his partner cared to go.

Roylance, the New Zealander, was at centre-half, and on his right was the South African, Clive, while Monty Lowther played at left-half.

But, good as was the defence, the forward line was the strong point of the School House side.

Tom Merry at centre, Levison at outside, Blake at inside-right, Talbot inside-left, and Arthur Augustus D'Arcy beyond him, all five fast, and all five clever, in spite of the unkind things that Gussy's chums sometimes said about his play. A forward line of which Arthur Augustus was the weakest member—and he was that—could not help but be strong.

The New House five were all good; but only Dick Redfern, the centre, was as clever as most of the rival quintet, and only he and Koumi Rao, the outside-left, were as fast as any of them. Owen and Lawrence made a capable right wing, and French was no duffer at inside-left; but they were not quite up to the School House level.

Nor were the New House halves equal to those of the rival side.

Pratt, Thompson, and Clarke were the trio, and only Clarke had much pace, while he was a bit erratic.

But the backs and goalkeeper helped to level up. Figgins and Kerr, both excellent forwards, had the makings of a great pair

of backs. They understood one another so well, they kicked so cleanly and with such judgment, and they were never beaten until the ball was actually in the net.

And it was very difficult to get it there. For Fatty Wynn was a really wonderful goalkeeper, as the School House fellows knew to their cost.

"We can't kick with the wind, because there isn't any," said Figgy, grinning cheerily. "And the sun shines across. We'll kick towards the school, Tommy."

The sides lined up, and Darrel of the Sixth whistled.

Tom sent the ball out to his left, where Talbot, taking it as it gently rolled to him, did not trouble to trap it, but merely sped it at an increased pace on its way towards Gussy.

To the swell of the Fourth fell the first chance of distinction in that game, and he took it.

Lawrence was near enough to cut across and try to stop him, but Gussy went past Lawrence almost without taking any notice of him, as it seemed.

Clarke dashed up. Gussy swerved cleverly round Clarke, and went on, close to the touch-line.

If he had stuck to the ball he must next have met Kerr, and the Scots junior was far harder to pass than Lawrence or Clarke.

But Gussy knew that he must not hold on too long. He drew Kerr, and then sent hard and low across to his right.

The leather came to Tom Merry, upon whom Thompson was in close attendance.

But Thompson had never been able to do much with Tom, and he could do nothing now. Tom dodged past him, saw Figgins ahead, and, quick as a flash, sent the ball out to Ernest Levison.

"Go it, Ernie!" piped up a young voice from the ropes.

A smile flickered over Levison major's rather grim face. It was his minor who had shouted.

"Silly ass!" snorted Reggie Manners. "There are other chaps on the field besides your blessed major, I suppose?"

"Shurrup, Reggie! It's Frankie's major who's got the ball, anyway, and yours isn't even in the team!" said Wally D'Arcy.

"Think I care whether he's in it or not?" retorted Reggie. "I'm not so soft about my major as you and young Levison."

Wally paid no heed to that. As far as he was concerned, the accusation of softness was very wide of the mark, though he could be a trifle more grateful to Gussy than Reggie usually was to Harry Manners. "Oh, well run—jolly well run, Levison!" roared Wally. "He's past Figgins; but Figgy's after him. My hat, don't those blessed long legs get over the ground some!"

Levison major had dodged past Figgins, but he knew that the lanky New House skipper would tackle him again in another

second or two. So before that could happen he muddled neatly.

"Sorry!" gasped Figgins, as his shoulder met Levison's the second after the ball had sped on its way.

"It's all right," returned Levison. But Figgins did not hear that. He was already dashing on to meet Tom Merry, to whom the ball had come.

He was not in time. Tom sent in a rasping low shot, right in the corner of goal—a brute of a shot to meet.

But the sure foot of Fatty Wynn met it, and sent it out to the right. Kerr pounced upon it, and lifted it over the heads of Talbot and Roylance, to fall at the feet of Redfern.

Up the field darted Dick Redfern. But only Koumi Rao, the speedy Indian, was in line with him when Dane and Noble closed in. He sent the ball out to the left, and Koumi Rao whizzed in a long shot. But Herries easily dealt with it, and transferred the ball to midfield.

For the next twenty minutes only one side was in the picture.

Dane played right up to the half-way line, and again and again the School House forwards attacked the New House goal. Herries stood hands in pockets in his goal, and Kangaroo chatted with him. But Fatty Wynn was hard at work, fisting, punching, throwing himself at the ball—doing wonders. And Figgins and Kerr hardly had an easy minute.

The first goal came in a most unexpected manner.

Thompson had given Redfern quite a good pass, and Redfern started off at once. Kangaroo came to attention suddenly. If the fleet-footed New House fellow could pass Dane he might have all his work cut out.

Redfern did pass Dane. But the Canadian was as fleet-footed as he, and he went in chase at once. He drew up, he ran shoulder to shoulder with Redfern, waiting his chance.

Then, with a sudden deft twirl, he was ahead of the New House forward, got his toe to the leather, and touched it past Redfern.

Dick Redfern shot forward and sprawled. Dane ran the ball twenty yards without opposition, then steadied it, and gave it a mighty lifting kick.

High over the heads of the players it sped. Fatty strung himself up for a spring, though all but he thought the ball must pass yards over the bar.

But, Fatty's sure eyes saw the downward curve. Just under the bar it came in, and his hands met it and beat it down.

It was all but a great save. Indeed, it was a save, but only for the moment. Fatty had not been able to punch; he could do little more than pat. And the leather, from that downward curve, met Tom Merry's head. A twist of the neck, and it went back, close by the left post, out of Fatty's reach, hard as he tried to get to it.

"Goal!" roared the New House players.  
"Goal! Hurrah!" roared the School House supporters.

"Good man, Tom!" cried Talbot, patting his captain on the back.

"Bwavo, Tom Mewwy!" shouted Gussy.  
"I shouldn't be a bit ashamed of Tom Merry as my major," said Wally critically. "That was clever!"

"I don't wonder you're ashamed of the one you've got," remarked Reggie Manners, who was in one of his fractious moods.

"If you want your head punched, young Manners—"

"Oh, don't squabble, you two!" pleaded Frank Levison.

"Reggie had better go in and get on with those five hundred lines Selby gave him this morning," said Hobbs.

"Hear, hear!" chorused Joe Frayne, Curly Gibson, and Jameson.

But of course Reggie did nothing of the sort.

For a little while after that first goal the game was more open. But the slight lack of balance in the New House front line spoiled some fine work by Redfern. When he fairly got away no one but Koumi Rao was usually near enough to help. Owen and Lawrence and French did their best, but to little avail.

It was different with the School House forwards. Their line was never ragged, and the five were playing together as well as ever they had done. Jack Blake, Gussy, Ernest Levison all showed ripping form. But Tom Merry and Talbot were the pick of the lot, with very little to choose between them.

At half-time the score was two-nil. Talbot had shot the second goal—a beauty that gave Wynn no chance at all.

"I never saw better play in a junior match," said Darrel to Tom Merry during the interval.

Tom took the half lemon he was sucking from his lips.

"I never saw a much better defence anywhere than Fatty and Figgy and Kerr have put up so far!" he answered.

"That's true enough; but my remark applied also—perhaps chiefly—to the forward play on our side," Darrel said quietly.

"Oh, I'm glad you think we're all right!" replied Tom.

Darrel thought them better than "all right," but he did not say so.

He had his reasons for watching the play keenly, apart from the conscientious performance of his job as referee, and he watched it as keenly as ever during the second half.

The New House defence was as good as ever. Dick Redfern played a forlorn-hope kind of game with perseverance and courage that would have been hard to beat. Koumi Rao backed him up well, and they were between them responsible for the one goal the New House scored. Gussy and Levison made fine runs along the lines, and centred beautifully. Blake, at inside-right, did clever work.

But again it was Tom Merry and Talbot who were most in the picture; and Darrel noted in their favour that this was by no means because of any selfishness on the part of either. They played to one another to perfection; but they also played to the other three as readily.

The end came with the score four-one in favour of the School House; and Manners and Digby headed a rush on to the pitch to cheer the victors the moment the whistle sounded for time.

## THE SECOND CHAPTER.

### Seniors in Council.

ERIC KILDARE, captain of St. Jim's, looked in at the door of Darrel's study.

His usually cheery face was clouded, and his voice was doleful, as he said:

"Can you guess the result, George?"

"I can guess that we didn't win," replied Darrel.

"You give that away directly you open your mouth."

"Win! My good man, we were beaten from the sound of the whistle! Five to nil—no less!"

Kildare threw himself down in the arm-chair, and groaned.

"It's pretty bad!" admitted Darrel. "But our team was a very scratchy one at best."

"Bound to be, with you and Monteith crooked, and Baker and Faulkner both kept away, I know. But the man who let us down worst wasn't one of those who had to bring in to fill the gaps."

"Who was it?"

"Can't you guess?" asked Kildare bitterly.

"Cutts, I suppose."

"Yes, Cutts! Might be one of our best—so on his true form. But he won't keep fit, and I fancy he enjoys letting me and the side down. Bar Lefevre and ons or two more, our Fifth Form is a pretty rotten crowd, George!"

"What of St. Leger and Gilmore to-day?"

"Oh, they weren't quite as bad as Cutts, because neither at his best is as good as Cutts when he is fit and chooses to play. But they were pretty rotten!"

"Looks bad for next Saturday," said Darrel thoughtfully.

"Oh, there's no doubt we shall get whacked again! Westwood Ramblers aren't as heavy as the side that put us through it to-day. They are rather a young team; but I understand they're clever beyond the ordinary, and have a goalkeeper who's somewhere near first class."

"H'm! There's only an off-chance of Monteith's playing. Baker and Faulkner and I will all be out of it."

"And Gray's crooked hopelessly; won't play for the next three weeks, I should say—strained his ankle just before time. And no power on earth will make me play Cutts again, and I'm not keen on having either of his precious pals in the team! Better scratch the match, I should say!"

"We can't do that, Eric!"

"I know, old man. I didn't really mean it. But what is to be done?"

"Play some of the juniors."

"Eh?"

"Nothing very startling in that proposition, surely?"

"Oh, I've done it before at a pinch, and I know some of them are good enough. I don't care about the seniors grumbling, either; it's up to me to field the best team I can. But I've never liked the idea of messing up the junior side. Young Merry's made it practically the school Second Eleven, and it stands for St. Jim's in a way that few Second Elevens, let alone junior teams, do for their schools!"

"True enough. But give the kids credit for some feeling for the school, apart from their own show. And give them credit, too, for thinking quite a heap of the school's skipper."

Kildare laughed at that—his usual breezy, ringing laugh.

"I give them full credit for both," he said, "though I may be vain. And, of course, quite a strong junior side can be fielded without three or four of their best. For instance, good as Tom Merry is at centre, young Redfern can take his place there without any danger of letting the side down. Whom do you suggest, George?"

"Depends upon how many you want. Merry and Talbot in the forward line, of course."

"Agreed!"

"If you want another forward, Redfern, Blake, and Levison are all in form. Then there's the New House defence. I'd play Wynn, Kerr, and Figins for the school in preference to the three we had out to-day, especially against a light team, as you say the Westwood Ramblers are. Never mind about their cleverness; there's plenty of that in those three."

"By Jove, you'd have rather more than half the team juniors!"

"Old man, I've watched every move of their game to-day, and I don't mind saying that, with the fellows away who can't play, and the fellows who won't do their best given the chuck, I'm half inclined to believe that St. Jim's best side just now would be made up of the skipper and ten juniors!"

"That's a tall order!"

"I've mentioned eight. Add Roylance, who is sturdy and an uncommonly good centre-half, and Dane, who, with his pace, is really better fitted for half than for back, or Noble, as fast as Dane in spite of not being quite as good, and you have a ripping good side!"

"I can't promise to play them all; but I'll certainly find places for Merry and Talbot, and I'll think over the matter of some of the others," said Kildare.

"Might see what Monteith says about it," Darrel replied. "He was watching the game to-day."

Kildare looked out of the window, and called to Wally D'Arcy, his fag, who was in the quad.

"Cut across to the New House, and ask Monteith if he'd mind dropping in to see me, will you, young 'un?" he asked.

"Right-ho, Kildare!" called back Wally.

Monteith came over in a few minutes, limping a little.

"I'd forgotten," said Kildare. "We ought to have come over to see you, old fellow!"

"Oh, I can still get about!" the head

prefect of the New House, one time Kildare's enemy, now his good friend, answered. "My leg's not so bad as all that comes to!"

"We were talking about the match on Saturday," Kildare said.

"Not the most cheerful subject under the sun!" replied Monteith.

"Darrel thinks we may have a chance if we'll take his advice!"

"Well, Darrel's advice ought to be worth consideration, anyway," said Monteith gravely.

"Thank you!" Darrel said, with a smile.

"It wasn't a mere compliment. By the way, Darrel, what a ripping game that was to-day! I forgot they were mere kids, and got quite excited about it."

"We were discussing that," Kildare put in.

"Darrel's notion is to kick out the duds and the chaps who won't do their best, and fill their places with juniors."

"Dashed good notion, too! I'd sooner have Wynn, Kerr, and Figins than your goalie and backs of to-day, Kildare!"

"And what about Merry and Talbot?"

"Worth their places any time, in my opinion."

"Blake — Levison — Redfern — Dane — Roylance—Noble?"

"All right, every blessed one of them! I think a heap of young Redfern's play. There's Koumi Rao, too; he's got lots of pace, and centres well. And young Clive at half shapes in good style."

Kildare smiled. Monteith was trying all he knew how to be fair. He had mentioned Clive, whom Darrel had forgotten; but it was plain that he was inclined to press the claims of as many New House juniors as possible.

And that was only natural, after all.

"Can't play the lot," Kildare said. "But I shall shove down Merry, Talbot, Figins, Kerr, and the fat artist in goal, and the fellows who have to stand down may lump it if they don't like it."

"There may be trouble with them," Monteith said.

"If there is, bring in the rest of the pick of the junior crowd, and we shall still be all right," said Darrel.

"I'll send for Merry, and ask him what they've got on for Saturday," Kildare said.

Tom Merry came, and was delighted to hear of the high honour in store for himself and the other members of his team chosen to play for the school.

"We can pull off our game all serene with a weakened side," he said. "We're not up against anything great. In fact, I think our second team could win the match for us."

To that Kildare replied nothing. He was not yet ready for any move quite so drastic as that which Darrel and Monteith favoured. He would wait and see.

## THE THIRD CHAPTER.

### Trouble in the Team.

"O H, by Jove! This is too dashed thick for anything!"

Gerald Cutts, of the Fifth Form, and his chums St. Leger and Gilmore, stood in front of the notice-board in the hall of the School House.

Five minutes before Kildare had posted on that board the team list for the Saturday's match with Westwood Ramblers.

"He's left all three of us out, hang him!" muttered Gilmore.

"I'm not entirely surprised," said St. Leger slowly.

Cutts glared at him.

"What d'ye mean?" he snapped.

"You were absolutely putrid yesterday, an' neither Gil nor I did anythin' to make up for it."

"Rot! Besides, that's got nothin' to do with this. What's he mean by shovin' in mere kids from the Fourth an' Shell in our places?"

"Yes, that's it. What's he mean by it?" echoed Gilmore.

"I rather fancy he means that he considers the kids better value than we are," replied St. Leger, with a wry grin.

"Once in a way, St. Leger did take a line of his own. But he never held to it very long."

"I'm not goin' to stand it!" snorted Cutts.

"You can't help yourself. Kildare's skipper, an' what he says goes," St. Leger answered.

"You'll dashed well see whether I can help it or not! I tell you this—if he keeps us out I'll muck up the whole match, by hook or by crook! Don't you want to play, you tame ass?"





C.H.S.

A neat pass from Tom Merry, and the ball came beautifully to Talbot's foot, bumping a little on the hard ground so that he could get his instep under it. At the same time the Ramblers' back made a rush upon him. (See page 20)

"Well, yes, on the whole, I do, though I should be puzzled to say just why. Footer's really rather a useless fag."

"Why not chuck it altogether?" drawled Gilmore. "We can get home on my majesty the skipper that way I reckon."

"I know a better way than that!" Cutts said savagely.

"Might try constitutional methods first, old top," suggested St. Leger.

"Do you mean go an' argue the case with Kildare? Hanged if I'll do that!"

"There's another way. Two more seniors are left out, an' there must be a dozen or so besides them who would fancy themselves better entitled to places than any juniors. We can stir them up to take action, I should think," St. Leger said.

"Good notion!" agreed Gilmore.

Cutts scowled.

"We can't count on Lefevre for aid," he said. "He doesn't just love us."

"Why should he?" inquired Gilmore, grinning.

And certainly there was no particular reason why Philip Lefevre, head of the Fifth and quite the best fellow in the Form, should cherish any fondness for Cutts & Co.

"Lefevre is down to play," said St. Leger.

"All the same, I'm not sure that some of the others may not stir him up to protest, though I know we can't. There's a strong feelin' among the top Forms in general in this matter, an' as things stand Lefevre is the only Fifth-Former on the list, while there are two Shell fellows an' three from the Fourth."

"You may be right," answered Cutts unwillingly. "Let's see some of the rest."

St. Leger was right, as it proved.

At most big schools there is a decided tendency to reserve the first cricket eleven and the first footer eleven for the seniors. A junior must be something like a genius at any game to get his place under such conditions.

This tendency was as strong at St. Jim's as elsewhere. Possibly it was even stronger, for the success of Tom Merry's junior teams

had marked a more distinct line than there usually is between a first and a second eleven. No senior could be included in a junior side, of course; why, then, some of the seniors argued, should any junior be included in a school side?

Cutts did not go to Lefevre, but Gilmore and St. Leger did, and with them went seven or eight of the Fifth and Sixth, all full of resentment. Cutts had stirred them up; now he trusted to them to stir up Lefevre.

"I was a bit surprised myself when I saw the list," Lefevre admitted. "But you fellows must allow that Cutts gave a rotten exhibition yesterday."

"Every man has his off days," retorted Gilmore. "In form Cutts can lick your head off, an' there aren't three better men in the team than he is."

"I don't want to make a personal question of it, Gilmore," Lefevre said quietly.

"I suppose you mean that as you're down to play nothin' else matters?" sneered Cutts' right-hand man.

"Hardly. There are others here down to play who don't seem to agree with what Kildare has done, I see. If there was a general senior protest—but you'll never get Monteith, Darrel, Baker, and Faulkner to kick against Kildare, you know."

"They're out of it, because they won't play any way—can't play," urged Prye.

"What of Webb?"

"He doesn't agree with it," Markham answered.

At that moment Webb came in. Like Lefevre, he was down to play, and Cutts & Co. had grasped the fact that upon the attitude of these two much depended. The other three Sixth-Formers in the list had been won over to a protest already, but Webb and Lefevre both held strongly by Kildare.

Within five minutes Webb and Lefevre were on their way to the captain's study, the bearers of an ultimatum with which neither quite heartily agreed.

Darrel was with his chum.

"Don't go, Darrel," said Lefevre. "We'd

rather you heard what we have to say. It's a matter of public importance."

"Must be serious, by the look of you two," Kildare said, smiling unsuspectingly.

But Darrel did not smile. He guessed what was coming.

"It is serious," said Lefevre. "Will you tell him, Webb?"

"I'd rather you did," Webb replied un-easily.

Kildare sat up, and his forehead puckered. "What on earth are you fellows driving at?" he demanded.

"It's this matter of Saturday's match," the Fifth-Former said. "We don't agree with the team chosen."

"To which of you shall I resign the captaincy?" asked Kildare, with an unusual touch of irony.

Darrel gave him a warning look.

Webb and Lefevre were both good fellows. Right or wrong, they ought to be met in a friendly spirit, Darrel thought.

"Rot!" said Webb hotly. "Nobody wants you to do anything of the sort. I think you know that both Lefevre and I have stood by you before now."

"That's true," answered Kildare. "Well, proceed with your protest, and I'll reply without getting my rag out—if I can help it!"

But the hot Irish blood was up now.

"We admit that some of the seniors gave a pretty poor show yesterday," said Lefevre. "We shouldn't kick if they were dropped for this match."

"There's no 'if' about it!" snapped Kildare. "I have dropped them."

"Right-ho! Then we consider that their places should be filled with other seniors, in the usual way."

"I've already filled their places!"

"The list can be altered, you know."

"Oh, can it? I don't see that. Moreover, I consider the fellows I've put in better value than any I can get from either Fifth or Sixth."

Webb and Lefevre were too honest to say that they did not think so. They would not

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even put forward arguments as to weight and strength. They were going all out on the seniors' claim.

"Does that matter so much?" asked Webb. "It's all that matters!" retorted Kildare. "Yesterday's match was a disaster and a disgrace!"

Lefevre flushed. He had been below his best, and he knew it. His form was very consistent, but for once it had deserted him.

Webb, who had played a better game than anyone else on the side except Kildare himself, answered:

"Was that my fault?" he snapped. "Not in the very least. I'm not saying it was Lefevre's. He did his best, I know—he always does. But I've known him more helpful."

"I'll put that behind me," Lefevre said quietly, "and I'll ask you to believe, Kildare, that it has not influenced me in what I am going to say."

"My dear man, I shouldn't doubt you for a moment after that!"

Darrel knew that an ultimatum was coming. He was glad that it seemed likely to be given and received without squabbling. The two visitors were hard up against Kildare. But all three were gentlemen, and that fact told.

"The crux of it all is, Kildare, that if these juniors are not withdrawn, you will be the only senior on the side," Lefevre said.

Kildare sprang to his feet, and his hands clenched. But he choked down his wrath, and said, speaking as quietly as Lefevre had spoken.

"In whatever way the list is altered, I shall not withdraw one of them!"

"That settles it, then," Lefevre replied, turning to go.

"Kildare, old fellow—"  
"Don't say another word, Webb, please! I should hate to quarrel with you fellows; but I'm afraid I shall if you don't go!"

Webb went. The door closed behind him and Lefevre.

"What do you think of that, Darrel?" asked Kildare bitterly.

"I'm sorry about it, Eric. But there's no irreparable damage done. If you had quarrelled with them—"

"George, old boy," said Kildare, putting his hand on his chum's shoulder, and speaking with a catch in his voice, "I quarrelled with the best friend I've ever had a little while ago, and I learned a lesson then. Webb and Lefevre don't matter to me as you do, and because of that it was easier to hold myself in; but that lesson did help. Now what am I to do?"

"What we agreed upon—play the other juniors, and make the best of it," answered Darrel.

There was no need for him to answer the rest of what his chum had said; and it was possible for him to keep his voice steady in speaking of the team, as it would not have been had he tried to reply to that.

"I don't know—I don't know!" Kildare said moodily. "There's another way. I can stand out myself—turn the match over to the junior team entirely!"

"But that will be giving way as certainly as if you had backed down to those two, and without any more dignity."

"It won't be the school team with ten juniors to support me!"

"The team you choose, with you as skipper, is the school team, whatever objections any silly ass may make, Eric!"

"By Jove, that's right, too! You're a good counsellor, George. I'll make out a fresh list at once. And I'm not so dead sure we'll lose the game."

"I believe you'll win it," said Darrel. "I only wish I could play. But the doctor says I must not risk this wretched arm of mine on any account."

A fresh announcement appeared on the notice-board that evening. It ran thus:

#### "MATCH WITH WESTWOOD RAMBLERS.

"For this match on Saturday next some alterations in the school team have been rendered necessary. The team will be:

"Wynn, goal; Figgins and Kerr, backs; Dane, Roylance, and Levison major, halves; Blake, Redfern, Merry, Talbot, and Kildare (captain), forwards.

"As the train service is not convenient, the team will travel by motor-charabanc, leaving the school gates at two o'clock sharp."

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### THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

#### How the School Took It.

"O H, ripping!" cried Tom Merry, as Blake dashed into Study No. 10 on the Shell passage to tell the news.

"I'm jolly glad Roylance has got a place!" said Manners.

"I'm exceedingly sorry that I haven't!" Lowther said.

"Oh, well, you're not up to Roylance's form, you know!" Manners replied, with comradely frankness.

"I admit that. I see it. But I regret that Kildare has also seen it," Lowther said.

"Dane and Levison and Redfern will all be playing out of their places, of course," Blake remarked. "But Levison says he likes half all right, and Dane's so speedy that he's sure to be all right there. Then three chaps can't all play centre, and Kildare's put you there (instead of Reddy Thomas.)"

"But centre's his own place," Tom said, puzzled.

"So it is! Blessed if I'd thought of that! Jolly decent of him to give it up to you!"

"You have to shift, too," Manners said.

"Oh, only going outside instead of inside—that's nothing!" answered Blake, one of the best of good sportsmen. "It wouldn't have done to put Reddy right out on the wing."

"My one wetwet is that Kildare ovahooked me!" spoke a voice from the door, and the famous monocle of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy gleamed into the study.

"That's all rot! He ought to have had the sense to give me a place. I'm well aware that I'm too strong and heavy for a junior team—above your weight, you know," said George Alfred Grundy, appearing behind Gussy.

"But this is a senior match, and—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I should like to know what you silly asses are cackling about?" demanded Grundy fiercely.

"If you'll come out into the passage with me, I'll explain with pleasure!" Lowther said blandly.

"I am out in the passage, you idiot!"

"Well, stay there, then. That also will give me pleasure," replied the humorist of the Shell.

But no explanation was needed. Grundy's footer was a standing joke to everyone but Grundy; and he knew that it was so regarded by everyone, though he had never been able to understand why.

Over in the New House there was also great joy. Figgins seized Fatty round his ample waist, and waltzed him up and down the study. Redfern and Kerr shook hands with one another in graver satisfaction. Then all four rushed across to talk with the rest.

Talbot, Roylance, Levison, and Dane came along, all of them delighted, but none of them noisy about it. Kangaroo made no moan, though he knew that the choice between him and his chum must have been a very close thing. Clive was so overjoyed at Levison's inclusion that it never even occurred to him that he had been in the running, and that he was a half, while Levison usually played forward.

"You fellows make me tired, by gad!" said Ralph Reckness Cardew. "A game of footer really isn't worth all this fuss. Now, if—"

"I've booked you for Saturday, Cardew!" interrupted Tom Merry, with a cheery grin.

"My dear good ass, Kildare's done all the bookin', an' anyway—"

"But there's a junior match on, and we must have a team for that."

"Count me out, dear boy! What my noble kinsman here would call my 'dig' will not allow of my figurin' in a mere junior team while Ernest here plays for the Senior Eleven."

"Ask Kangaroo if he'll let you off," Tom said. "He will skipper the side."

"Let the boulder off? Not likely!" the Australian junior said. "I shall shove him at centre-half, and see that he keeps going all the blessed time!"

"An' I will play centah-forward," said Gussy, brightening up.

"We'll see about that," was the diplomatic reply of Harry Noble. "I say, Tommy, it shouldn't be half a bad team, even without you First Eleven boulders. Glyn in goal, then Herries can play back with me. Clive and Cardew and Lowther at half. Gussy, Maners, Koumi Rao, Owen, Lawrence, Digby, Durrance, Lumley-Lumley, Gore—plenty of forwards to choose from."

"Pity that both games aren't at Westwood," Tom said.

For the team that the juniors were to meet was also a Westwood one.

"I wonder whether they'd change the

dates—I mean, change the places for the dates?" suggested Noble.

"They might. We could wire them tomorrow."

"Good egg! Wouldn't it be jolly coming home if we'd won both matches?"

The juniors were in high feather, naturally. But feeling among the seniors was very different.

"I wish I hadn't touched the bizney," said Webb to Baker. "It came as near as a touch to a quarrel with old Kildare, and all that I'm surprised at is that it wasn't quite as bad as that. He held himself in well."

"The harm's done now," replied Baker. "He's bound to carry through with the team chosen, and I should blame him if he didn't. But if I know Kildare—and I fancy I do—there will be no rancour. He will choose the best team for the next match; and if it does include some of the Shell and Fourth, you fellows—those of you who have twopenorth of common-sense, anyway—won't kick."

Lefevre felt it even more than Webb. He went to Kildare just before bed-time.

"Look here, Kildare," he said, "I can't ask for a place on Saturday, because you've a team booked up, and I feel pledged to stand out, anyway. But I'm sorry! You were right, and we were wrong, and that's all there is to be said about it!"

"Not quite all," replied Kildare. "Will you go with us as linesman, Lefevre?"

The Fifth-Former's eyes gleamed.

"Like a shot!" he said. "And I'll tell the rest of them that I'm going, and admit that I see we were wrong. But wasn't Darrel to take the line?"

"The 'no odds,'" Kildare answered. "Darrel would just as soon look on."

Eric Kildare had learned now to realise the utter selfishness of his best chum in matters that concerned him.

Lefevre went off feeling much happier. And what Baker had said had comforted Webb. But there was disgruntlement among most of the other seniors concerned; and Cutts was furious.

"So he'll play the match with a scratch team of kids like that!" he snorted.

"Let him, an' see what the result will be!" said Gilmore.

"It may be rather different from what you imagine, dear boy," St. Leger put in.

Cutts stared at him, and scowled blackly.

"It seems to me you're on the side of the enemy, by gad!" he said.

"Oh, no! But I can't see everythin' quite your way, old gun!"

Cutts brought down his fist on the table with a bang.

"The match sha'n't be played at all! I swear it sha'n't!" he snarled.

"Oh, you're ravin' now!" said St. Leger.

"I don't see how you're goin' to stop it, old chap," Gilmore said.

"I'll bet you twenty to one in quids that I do!"

"Don't take him on, Gil," St. Leger said. "It will only encourage him to make an idiot of himself, an' we had enough of that with his bettin' madness last term!"

"Twenty to one isn't to be sneezed at," said Gilmore, in whom the gambling passion was almost as strong as in Cutts. "An' I know he can't put the kybosh on the game. Done with you, Cutts!"

"Done! But you're wrong, my boy! I will put the kybosh on it—not for the sake of a measly quid, but to show Kildare what's what!"

### THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

#### Cutts' Dodge.

"HALLO, Welsh!"

"Hallo, Mr. Cutts! It's some time since I've had the pleasure of seein' you, sir."

Welsh was a motor-driver. He was also a sportsman of Cutts' own type—for which "sporting man" is perhaps a better label. Betting, billiards, banker, bridge, all of these were in Welsh's line, which was not a straight line, by any means.

Cutts, though he could be haughty and arrogant enough when he liked, was not particular about his choice of companions when out on the randan.

If he had been so he would have avoided Welsh. On the other hand, if Welsh had been at all particular as to whom he consorted with, he would have avoided Cutts. But they were birds of a feather.

"Are you drivin' our team to Westwood this afternoon?" asked Cutts.

"If there's anythin' to it I could," replied Welsh. "The boss had told off Smith for the job, but a word from me would get it all right."

"Better speak the word, then," said Cutts.

"What's the game, sir?"  
 "Oh, there's nothin' in the sportin' way doin'—most of our footer gang are too slow for words. I've chucked them for the time bein'. What I want is to make sure that the match won't be played."

Welsh tilted back his white cap, and scratched his head.

"Might be worked," he said. "But there's difficulties. What's it worth?"

"A daver."

"That's good enough for yours humbly. If it can be did it shall be did, Mr. Cutts!"

"What are the difficulties? I don't see them, by gad! Easiest thing in the world to have a breakdown on the road."

"Yes, that's so. But look here, 'tain't so very many miles from here to Westwood, an' if I break down they'll get there some other way—hire horse-traps, or somethin' low like that."

"You could keep them danglin' for three-quarters of an hour or so, I suppose?"

"I could do that. An', of course, it's a lonesome sort of road to Westwood. It might not be so easy for them to get another conveyance of any kind."

"An a wire's no use, at the time the things take now, an' there's no telephone call office on the way. So that if any one rode along to Westwood an' let the Ramblers' team know that our lot couldn't come—well, it would be no great odds if they did turn up after so much delay, for the Ramblers would have rambled away—see?"

Welsh chuckled. He had a liking for intrigue as well as for money, and he was the kind of cur to whom the straight fellow of the type of Kildare or Darrel makes no appeal. He had no definite cause for any dislike of the St. Jim's skipper, but he did dislike him.

"Sounds all right," he said. "An' I take it you'll ride into Westwood with the news?"

"That's the idea. Motor-bike," replied Cutts. "But I reckon on shootin' past them without their twiggin' me."

"You can count on me, Mr. Cutts," said Welsh. "I shouldn't mind touchin' a quid in advance, for I'm stony. Hand that over, an' I'll see the boss at once, an' arrange to drive the team."

The sum demanded changed hands, and the new arrangement was made without difficulty. Welsh's boss had not yet found Welsh out, and the fellow was a first-rate driver and a skilled mechanic.

Hardly had Cutts gone when Tom Merry and Kangaroo rode up on their bikes. Welsh had gone to his lunch then, and the two juniors saw his employer.

"I say, Mr. Lowe, it's short notice, I know, but can you let us have the other motor charabanc this afternoon?" said Tom. "We know you've got two now."

"I might, Master Merry—I might. Where do you want it for?"

"To Westwood—same as the other."

"Start same time?"

"Yes, we'd like that."

"That's a pity, because the other one's out this morning, and I'm not sure that it will be back in time."

"We could start half an hour later, and yet be in good time, Tom," said Harry Noble.

"The Invicta secretary said they couldn't kick off before half-past three."

"Yes, that would do," Tom said, "though, of course, it would be jolly to travel together."

"Might get racing, and have a smash," remarked Mr. Lowe. "That wouldn't be so jolly. But if I can start 'em together I will—only no racing, mind!"

"We'll promise you that," Tom said. "Anyway, if there is any it will be your men's affair. Kildare won't have it, I know."

"That's good!" said Kangaroo, as they rode away.

But he hardly guessed how good it was to prove.

Only one charabanc turned up at the appointed time. Cutts saw that there was quite a crowd at the gates, and that the fellows playing for the junior team were present. But he thought nothing of that; the junior match was understood to be on Little Side, and Cutts had heard nothing about the new arrangement. None of the players were in footer togs; they would change on reaching Westwood.

The Fifth-Former did not go near, or he might have got enlightenment from some of the remarks made.

He sneered as he heard the ringing cheers with which the departure of the team was greeted.

"They won't have much to howl about presently!" he muttered.

Gilmore accosted him.

"Cutts, dear boy, I rather fancy you owe me twenty quid," he said.

"The game hasn't come off yet," replied Cutts sullenly.

"Oh, well, someone's neck may get broken on the way, of course. They wouldn't play after that, I suppose."

"It needn't take a broken neck to stop them!" growled Cutts.

"Have you any plan for stoppin' them, old top?"

"That's my business!"

"I'd advise you to drop it if you have. I don't care about the quid I shall owe you if you mess up the match; but it won't pay you to get farther across with Kildare. The rest are comin' round, y'know."

"Thank you for nothin'! When I want your advice I'll ask for it!" Cutts snorted.

Gilmore shrugged his shoulders as his chum walked away.

"That chap's askin' for trouble," he said to himself.

Cutts fetched out his motor-bike, and wheeled it to the gates.

The junior team was still at the gates in full force. Cutts took it that they were waiting for the arrival of their opponents.

"Runnin' over to see the game, Cutts?" asked Cardew blandly.

Cutts glared at him. Cardew put up his hands over his face.

"Please, please don't look so very witherin'!" he said. "My constitution's not very strong, y'know!"

"For twopence I'd give you the hidin' of your life!" snarled Cutts.

"I won't tempt you. Perhaps you may recall the fact that you did somethin' of the sort once, an' that you were rather sorry for it afterwards?"

The grins on the faces of the hearers goaded Cutts very nearly to an outbreak of fury. He remembered well enough, of course. Cardew was very much below his weight; but Cardew, as a new boy, had stood up to him in defence of Frank Levison, and had taken such a thrashing as no senior could be justified in inflicting upon a junior.

Cutts' machine buzzed and hummed, and Cutts sprang to the saddle, and whizzed down the road in a cloud of dust.

At that moment Wally D'Arcy & Co.—the whole seven of them—came up to the gates with their bikes.

"I say, Cardew!"

"It was Wally who spoke."

"Well, cousin Adolphus?"

"Oh, drop that potty rot! I've something to say to you, and I don't want everybody to hear it."

"We will retire into private conference, kinsman," replied Cardew.

Three of the fags came. Cardew looked at Frank Levison and Joe Frayne with pretended puzzlement.

"Do you call this quite absolutely private, cousin—" he began.

"Rats! It was Franky, and Joe who saw what I'm going to tell you about. Come to that, we shouldn't have told you at all, only Franky's major has gone off with the team, and my silly major's no good for a thing like this. Franky thinks you are."

"I appreciate the compliment, Frank," said Cardew, bowing low.

"It's about Cutts," Frank said. "Joe and I were in the village this morning, and we saw him talking to Welsh—you know, Cardew, one of Lowe's drivers."

"Yaas! He's drivin' them now."

"Well, we think it's suspish," said Wally.

"As how, kinsman?"

"Cutts is mad with Kildare, and they say he's made a bet that the match won't come off. Now he's gone off on his motor-bike."

"You imagine that he's bribed Welsh to play tricks? I must say you infants have lively imaginations. Still, I freely confess that I don't think the dear Cutts above such a trick. Why didn't you speak of what you'd seen before the team left, Frank?"

"Didn't think much about it till we saw Cutts get his motor-bike out," admitted Frank.

"Well, that hardly proves anythin', y'know."

"I suppose not. But—but—"

"I don't care what it proves," said Wally.

"It's jolly suspish, anyway. Hope your shebang will come along soon. We're off to Westwood, so we may know something before you do. Ta-ta!"

The seven departed. Cardew's face was very serious as he went back to his comrades.

## THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

## On the Road.

"WHAT a confounded nuisance!" said Kildare.

The charabanc had stopped, and Welsh had told the St. Jim's skipper that it might be some time before it could go on again. He gave technical reasons for this which sounded genuine enough, and he was already getting to work on pretended repairs.

"Well, I s'pose bein' half an hour or so late won't hurt you much?" he said.

"If it's only that," answered Kildare, "Anyway, we've no course but to wait. You'll hurry up, won't you?"

"Oh, I'll hurry up!" Welsh said. His head was bent, so that Kildare could not see his face, or the grin that accompanied the words might have made the captain of St. Jim's smell a rat.

Welsh got busy. The first thing he did, before anyone had become so impatient as to watch him closely, was hardly to be classed as a repair, however. It was rather in the nature of making a repair necessary. Some of the St. Jim's fellows might know enough about motors to twig the fact that he was merely wasting time, so he gave himself something genuine to do.

The players, with Darrel and Lefevre, got out and strolled about. The pretended breakdown had taken place at just the loneliest part of a road never very busy with traffic, and the minutes dragged for them.

The minutes grew into half an hour, and still Welsh was at work. He began now to take a less hopeful view of getting the damage put straight.

"Honk, honk!"

Down the road sounded the warning hoot of a horn, and a motor-bike sped towards them.

They cleared out of the way. The machine had come and gone in a flash, and as it chanced, no one recognised Cutts in the masked and goggled rider.

"Hallo, there!"

It was only two or three minutes later that Wally hailed the broken-down travellers, and the seven drew nigh. Cutts had halted by the way, or they could not have got so near him.

"The fags jumped off."

"Had a smash?" asked Jameson.

"No. Only something gone wrong with the work," answered Tabbot.

Frank Levison drew his major aside, and Wally joined them.

"Have you seen Cutts, Ernie?" asked Frank.

"Cutts, kid? No. Wait a moment, though. A motor-cyclist came past at about fifty an hour—may have been Cutts."

"It was," said Wally confidently. "Levison, you chaps have been spoofed!"

"What in the world do you mean?"

Wally explained in haste. Levison fetched Kildare, Darrel, Lefevre, Tom Merry, and Tabbot.

"There may be nothing in it," said Kildare. "It's only suspicion, at most. I don't like that driver fellow; but I should hate to accuse him wrongly, and I don't see how we can possibly prove anything. Something certainly has gone wrong with the car; I know enough to be sure of that."

"The other car ought to be along directly," said Levison major. "We can commander that, and it can come back for the other crowd. But there's Cutts."

"What about Cutts?" said Kildare sharply.

"Well, what do you fancy he's gone to Westwood for?"

"I don't know—how should I?"

"I don't know—I can only guess," Levison said. "But my guess is that when we do get there we shan't find any Ramblers' team to meet us. Cutts will have told them that the game's off through a breakdown on the road. That's my idea."

"By Jove!" said Kildare.

"Franky," said Levison, "I'm going to have your bike, and I'm going to ride like blazes to the Ramblers' ground!"

"Good notion!" said Kildare. "I can't possibly ride any of these kids' machines, but—"

"I can manage on Jampof's," said Tom Merry.

"Oh, can you? You're not—"

"You shall come along with us, Jameson," put in Kildare.

"Right-ho! You shall have it, Tom Merry."

"And I'll lend somebody mine," volunteered Hobbs.

Two or three minutes later, having raised the saddles of the bikes as far as they could

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he got, Levison major, Tom Merry, and Talbot were pedalling for all they were worth towards Westwood, with Wally keeping pace with them for the present, and Reggie Manners, Joe Frayne, and Curly Gibson toiling behind.

"It's the Sports' Ground," panted Levison. "The other team play there, too. This way, I think."

They turned out of the High Street at his direction. Wally was still near enough to see where they went, but the other three had been left far behind.

A motor-bike stood just inside the gate of the Westwood Sports' Ground, and they knew it at once for Cutts' machine.

Some of the Ramblers' side were coming towards the gate. Others stood in a group around Cutts in the middle of the pitch.

"Help, you fellows! We've had a breakdown on the road," said Tom Merry.

"So we've heard," said one of the home team. "Didn't expect to see any of you. But, I say, you're some of the other team, aren't you? The side that's playing the Invicta, I mean."

"No; we're playing for the school team against the Ramblers," said Tom. "Is that fellow over there the one who brought the news?"

"Yes. He said there wasn't a dog's chance of your getting here, so some of us were clearing off."

"Well, don't clear! You can take my word for it, the team's coming. We'll talk to that chap!" said Tom.

And the three, with Wally close behind, moved towards Cutts.

"Will you leave him to me, Tom?" asked Talbot quietly.

"Yes, Talbot. I'm not a bad-tempered chap, I hope, but I couldn't talk civilly to Cutts just now."

Talbot's eyes had a steely glint in them, and his face was set, as the three walked up to the group. But he had his voice under control.

"There seems to have been a mistake," he said. "It's true enough that we've had a stoppage on the road, but the team's coming along. Sorry to keep you fellows waiting, but you'll excuse it in the circus, I know."

"Oh, of course," replied the Ramblers' captain.

"It was kind of you to bring the news of the breakdown, Cutts," said Talbot. "But you really were in a little too much of a hurry."

Cutts ought to have seen that the object of the Shell fellow was to save his face for the time being, not to give him away to the other side. Perhaps he did see that. But his fury of bawled spite was too strong for his self-control.

His gloved hand struck Talbot in the face. In an instant the blow was returned.

Cutts flung off mask and goggles and heavy coat. Talbot threw aside his jacket and waistcoat. They went hard at it.

### THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

#### Triple Victory.

"HURRAH! Here they come!" The second charabanc had appeared in sight from the Rylcombe direction, and Figgins and Kerr and Blake and the rest cheered wildly as they saw it come, while Kildare and

Darrel and Lefevre, though to cheer was beneath their dignity, smiled at one another in relief.

Smith, the driver, drew up at Kangaroo's order, and at once the junior team players hurried out. Cardew had prepared them for this as soon as he had seen the stationary car.

"Don't wait to talk, Kildare; we understand all about it," said Noble. "You'll have to come back for us, Smith. We're not going to trust ourselves to that bouncer who's fumbling with the other jigger, if he is ready before you're back."

"Sha'n't be long, sir," replied Smith, with a grin.

Smith did not like Welsh. He did not need to be told to drive hard. He had Kildare and the rest—including Frank Levison, Jameson, and Hobbs—at the gate of the Westwood Sports' Ground in very quick time.

Reggie Manners came rushing up to them as they entered.

"Talbot's fighting Cutts!" he panted. "And, my hat, he is showing up well! I do believe he'll lick him!"

"This must be stopped!" said Kildare sternly.

And he hurried across the ground. But he was too late to stop it. He and those with him were just in time to see Talbot knock out Cutts.

There was an element of luck in it, no doubt. Talbot had taken more punishment than Cutts had. But he had kept his head all through, whereas Cutts had lost his before the fight began. And Tom Merry and Levison and Wally were sure afterwards that they had never doubted Talbot's victory, heavy though the odds in weight and strength against him seemed.

The conditions had given Talbot a bigger chance. He was far fitter than the Fifth-Former.

"Are you fit to play, Talbot?" asked Kildare anxiously.

"Oh, rather!"

Within ten minutes the game had begun. The St. Jim's players hurried into their footer togs, and lined up in record time, Talbot, with his bruised face, as ready as the rest.

Smith was already on his way back to pick up the other team. Their opponents filled in the time of waiting by watching the match already begun.

The Ramblers saw that they were up against a side much younger and lighter than the usual St. Jim's senior team, and naturally anticipated an easy victory. But they were soon made to understand that, at best, this would be no soft thing for them.

They were rather a young and light team, and on that score their advantage was not excessive. But the St. Jim's side had to find itself, for several of its members were playing out of their usual places, and during the first twenty minutes the Ramblers had the best of matters. But even then they found the defence great.

No goal had been scored when a burst of cheering from the Invicta players announced the arrival of the junior team.

No goal had been scored when the whistle went for half-time, which happened just as Kangaroo led his men out of the dressing-room to line up on the other pitch.

Kildare and his men watched Gussy kick

off, and saw an immediate raid upon the Invicta goal—a raid in which Koumi Rao and Harry Manners, and the great Arthur Augustus himself, highly delighted at getting the centre-forward position, showed up well, though it was Digby who shot the goal that ended it.

Then Kildare and his men went back to their own game, and within five minutes Tom Merry, from a pass by the skipper, scored for St. Jim's.

Five minutes after that the Ramblers' captain beat Fatty Wynn. And then for half an hour the game swayed to and fro without another goal.

Meanwhile the juniors were more than holding their own with the Invicta, whose name seemed hardly likely to be a fitting one when the game ended. Manners and Gussy had both scored when half-time came, and only once had the ball been put past Glyn.

Kangaroo led the rush to the other pitch when the whistle went for the break. No one thought of lemons. They knew the state of the game there, and they wanted to cheer on their comrades to the winning game.

"Oh, well saved, Fatty!"

"Good kick, Figgins!"

The ball was cleared well down field. Roylance had it now.

"Oh, pretty! See that, Bernard?" yelled Kangaroo.

Roylance challenged, and tipped the leather to Dane. Dane sent it on to Kildare. Kildare ran it twenty yards, then put it across, to see Redfern trap it. Redfern dodged a half, and passed to Tom Merry. Tom ran it on as if he meant to go for goal on his own, but, drawing back, slung it to Talbot.

It came beautifully to Talbot's foot, bumping a little on the hard ground, so that he got his instep under it, and sent in a deadly shot in the corner of the goal just before he went down to the charge of the other Ramblers' back.

"Goal! Hurrah! Hurrah!" The goalkeeper hurled the ball out, and then the whistle sounded for time.

So the scratch St. Jim's team—the skipper and ten juniors—won a fine match over clever opponents by the odd goal in three.

And directly they had changed they rushed off to watch the scratch junior side put paid to the account of the Invicta by five to two!

Not a man had failed St. Jim's that day. Every player in both teams had shown his best form. The three seniors said that they were proud of them all, and the seven fags added their note of high approval.

But Cardew, who had played as well as anyone on his side, said that he did not expect to survive the night, and that the sympathy given to Talbot was really his due. It was he who, with Tom Merry, helped Talbot off the field, all the same.

Nothing more was done in the matter of Cutts. Kildare held that they could afford to treat his blackguardly trick with contempt. He had been thrashed by a Shell fellow—let that suffice!

And nothing at all was done about Welsh, for against him nothing could be proved.

THE END.

(Another grand long story of Tom Merry & Co. next week.)



"Look, my daughter, look well, for these are the marks of the man you wish to marry!"

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