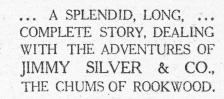
:: THE ::

# Missing Captain!

## By OWEN CONQUEST.



THE FIRST CHAPTER.

IMMY SILVER stopped before the notice-board at Rookwood and pinned up the paper he carried in his

up the paper he carried in his hand in a prominent position.
It was an important paper.
For it contained the list of the Junior Cricket Eleven, who, on the morrow, were to visit Bagshot School, and inflict dire defeat and confusion upon the ancient rivals of Rechwood.

There was a rush of juniors to read the

Most of the names contained in it could be guessed in advance; but there was a chance that any fellow might find his name

there. there.

"Jolly good team!" remarked Tommy Dodd, of the Modern side, finding written there his own name, and the names of his two special chums, Cook and Doyle. "A few more Moderns would improve it. But it's jolly good."

"Wants a few more Classical names," remarked Dick Oswald. "But it's jolly good, all the same. My name's there."

"And mine, intirely," remarked Flynn.

"Jimmy Silver's the best captain we've ever had in the Fourth. Smythe used to lave me out."

"Glad you're all satisfied," remarked Jimmy Silver.
"I'm not satisfied," said Dickinson minor.
"What have you left me out for, Jimmy Silver?"

Silver?"
"Sorry, old chap; but we want to beat Bagshot!" said Jimmy affably.
"Ha, ha, ha!"
"It's a jolly good list!" remarked Lovell.
"I think we shall give Bagshot the kybosh this time. I suppose Bootles isn't likely to chip in again, and ask us to play that slacker Mornington."

Jimmy shook his head.

"No fear. That's all over, for one thing. I've spoken to Bulkeley about that, and he's

chipped in."
"Good old Bulkeley!"

"Mornington expects to play," remarked

Newcome.

Jimmy Silver shrugged his shoulders.

"Let him expect! He won't play."

"He's been telling chaps that he's in the

"No law against that," said Jimmy. "He can tell chaps that he's going to be Head of Rookwood, if he likes."
"Here he comes!" said Lovell, with a grin. Mornington of the Fourth came up to the retire heard. Townsond and Townsond and Townsond and Townsond and Townsond. Mornington of the Pouth Canada and Topham and Peele were with him. The Nuts of the Fourth glanced at the ericket list, and Mornington frowned darkly and turned to Jimmy

Silver.
"You've left my name out!" he said sharply.

Jimmy nodded.
"Why is that?" demanded Mornington.
"Because you're left out yourself, my dear

chap."
"I've told you that I expect to be played!"

"Go hon!

"The best thing you can do is to put my name in at once," said Mornington. "I decline to be left out, and it will save you trouble in the long run."

Jimmy Silver looked grimly at the dandy

of Rookwood.

Nobody but Mornington would have dreamed of taking such a tone with the captain of the Fourth.

But Mornington was now some fellows.

His wealth loomed largely in his own eyes and in the eyes of fellows like Townsend & Co. His uncle and guardian, Sir Rupert Stacpoole, was chairman of the governing bookwood. board of Rookwood.

Mornington was ambitious to shine among the cricketers, but his ambition did not

cause him to stick to practice or exert himself in any way; and Jimmy Silver was the last fellow in the world to play a slacker

if he could help it.
On one occasion he had not been able to on one occasion he had not been able to his guardian had caused that gentleman to approach the Head on the subject. And Dr. Chisholm, who knew little of junior cricket matters, had interfered.

Ms. Bootles, the master of the Fourth, had conveyed the Head's request to Jimmy Silvet to play Mornington in the St. Jim's match. Jimmy, sorely against the grain, had concurred.

But for the fact that a couple of juniors locked Mornington in a study, and kept him out of the match, the result would have been disastrous for the Junior Eleven.

Jimmy Silver did not mean to run that risk a second time.

He explained the matter to Bulkeley of the Sixth, the captain of the school, and Bulkeley had "taken a hand" promptly enough.

Bulkeley had interviewed the Head on the chiect and there was no despress of a repetic

subject, and there was no danger of a repeti-tion of the Head's request to Jimmy Silver. Mornington was evidently unaware of the

new state of affairs.

Evidently he considered that he had only to state his wishes in order to have them assented to.

"You hear me?" he said. "You'll put my name down in that list at once, Jimmy Silver!"

"Cheeky ass!" growled Lovell. "Sh mop up the passage with him, Jimmy?" "Bump him intirely!" said Flynn.

"Do "Do you hear me, Silver?" Mornington. snapped

Jimmy nodded.
"Yes, dear boy!"
"Well, what do you say?"
"Rats!"

"Wha-at!"
"R-A-T-S-rats!" said Jimmy. "Isn't that plain enough?"

plain enough?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Mornington set his teeth.

"Well, you'll get an order from the Head," he said. "You'll find that you can't do as you please."

Jimmy Silver smiled, and turned away. Mornington turned away also, to make his way to the Head's study. But before he had taken two steps, several pairs of hands were laid upon him. He swung round savagely, and glared at the grinning faces of Lovell and Raby and Newcome and Tommy Dodd. Raby and Newcome and Tommy Dodd.
"Let me go!" he shouted.

"You're going to be bumped for your cheek," said Lovell coolly. "Up with him!"
"Let go! Help!"
Bump!

Ha, ha, ha!" Bump!

'Yarooh!"

"Cave!" ejaculated Rawson of the Fourth, and the juniors scudded away as Mr. Bootles came out of his study. Mornington was left sitting on the floor,

gasping.

Mr. Bootles stared at him.

"Bless my soul!" he exclaimed, peering at Mornington over his glasses. "Who is that? Mornington—ha! What ever are you doing on the floor, Mornington?" Mornington is taggered to his feet, crimson with aner

with anger.

"I've been ragged!" he gasped. "Lovell

"That will do, Mornington! I am sorry to see that you cannot live on better terms with your Form-fellows," said Mr. Bootles severely. "You are concerned in incessant disturbances, Mornington. I fear that it is the insolence of your manners that is the cause of it. I advise you, Mornington, to amend your ways, and to cease to exasperate your schoolfellows by ill-

founded arrogances. You will do well to bear this in mind, Mornington." Mr. Bootles rustled on, leaving Mornington almost stuttering with rage.

## THE SECOND CHAPTER. A Surprise for Mornington!

AP! Dr. Chisholm laid down his pen. "Come in!" Mornington of the Fourth entered

Mornington of the Fourth entered the Head's study. He was still looking somewhat red and flustered, and was evidently in a savage temper. Only Mornington, of all the fellows at Rookwood, would have ventured to show signs of temper in the august presence of the Head.

Dr. Chisholm noted the knitted brows and gleaming eyes of the dandy of the Fourth, and he frowned.

"Well?" he said sharply. "What is it, Mornington?"
"I wish to speak to you, sir!"

"I wish to speak to you, sir!"
"Kindly be brief!"

The cold, severe glance of the Head somewhat abashed Mornington. His gaze dropped a little, and his voice was quieter as he went

on.

"I have been left out of the cricket team again, sir"

The Head made a gesture.

"That is a matter that concerns only the junior cricket club. You may go."

"My guardian asked you——"

"Listen to me, Mornington," said the Head enjetty. "Sir Rupert Staepoole wrote

"Listen to me, Mornington," said the Head quietly. "Sir Rupert Staepoole wrote to me on the matter, and I did not care to disoblige a governor of Rookwood, and to disoblige a governor of Rookwood, and for that reason I uttered a word on your behalf. Since then I have received further information on the subject. I have learned the particulars from Bulkeley. It is a matter that entirely concerns the cricket club, and I understand that you are omitted from the playing eleven because your play is not up to the standard required, and because you re-fuse to attend the necessary practice. I cannot interfere in the matter again."

"I recommend you to attend more con-"I recomment you to attend more constantly on the playing-fields, and make your-self useful as a cricketer, and in that case I have no doubt you will have as much chance as the others of playing for the school," said the Head. "The matter, how-

wern does not concern me. You may go!"

Mornington did not stir.

"Am I to be left out, then?" he exclaimed.

"That depends on the captain of your club; presume.

He dislikes me."

"He dislikes me."

"Probably you have given him reason, if that is the case," said the Head drily. "I have received very unfavourable reports of you from your Form-master, Mornington. It appears that you treat the other boys with insolence and an assumption of superiority. You cannot expect that to make you popular. I advise you to mend your manners."

"I—I—"
"And now you have wasted enough of my

"And now you have wasted enough of my

"The Head took up his pen again. But Mornington did not go.
"Do you hear me, boy?" exclaimed Dr. Chisholm, in surprise and anger.
"Yes, sir."

"Leave my study at once!"
"L'eave my study at once!"
"I'm going to play in the Bagshot match,"
said Mornington doggedly. "I want you to
tell Jimmy Silver so, sir."

Boy! Mornington stood his ground, unabashed now by the glare the Head of Rookwood bestowed upon him.

There was an ominous pause.

"It is due, I suppose, to your extraordinary training that you dare to speak to your The Penny Popular.—No. 71.

headmaster with such unexampled insolence! headmaster with such unexampled insolence!" said the Head at last. "If you think that such insolence can be tolerated, Mornington, you are mistaken!" Dr. Chisholm took up his cane. "Hold out your hand!" Mornington's eyes gleamed.
"I won't be caned, sir! I shall write to my guardian. He is chairman of the governors and he will not allow—"

my guardian. He is chairman of the governors, and he will not allow—"

The Head rose.

The Hold out your hand immediately, Mornington, or I shall administer a public flogging!" he exclaimed.

Mornington hesitated a moment and then

Mornington hesitated a moment, and then his hand came slowly out.

Swish!

"Now the other hand!" thundered the Head.

Swish!

Mornington squeezed his hands together, is face pale with pain and rage.

is face pale with pain and rage.
The Head pointed to the door with the

"Go!" he said.

"Go!" he said.

Mornington went, almost choking.

Townsend & Co. were waiting for him in the passage with rather anxious looks. Although it suited the Nuts of the Fourth to chum with Mornington, they could have little liking for him, and they were never without a certain amount of uneasiness lest his insolence should land him, and themselves, in some serious scrape.

Nobody but Mornington would have dared to "beard the lion in his den" as he had done.

The Nuts were not surprised to see him come forth squeezing his hands and mumbling. "Well?" said Townsend.

Mornington gritted his teeth.

"I've been licked!"

"Well, what the dickens did you expect?"
said Peele. "You can't cheek the Head, you know, and I'll be bound you cheeked him!
What about the cricket?"

What about the cricket?"

"The Head won't interfere again."

"Couldn't expect him to," said Townsend.

"Nothin' doin', of course."

"He doesn't seem to understand that I can give him trouble about it," said Mornington. "My guardian will back me up."

The three Nuts grinned at one another. They did not have so much faith as Mornington in the influence of his guardian.

"You can cackle!" growled Mornington. "I know what I'm talkin' about. Sir Rupert doesn't like the Head. As a matter of fact, he would be glad to get him into the bad books of the governors. He has a friend he would like to see Head of Rookwood, if Dr. Chisholm were gone. I know he's thought of workin' it already."

"Phew!" said Topham.

"Anyway, you're out of the Bagshot match," said Townsend.

"Pnew!" said Topham.
"Anyway, you're out of the Bagshot
match," said Townsend. "Let's have a jolly
afternoon to-morrow instead. There are
races at High Coombe."

Mornington shrugged his shoulders impatiently.

patiently.

"Never mind the races. I suppose I'm out of the cricket—owin' to Jimmy Silver. He's been one too many for me. But I'll get even. Jimmy Silver is goin' to be out of it, too!"

"How the dickens—"
"You know what they did with me when.

"How the dickens—"
"You know what they did with me when the St. Jim's match was on?"
"Locked you in Rawson's study," grinned Townsend. "Us, too, the rotters! But you can't work that on Jimmy Silver. A study wouldn't hold him."
"I'm not thinking of a study." Mornington lowered his voice. "What about the old tower? There's Sergeant Kettle's tuckshop on the ground-floor, but the rooms above are never used and never entered. A fellow shoved in there would never be found—till we chose."

"My hat! But how would you get Jimmy Silver there?"
"Four of us could handle him, I suppose."
"But—but we should be seen getting him

"Not after dark."
"But after dark the match will be over."
"I'm thinking of to-night."
"Great Scott!"

"Great Scott!"
"You-you're dotty!" said Peele, aghast.
"You couldn't keep the chap there all night.
He'd be missed."
"Well, what about it?"
"There'd be a row—a search—no end of a

don't care."

"I don't care."
"You may not," said Townsend. "But I do. I'm not going to get myself sacked from Rookwood to please you, Mornington!"
"So you are a funk!" sneered Mornington.
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"I haven't an uncle on the Board of Governors to see me through," said Peele, with a sneer. "If I had, I might risk it." "There's no risk. Silver wouldn't give our names.

"He might have to."

"He might have to."
"Then I'll do it alone," said Mornington.
The three Nuts looked at one another.
But they shook their heads.
"Too jolly risky," said Peele. "It would be a flogging at least."
"Then I'll do it alone," said Mornington, and he turned his back on his companions and walked away.

and he turned his back on his companions and walked away.

Townsend & Co. looked at one another un-

easily

"What the dickens has he got in his head?"

"What the dickens has he got hims head, muttered Towny,
"Blessed if I know," said Topham. "But I know one thing, and that is—I'm going to keep clear of it!"

To which Towny and Peele heartily agreed.

THE THIRD CHAPTER. .Caught Napping!

HE Fistical Four sat down to tea in the end study in great spirits.

They were looking forward to the cricket-match of the morrow, and Jimmy, who was very pleased with the form his team had shown of late, fully expected to "mop up" the Bagshot ground with the Bagshot team. Bagshot team.
Lovell and Raby and Newcome

equally confident.

They had dreaded a repetition of the trick They had dreaded a repetition of the trick Mornington had played on them on the occasion of the St. Jim's match. But Mornington had come to the end of his tether; there was a limit, evidently, to the influence of his guardian at Rookwood.

The careless and swanking slacker would have been sufficient, if he had been played, to reduce the chances of the Rookwood team to zero.

to zero.

to zero.

The danger was over, however, and the Fistical Four rejoiced accordingly.

"Of course, we wouldn't have stood it."
Lovell remarked. "If the Head had chipped in a second time, there would have been trouble." in a se trouble.

trouble."

Jimmy Silver nodded.

"Jolly sure of that!" he replied. "The whole club would have gone on strike, I think. But the Head didn't savvy. Mornington's guardian gave him the impression that a set was made against the silly ass, and that he wasn't given a fair chance. Now Bulkeley's spoken to the Head it's all right. The Head means well," added Jimmy tolerantly. The captain of the Fourth felt that he could make allowances for a headmaster.

"Mornington is ratty about it," grinned Raby. "He was looking like a Hun when I saw him last."
"Let him!" said Jimmy serenely.

"The silly duffer!" remarked Newcome.
"He can't play cricket for toffee. Blessed
if I think he cares twopence whether Rookwood wins or loses, so long as he can swank
at the wicket."

wood wins of loses, so long as he can swank at the wicket."

"Well, he won't swank at the wicket this time," said Jimmy Silver sententiously.

"No room for slacking asses in the Rookwood Junior Eleven."

"Horn been!"

wood Junior Eleven."
"Hear, hear!"
After tea, as there was plenty of light, the Fistical Four walked down to Little Side for some batting. Mornington & Co. stood looking on, decidedly sour in appearance.
In the dusk the chums of the Fourth walked back to the School House. They were chatting on the steps after calling-over, when Mornington came up.
The Fistical Four looked at him rather grimly.

grimly.

They were prepared for some more insolence from the dandy of the Fourth, and quite ready to roll him in the quad at the first word.

But, as it happened, Mornington was quite civil for once.
"Tommy Dodd wants to speak to you, Silver," he said carelessly.
"Where is he?".
"In the tuckshop."

"In the tuckshop."

"Well, I suppose he can come here?" said

Jimmy.

"Time we got on to our prep," remarked Lovell, as eight rang out from the clocktower. "Don't waste time on that Modern bounder, Jimmy!"

"Well, it won't take me long to run across," said Jimmy, a little puzzled, but always obliging.

Lovell and Raby and Newcome went up to

the end study, while Jimmy Silver ran across the dusky quadrangle.

The school shop, which was kept by Sergeant Kettle on the ground-floor of the old disused clock-tower, was closing. The sergeant was about to lock the door when Jimmy came up.
"Hallo! Is Tommy Dodd here, sergeant?"

"Hallo! Is Tommy Dodd here, sergeant?" asked Jimmy.
"No, Master Silver."
"The ass! He sent for me."
"Well, he ain't here, Master Silver," said Sergeant Kettle, and he retired into the shop and closed the door and locked it.
Jimmy Silver looked round wrathfully at Mornington, who had followed him from the house

"Have you been pulling my leg?" he de-manded. "Dodd isn't here."

The next moment Jimmy uttered a gasp of

amazement.

'What the dickens- Hands off! My

Crash !

Mornington had sprung at him like a tiger. Jimmy Silver was not often taken by sur-prise, but the attack was utterly unexpected, and he went down in a heap, with Morningon him.

He lay on his back on the ground in the deep dusk, with the dandy of the Fourth kneeling on his chest.

kneeling on his chest.

He glared up at Mornington.

"Get up, you silly chump! By gum, I'il smash you! Lemme gerrup!"

Mornington did not move. He had grasped Jimmy's hands, and he held him by the wrists, in spite of his struggles.

From round the corner of the tuckshop a junior ran quickly and silently, and a sack was thrown over Jimmy Silver's head as he lay prostrate.

So quickly was it done that Jimmy did not

lay prostrate. So quickly was it done that Jimmy did not catch a glimpse of his new assailant, and, indeed, did not know what was coming untit the sack was over his head.

He struggled furiously.

But he was at a disadvantage and two

But he was at a disadvantage, and two strong pairs of hands were grasping him. He struggled in vain. "Quick!" panted Mornington.

"Quick!" panted Mornington.

The young rascal had chosen his moment

well. The quadrangle was dark, and there was

no one near the tuckshop, and Ser Kettle had retired into the back-room.

Jimmy Silver, more amazed than angry, struggled in the hands of the two assailants. But the second assailant ran a loose cord round his wrists as Mornington held them, and it was drawn tight and knotted.

and it was drawn tight and knotted.

Then\_Jimmy was helpless.

Another cord was knotted round his ankles, and then the sack was pulled close over his face, stiffing the shout he tried to utter.

Then he was lifted and rushed away in the darkness.

darkness. darkness.

He felt himself being carried into a building, and up stone steps, upon which he bumped several times.

He was set down at last.

"Good!" It was Mornington's voice. "You can cut. He hasn't seen you."

Jimmy heard departing footsteps.

A match scratched, and the sack was pulled from over his face. He blinked in the light

of a candle.

In utter amazement, he stared at Mornington.

He opened his lips to speak, and as he did so a folded handkerchief was thrust into his mouth, and Mornington proceeded to tie it there safely, winding a string round and round

his head.

Then he rose to his feet, and looked down on Jimmy Silver with a mocking grin.

## THE FOURTH CHAPTER. Kidnapped!

IMMY SILVER stared up blankly at Mornington.

He was lost in amazement. He lay upon the stone floor of a small room, with a tiny window open to the starry

He knew where he was.

He knew where he was.

Part of the ground-floor of the ancient clocks.

Part of Rookwood was occupied by the school and the dilanidated. Part of the ground-floor of the ancient clock-tower of Rookwood was occupied by the school shop, but the greater part of the dilapidated old building was untenanted. Sometimes the fellows climbed the crazy old stairs to investi-gate the deserted place, and to view the country from the high window; but it was seldom. The climb up the stairs was hard work, for the spiral stair contained over a hundred steps. Sometimes the place was not visited for weeks together, or even for a



There was a shout from the fellows, as the burly sergeant was seen to choss the quadrangle to the School House, bearing the missing junior in his arms. "Silver!" they cried. "It's Jimmy!" (See page 17.)

whole term. The door at the foot of the spiral stair was generally kept locked, and old Mack, the porter, had the key; but he would part with it for a moderate tip.

Mornington had evidently obtained the key from the porter, and chosen this out-of-the-way spot as a hiding-place for his prisoner.

But Jimmy could not understand.

It was not uncommon for Moderns and at Rookwood to raid one another

Classicals at Rookwood to raid one another in this way.

But why Mornington should take the trouble to kidnap Jimmy Silver was a mystery. Jimmy could not be kept there long, at all events, as he would have to turn up on the Classical side at bed-time. And it was quite certain that he would hammer Mornington without mercy if he were kept a prisoner in the old clock-tower for a couple of hours.

He was far from divining, as yet, the thoughts that were in the mind of the reckless young rascal.

thoughts that were in the mind of the reck-less young rascal.

Mornington was breathing hard after his exertions. Smoking and slacking did not make it easy for him to carry Jimmy Silver's weight up a hundred steps, even with the assistance of his unknown companion.

He was gasping, in fact, and for some minutes he could not speak. Neither could Jimmy, for the excellent reason that the gag choked back any sound but the faintest mumble.

Mornington found his voice at last, however.

Mornington found his voice at last, however.

"Well, here you are!" he remarked.
Jimmy could not speak, but his look was eloquent. But the dandy of the Fourth only

grimed at his expression.

"You wonder why I've taken all this trouble?" grimed Mornington. Jimmy nodded.

"I'm goin' to make terms with you. Play me in the team to-morrow, and I'll let you go. Nod your head if you mean 'Yes."

Jimmy Silver did not nod his head. Evidently he did not mean "Yes."

"Don't be an obstinat ass!" urged Mornington. "You'll find it pretty cold to stay here, though it's a summer's night. I've brought this old sack for you to lie on, but it won't be comfy."

Jimmy Silver's eyes opened wide.

For the first time it occurred to him that Mornington intended to leave him there a prisoner for the night.

It was scarcely eredible that the dandy of the Fourth could be so brutal and so reckless; but Jimmy's heart sank.

He knew Mornington's fixed belief that whatever he did, his unele, the governor, would be able to see him through.

whatever he did, his uncle, the governor, would be able to see him through.

Jimmy knew that, in that, he miscalculated; but Mornington did not know it.

"You're going to play me, or you won't play yourself!" said Mornington. "You can take your choice. Both or neither. If you nod your head, I'll take it as your word of honour that you'll put me in the team."

Jimmy's head remained motionless

Jimmy's head remained motionless.

"Still obstinate!" grinned Mornington.

"I'll come and see you before brekker, and
I think you may have changed your mind by

then!"
Jimmy strove to speak, but only a mumble

Jimmy strove to speak, but only a mumble came forth.

"I've borrowed the key from Mack," went on Mornington. "I shall lock the door below, and tell Mack I've mislaid the key. He won't be able to make a fuss, as he's not supposed to lend it to us. Nobody can come here—if anybody wanted to, which isn't likely.

You can't get out of this reom—the door opens outwards, and I'm going to wedge it with a chunk of wood. You can't call for help—you're gagged. You'll have a bad night if you stay here?

help—you're gagged. You'll have a bad night if you stay here."

Jimmy Silver's look was expressive.

He no longer doubted that the dandy of the Fourth intended to carry out his threat, and the prospect of a night, bound and gagged, at the top of the old tower, was dismaying enough.

But Jimmy Silver did not intend to surrender.

render.

"You think I shall get licked for this," continued Mornington, grinning. "Well, you can lick me, though I shall put up a fight, I think. As for the Head, he dare not flog me. He would have the governors down on him." Jimmy shook his head.

Mornington laughed.

"Well, I'm risking it," he said. "You'll see, But if you still want to get off, you've only to agree to play me in the Bagshot match, You see, I'm determined. Now, do the sensible thing."

Jimmy's eyes burned, but he made no sign

Jimmy's eyes burned, but he made no sign f assent.

Mornington waited a minute; then he shrugged his shoulders impatiently, and went

shrugged his snounders impactately, and to the door.

The door.

The heavy oaken door closed. Mornington had taken the eandle with him, and Jimmy Silver was in darkness, save for the faint glimmer of starlight at the little window. He could hear a scraping sound as Mornington drove a wedge of wood under the door.

door.
door.
Even if he could have released himself from
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the knotted cords, he was a prisoner in the

tower now.

Faintly, Mornington's retreating footsteps died away on the long spiral stair.

Silence at last.

He was gone!

Jimmy Silver, stretched on the sack on the stone floor, writhed in his bonds, struggling to free himself, till his wrists ached, and the skin was abrased and torn. But he could not get free.

not get free.
Outside the old tower, Mornington closed the big, heavy door, and locked it, and slipped the key into his pocket.
Then, with perfect calmness, the rascal of Rookwood strolled away to the School House.
Townsend & Co. were chatting in the hall, and they looked curiously at Mornington as he came in he came in.

Been for a stroll with Leggett?"

"Leggett! That modern bounder! No!"
"I saw you talking to him a while ago,"

"I saw you talking to him a while ago," said Peele.
"Just a word or two," said Mornington carelessly. "He was tryin' to lend me money, as a matter of fact."
"Seen anythin' of Jimmy Silver?"

"Seen anythin' of Jimmy Silver?"
Mornington smiled.
"By gad! I shouldn't notice Jimmy Silver
if I saw him," he said. "Nearly half-past
eight—time I got on with my prep. Ta-ta!"
He went to his study.
Townsend and Topham and Peele exchanged curious glances. But they did not
speak on the subject that was uppermost, in
their minds. They went to their preparation, content to mind their own business with
great strictness. great strictness.

great strictness.

Rawson of the Fourth noticed that they were grinning, however, as they came into the study they shared with him. But Rawson was not on speaking terms with the Nuts of the Fourth, and he did not inquire what amused them.

It was close on bed-time when Mornington looked into the study.

"Finished, you chaps?" he drawled.

"Yaas," said Townsend.

"Come along to my study and have a smoke. By the way, Silver's out."

"Out—at this time!" exclaimed Rawson, looking up.

tooking up.

"Yaas. him?" Queer, ain't it? Seen anything of

"Not since cricket practice."
"Jolly queer," said Townsend.
The Nuts of the Fourth followed Mornington to his study. Rawson, with a somewhat worried look, went to the end study to speak to Jimmy Silver's chums.

#### THE FIFTH CHAPTER. Missing!

EEN Jimmy?"
Lovell and asked that qu Lovell and Raby and Newcome asked that question together as Tom Rawson came into the end study. The Fistical Three had finished their preparation, and they were surprised by the absence of their study leader.

Rawson shook his head.

"I've just heard that he hasn't come in," lie said. "It's bedtime in half an hour. Hasn't he done his prep?"

"No; he hasn't been in. Better look for him, I think," said Raby.

"Can't have gone out of bounds, anyway."

"Oh, no! He went to speak to Tommy Dodd. Those Modern bounders have been larking with him, most likely."

"They wouldn't make him miss his prep," said Rawson.

"They wouldn't make him mass his party said Rawson.
"Well, he's missed it."
The four juniors left the study and the House, and crossed to the Modern side. They found the three Tommies chatting on the staircase. The Moderns looked at them in surprise.

in surprise.

"Hallo! Time you Classical kids were in bed!" said Tommy Dodd severely. "What are you doing over here at this time of night?"

Where's Jimmy Silver?" asked Lovell.

"Blessed if I know.

"Lost, stolen, or strayed?" grinned Tommy

"Look here, he came to speak to you in the Look here, he came to speak to you in the tackshop about eight, and we haven't seen him since," said Lovell warmly. "He's missed his prep, and that means a row with Bootles in the morning. What have you done with him?"

"My dear chap, we haven't eaten him for supper," said Tommy Dodd. "And he didn't come to see me in the tuckshop. I haven't been there since tea."

THE PENN'T POPULAR.—No. 71.

"You sent him a message—"
"Blessed if I did!"
"Look here!" exclaimed Raby. "Mornington brought him a message from you!"
Tommy Dodd shook his head.
"Mornington was retting them.

Tommy Dodd shook his head.
"Mornington was rotting, then. I never sent any message. Perhaps the Nuts have been larking with the august Jimmy."
Lovell gave a snort.
"We'll jolly soon teach 'em manners if they have," he said. "Come on, you chaps! Jimmy's not here!"
The four Clusical's grossed the guarantee.

The four Classicals crossed the quadrangle again, and repaired to Mornington's study on the Classic side. They found Mornington, Townsend, Topham, and Peele, smoking cigarettes. Mornington regarded them with an insolent smile as they came in.

"I don't remember askin' you into my study," he drawled.

udy," he drawled.
"Where's Jimmy Silver?" demanded

Lovell.

Mornington raised his eyebrows.
"How the dickens should I know?" he

'You gave him a spoof message from mmy Dodd." Tommy Mornington laughed.

Mornington laughed.

"Yaas! I was pullin' his leg."

"Haven't you seen him since?"

"Of course not!"

"Then you don't know where he is?"

"Haven't the slightest idea."

"Marpington yawand as he work. Mornington yawned as he made that

Lovell & Co. looked puzzled. They did Lovell & Co. looked puzzled. They did not see any reason why Mornington should be lying. Evidently Jimmy was not in the study. They left if, leaving the Nuts grin-ning as soon as the door was closed. "Well, this beats the band!" said Lovell. Where on earth can Jimmy be? He can't have gone out."

"Let's ask the sergeant."

Sergeant Kettle was in his back room, smoking his evening pipe, when the juniors knocked at his door. He stared at them as Shop's closed long ago!" he grunted. "Be

"We're not after jam-tarts!" growled ovell. "Have you seen anything of Jimmy Lovell. Silver?"

The sergeant nodded.

"He came just as I was closing the shop, nod asked for Master Dodd," he said.

Master Dodd wasn't here."

"Where did Jimmy go then?"
"I don't know."

"I don't know."
"Anybody with him?" asked Rawson.
"Not that I see. I was locking up."
The juniors left the sergeant, greatly puzzled. They returned to the house, and inquired right and left for Jimmy Silver. But no one had seen him. It was close on bedtime now.

time now.

"Well, what the dickens!" exclaimed Lovell. "Jimmy must be somewhere. What the dickens is he playing hide-and-seek for like this?"

"Bed-time, you kids!" said Bulkeley, coming along the passage.

The Classical Fourth went to their dormi-

Lovell & Co. had a hope that Jimmy might turn up there for bed. But the captain of the Fourth was not in the dormitory.

Bulkeley came in to see lights out, and he noticed Jimmy's absence at once.
"Isn't Silver here?" he exclaimed.

"We don't know where he is," said Lovell, with a worried look. "We haven't seen him

all the evening."
"He seems to have disappeared intirely,"
remarked Flynn.

Bulkeley looked astonished.

"What nonsense!" he exclaimed. "Has he gone out?"
"I don't think so."

"Well, turn in! I'll look for Jimmy Silver!" said the captain of Rookwood

grimly.

The Classical Fourth The Classical Fourth turned in, and Bulkeley left the dormitory. He repaired to Mr. Bootles' study, to inform him that Jimmy

Silver had not turned up for bed, and that his Form-fellows did not know where he was.

"Bless my soul!" exclaimed Mr. Bootles,
"This is extraordinary!"

"I can't understand it, sir," said Bulkeley. "I find that nobody's seen him since eight o'clock." since eight o'clock."

"Please ask the prefects to look for him,

Bulkeley.

"Yes, sir."

Bulkeley left the study. He returned in a quarter of an hour.

"Silver can't be found, sir!" Mr. Bootles jumped up.

"You have looked for him?"
"Yes, sir. He isn't in the school—unless he is hiding away somewhere."
"Surely he would not do such a foolish thing, Bulkeley?"

thing, Bulkeley?"
"Well, I suppose not, sir. Unless he's
doing that, he must have gone out without
permission, and has not returned."
"Extraordinary!" exclaimed Mr. Bootles.
"What is to be done, sir?"
"Send him to me immediately he returns

"What is to be done, sir?"
"Send him to me immediately he returns
Rulkeley."
"Very well, sir."
"The captain of Rookwood returned to his
study. But Jimmy Silver did not return, and
at half-past ten Bulkeley visited Mr. Bootles
again

"Has not Silver returned?" asked the Fourth Form master, as the captain of Rookwood came in.

No. sir!"

"No, sir!"

"Very well, Bulkeley. You may go to bed.
I will speak to the Head on the subject."
Mr. Bootles, very much surprised and somewhat alarmed, went at once to the Head's study. Dr. Chisholm's brow contracted as he heard the Form-master's report.
"The boy has broken bounds undoubtedly," he said. "Something has occurred to prevent his return."
"Some accident. sir?" said Mr. Bootles.

his return."

"Some accident, sir?" said Mr. Bootles.

"Probably. I will telephone to the policestation immediately."

The Head went to the telephone at once.
He rang up the police-station, but there was
no news from that quarter. No accident had
happened to a schooboy in the neighbourhood
of Coombe, so far as the police were aware.

The Head laid down the receiver, his look
grimmer than ever.

"What is to be, done, sir?" asked Mr.
Bootles helplessly.

"There is nothing to be done until morning.

"There is nothing to be done until morning, unless the boy returns," said the Head. "I can hardly believe that he has run away from the school. I fear that some accident this can narmy believe that some accident was the school. I fear that some accident was the promised to do happened. The police have promised to do

happened. The police have promised to do all they can."

"I shall remain up," said Mr. Bootles.

"If you do not mind—"

"Certainly not! I am very anxious."

Mr. Bootles remained up, in his study. He was anxious and flurried. By midnight, however, he was fast asleep in his armchair, and he did not waken till the rising-bell was pealing out over Rookwood.

Mr. Bootles started up, and rubbed his

Mr. Bootles started up, and rubbed his

Mr. Boones every service of the murmured. "I—I cycs, "Bless my soul!" he murmured. "I—I think I must have fallen asleep. Yes, undoubtedly I must have fallen asleep. It is—bless my soul!—morning. Dear me!" He rubbed his eyes again, and yawned, and left his study. Three anxious-looking juniors came downstairs—Lovell and Raby and Newcome. They had been awake before rising hall

"Has Silver come back, sir?" asked Lovell.
"I—I fear not!" yawned Mr. Bootles, sup-pressing a heavy yawn. "I have waited up for him, but he has not come back, apparently. It is extraordinary!"

"There's been an accident," said Raby.

"Ineres been an accident, said Raby,
"Jimmy must have gone out."
"I shall inquire of the police," said Mr.
Bootles.
The Form-master telephoned to the police,

but there was no news of Jimmy Silver.

At breakfast there was only one thought in the minds of the Rookwood fellows. The whole school, Classical and Modern, was buzzing the control of t ing with the news,

What had become of Jimmy Silver?
The Head was seen to be looking very anxious. Angry as he was at Jimmy Silver's supposed absence without leave, his anger was

supposed absence without leave, ins anger was not so great as his anxiety.

The only possible supposition was that an accident had happened to the junior outside the walls of Rookwood, and prevented his

return.

The Rookwood fellows went into the Formrooms as usual that morning; but there was
much more thought given to the missing
junior than to the lessons.

During the morning the police-inspector
from Coombe called upon the Head. He had
no news; but he took a description of Jimmy
Silver, and promised that every effort should
be made to find the missing lad.

After morning lessons the juniors came
eagerly out of the Form-rooms, hoping to hear
news of Jimmy.

news of Jimmy.

news of Jimmy.

But there was no news.

The captain of the Fourth was still missing.

Lovell and Raby and Newcome were looking lugulrious. At dinner they ate hardly anything. Their anxiety for their missing anything. Their anxiety for their missing chum was intense. After dinner Tommy Dodd came up, as the

three were discussing the matter dismally in the quadrangle. Tommy was looking con-cerned. In spite of his many rows and rags with Jimmy, he had a real liking for the captain of the Fourth.

"Not heard anything of Jimmy?" he asked. Lovell shook his head.

"What about the Bagshot match?"
Lovell snorted.

Lovell snorted.

"Blow the Bagshot match! I'm not thinking of cricket!"

"Well, they're expecting us," said Tommy Dodd awkwardly.

"We're going out to look for Jimmy this afternoon," said Raby. "You'd better take a team over, Tommy."

"Well, I'll oit, if you like. We're bound to play the match, or else send an excuse, and it's rather late for that," said Tommy Dodd. Dodd.

And so it was settled. Lovell & Co., keen and so it was settled. Lovell & Co., keen cricketers as they were, had no mind for cricket that afternoon. They had resolved to spend the afternoon in a search for their missing chum. Little did they dream how near at hand he was.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Sergeant Kettle Makes a Discovery. OU'LL want some players, I suppose?"

Tommy Dodd glared at Morning-ton as the dandy of the Fourth

ton as the dandy of the Fourth asked that question.

"Not your sort," he said, with a sniff.

"There's a lot of fellows standin' out—Rawson and Oswald, as well as Lovell and Raby and Newcome," said Mornington.

"They're goin' out huntin' for Silver."

"I know that."

"Well, I'm willin' to play, if you like."

"But I'm not willing," said Tommy Dodd tersely. "Go and eat coke!"

And he turned his back on Mornington.

And he turned his back on Mornington. The team that departed for Bagshot School was mostly composed of Modern fellows, Quite a crowd of the Classical juniors had resolved to spend the afternoon searching for Jimmy Silver.

Mornington strolled away idly after speaking to Tommy Dodd, and sauntered round the tuckshop to the door of the staircase of the old tower.

He inserted the key and unlocked the door, and disappeared within.

Townsend had observed him from a distance, and he turned a somewhat scared look on his chums.

"Morny's got him shut up right enough,"

"Morny's got him shut up right enough," he whispered.
"The silly ass!" said Peele. "He'll be flogged for this. Mind, we don't know anythin' about it—not a word."
"Not a syllable," said Topham. "It's a rotten trick, too; the poor beggar must be hungry by this time."

Townsend shivered a little as he thought of the night the imprisoned junior had passed in the lonely room at the summit of

the tower.

"It's rotten!" he muttered. "But we can't say anythin'. It's rather thick, even for Morny. He's a regular hooligan. Serve him right if he's sacked. I wonder who helped him? He couldn't have handled Silver alone." Silver alone.

"Leggett, of course," said Peele. "Leggett would play any mean trick for half-a-quid. It was Leggett."
"Sorry for him, then, when Silver gets out," said Topham.

Mornington mounted the spiral staircase, unfastened the door at the top, and entered

the little room.

Jimmy Silver lay on the sacking on the

Jimmy Silver may on the shadows.

His face was deadly pale.

He had slept little in the night. His limbs were cramped by his bonds, and he was faint with hunger and want of sleep. His eyes burned as they turned on the rascal of Rookwood.

Mornington regarded him with a mocking

smile.

"It's, time to start for the match," he remarked. "They're sending over a team with Tommy Dodd as skipper."

A faint mumble came from Jimmy Silver. He had gnawed away part of the gag, but still he could not speak.

"Would you like to be let loose?" smiled Mornington "There's still time, you know!" Jimmy nodded.

"Will you play me if I let you loose?" Jimmy shook his head.

"Still obstinate!" grinned Mornington.
"You are a sticker, and no mistake! But I'm rather a sticker, too."

Jimmy mumbled.
"For the last time, you know. I'm willin' to let you loose, and go over with the team

Jimmy did not trouble to shake his head. But his look was enough. Mornington shrugged his shoulders, and left

He descended the staircase, and left the tower, turning the key in the lock. Then he strolled away and joined Townsend & Co. "Comin' out for the afternoon?" he said

lazily.

"Not with you," said Townsend tersely.

Mornington raised his eyebrows.

"Why not?"

"Look here, we'd rather not be seen speaking to you at present," said Townsend. "We don't want to get into a row when it all comes out."

"Gettin' funky?" grinned Mornington.

"We've had nothin' to do with it, mind." said Topham.

"We've had nothin' to do with it, mind." said Topham.

Mornington laughed.

"I'm not goin' to drag you into it," he said contemptuously. "If it comes out, I can face the music on my own."

"The chap who helped you—"

"Silver didn't see him—that's all right."

"And you won't mention his name?"

"I've promised not to."

"Look here, when are you goin' to let the poor beggar out?" demanded Townsend abruptly. "We can't let this go on."

"Not till it's too late for him to play in

"Not till it's too late for him to play in

Not till to stoo late for him to play in the Bagshot match."
"Well, that won't be long!" said Peele.
"The team's startin' now. And if you don't mind, Morny, we'd rather not have your company this afternoon."
"Just as you like," said Mornington indifferently.

He sauntered away.

Townsend & Co. joined the crowd of fellows who were going to hunt for Jimmy Silver. That seemed to Townsend the best way of keeping up appearances. In spite of Mornington's assurances, the nuts could not help testing appearance.

Ington's assurances, the hues could not help feeling uneasy.

It was not till five o'clock was striking from the clock-tower on the Modern side that Mornington entered the old tower again. He nodded coolly to Jimmy Silver as he entered the room at the top of the stair-

"Time's up!" he remarked, as he took the gnawed gag from the junior's mouth. "You can get out now."

Jimmy could not speak, his lips were numbed. Mornington cut through the cords that bound him.

that bound him.

Jimmy made an effort to rise, but sank back on the sacking with a cry of pain. His limbs were cramped and icy cold.

"By gad, you look bad!" said Mornington, with a touch of remorse. "Of course, I didn't intend to hurt you, Silver. By gad, you look as if you're goln' to be ill. Let me help you down."

"Let me alone, you rotter!" gasped Silver. "Don't you want my help?"

"No!"

'No!

Mornington shrugged his shoulders, Mornington shrugged his shoulders, and left him. Jimmy made another effort to rise, but sank back helplessly. He realised that he was going to be ill. His limbs felt like lead, and his head was burning. Mornington had not reflected on the probable results of his dastardly action. The results were to be more serious than he had dreamed.

were to be more serious than he had dreamed.

Jimmy lay helpless on the sacking, unable to rise now that he was free. Mornington was gone, but even had he been there Jimmy would have refused his help.

"My hat!" murmured Jimmy. "I feel awfully queer! I suppose this means the sanatorium for me. The silly ass!"

Again and again he strove to rise, but he could not. He felt as weak as a baby. But he could use his voice now, and he called for help.

His voice was faint at first, and did not.

He could use his voice how, and he caned for help.

His voice was faint at first, and did not reach beyond the walls of the little room. But it became stronger.

It seemed an age to Jimmy Silver before he heard steps on the staircase, and the bronzed old face of Sergeant Kettle looked in.

"Now, then, wot's this 'cre little game?" said the sergeant gruffly.

Then, as he caught sight of Jimmy Silver, he uttered an exclamation of horror.

"Master Silver! You here!"

"Help me out!" said Jimmy faintly.

The sergeant did not ask any more questions. He picked up the junior in his strong arms, and carried him downstairs.

There was a shout from the fellows in the

There was a shout from the fellows in the quadrangle, as the burly screent was seen crossing to the School House, with the missing

crossing to the School House, with the missing junior in his arms.

Mr. Bootles met them at the doorway, blinking with astonishment.

"Silver!" he exclaimed.

The Head came hastily out of his study. He had seen the sergeant with his burden from the study window.

"Silver! Where did you find the boy, sergeant?"

Jimmy was silent. Much as he had suffered Jimmy was sient. Much as he had sunered at Mornington's hands, he was not inclined to betray the rascal of Rookwood.

"You hear me, Silver? Tell me at once who was guilty of this outrage?" exclaimed Dr.

Chisholm.
"I—I'd rather not, sir!" faltered Jimmy.
"What!"

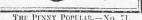




Funny People From Funland Farm!

These are only two of the many jolly characters appearing every Tuesday in "Little Sparks," which is full of COLOURED pietures and picture stories now, and is like an entirely NEW paper! Take a copy home to the little ones TO-DAY.

The ALL-PICTURE Paper For Children.



"One word, sir," interposed Mr. Bootles.

"Whoever placed Silver there must have obtained the key from the porter."

"Ah! Kindly call Mack here, Mr. Bootles. Sergeant, take Silver up to the dormitory. Go to bed at once, Silver, and I will telephone for the doctor."

The sergeant carried Jimmy upstairs. In a few minutes he was in bed, with blankets piled on him, and a hot-water bottle at his feet. And in a few minutes more he was fast

feet. And in a few minutes more he was fast

#### THE SEVENTH CHAPTER. Flogged!

OOKWOOD was in an uproar. The news of the sergeant's discovery spread like wildfire.
"Who did it?" exclaimed Lovell, with blazing eyes, as the chums of the Fourth went downstairs again. "The Moderns, what!"
"Impossible!" said Rawson.
wouldn't play such a dirty trick!"
"But it was somehody..."

wouldn't play such a dirty trick!"
"But it was somebody—"
"It's bound to come out. Mack will know who had the key of the tower."
Mack, the porter, was at that moment in the Head's study, being questioned by Dr. Chisholm. He had little to say, but that little was very much to the point. Mornington had asked for the key of the tower, and had not returned it. Mack had supposed that he wished to explore the place. The Head dismissed him and sent for Mornington.
Mornington entered the study calmly

Mornington entered the study calmly

enough.

The storm had burst, and he had expected it. He was ready to face the music now, with plenty of nerve. He faced the Head calmly.

"You sent for me, sir?" he asked.

"You sent for me, sir?" ne asked.
"I sent for you, Mornington. You have been guilty of an astounding outrage!"
"Indeed, sir!"
"Do you deny that you placed Silver of the Fourth, bound hand and foot, in the old tower, and left him there, without food, for a whole night?" thundered the Head.
"No. sir!"

"No, sir You-you admit it?" ejaculated the

"Yes, sir!"

"Yes, sir!"

"Why did you do this wicked and brutal thing, Mornington?"

"I did not mean to hurt Silver, sir. I am gorry if he is ill. I only meant to keep him out of the Bagshot match, as he refused to relay me."

out of the Bagshot match, as he refused to play me."

"Good heavens! For so trifling a motive you have been guilty of this dastardly outrage?"

outrage?"

"That was my motive, sir."

"You understand, of course, that your punishment will be severe? Only in consideration of your training, or want of training, I refrain from expelling you in disgrace from the school. You will be flogged!" thundered the Head. "To-morrow morning, in the presence of the whole school, I shall administer the severest flogging that has ever been administered at Rookwood! Now go!"

Mornington gritted his teeth.
"I will not be flogged! I—"

"Go!" thundered the Head.
And Mornington went.

And Mornington went.

The next morning, after prayers, all Rook-wood was assembled to witness the punishment

of the culprit.

Grim faces looked at Mornington as he entered the Hall, with Bulkeley's hand on his

shoulder.

The thrashing that Mornington received was, without doubt, the severest the Head had ever dealt out to a junior at Rookwood. When at length he was set down he staggered from Big Hall without a word.

The Rookwood fellows crowded out.
They looked grimly at Mornington, who was
gasping on the settee in the passage and
groaning with pain. He gave them a fierce

"This isn't the end! I'll have him sacked!
I'll have him turned out of Rookwood!
There'll be a new Head here soon!" hissed Mornington.

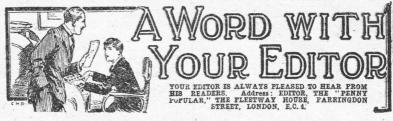
"Silly ass!" said Jimmy Silver

And the juniors, grinning at Mornington's wild threat, passed on.

But they were destined to be reminded of that threat.

THE END

(Next week's grand long story of Jimmy Silver & Co. is entitled: "RULED BY A TYRANT!" by Owen Conquest. Avoid disappointment by ordering your copy EARLY.)
THE PENNY POPULAR.—No. 71.



## NEXT WEEK'S STORIES.

## Our Grand New Cinema Serial, "THE MYSTERY MAKERS!"

By Nat Fairbanks,
is creating quite a stir, and I think my
chums will agree, after reading the first two
instalments, that the story promises to
develop into an exceptionally interesting and
exciting one. Nat Fairbanks assures me that

exciting one. Nat Fairbanks assures me that he has something quite out of the ordinary in the way of "copy" concealed up his sleeve, and I am now anxiously awaiting the delivery of another batch of it.

The two complete school stories, which are on our programme for next week, deal, of course, with the adventures of Harry Wharton & Co at Greyfriars, and of Jimmy Silver & Co. at Rookwood. Both are exceptionally good stories, and the Rookwood story, especially, which is entitled:

## "RULED BY A TYRANT!" By Owen Conquest,

chronicles one of the most amazing episodes in the history of the old school. You will all enjoy next Friday's "Penny Popular."

#### A HAPPY-GO-LUCKY-VILLAGE.

A HAPPY-GO-LUCKY-VILLAGE.

Some friends of mine who are putting in some enjoyable weeks in Italy seem to find matters rather easy-going. In their remote quarter of the boot-heeled kingdom, life does not hurry. When you want to go ten miles by train, you find there are several changes. "We were turned out at a junction where the station house looked like a hut, and told to hurry for the second train. We found this train at last. It was standing in the long grass—just a toy-sort of train, but it was in no hurry at all, and did not move for half an hour." There was a visit to a certain post office at mid-day. Everybody was fast asleep. Someone woke up, and for half an hour." There was a visit to acertain post office at mid-day. Everybody was fast asleep. Someone woke up, and told the callers to come back later, when the staff would be awake, and able to transact business.

But the best touch of all had to do with But the best touch of all had to do with the house-bell. A new bell was required. Three engineers came and spent a day over the work. They threaded some wire from the gate, through the shrubs, to an oleander bush, on which a humble little sheep-bell was hung. You tug at the wire. It often breaks, and has to be tied up. Occasionally the bell gives the faintest tinkle, but the best plan is to keep your eye on the oleander. When the oleander wags, you know there is a visitor.

It is all a pleasant, take-things-quietly sort of existence. No need to worry. If life gets irritating, just take a nap!

## CARDEW.

"A Faithful Reader" writes from Sunderland: "Just a few lines to let you know that I like the stories very much, but please let us hear more about Cardew." "I have made a note of the suggestion. Cardew is immensely popular, even if he does not hit it off with the Australian supporter to whom I have referred. When there is real merit, you can put up with affectations.

## BASEBALL

R. T. Ellis, of the Waterloo Hotel, Alexandra Road, Newport, Mon., is much interested in baseball. There are many teams in South Wales. Newport, Cardiff, Ebbw Vale, and Swansea are keen on the game. Did the sport originate in this country? Well, the general impression is that the States originated baseball as it is now, though, to be sure, in the back ages, before the time of the Mayflower, there was a game of the sort in this country. An American baseball team came over to London in September, 1889, and played an exhibition match at Kennington Oval, but though therewas a lot of interest shown, it did not look then as if the fine game would get a firm hold this side as it has done.

#### EXCELLENT!

"Gert," writing from Pretoria, says a lot of cheery things about the yarns, but the writer takes grave exception to Fingo. Fingo was the Kaffir boy who figured in one of the tales not long since. My correspondent points out that she has never heard of a decent native. A Kaffir her family trusted because he had saved her brother's life took French leave when he chose, stole all he could lay his hands on, got drunk, and ended up by attacking the family with a knife. "He got away, thanks to my brother, who still had the idea that he was indebted to the savage. . . In future when reading about Fingo, I shall imagine I am out in England, where I've never seen a savage. Now, I want to ask you where Trimble is? We have hardly heard of him lately. All the new boys seem to be fading away. We don't want them to figure in every story, but, still, they might be mentioned occasionally. It is very difficult to get back numbers here. Who is Doris Levison? I am out of many details to which you refer in Chat. I was a reader of the good old 'Penny Popular' before the war.

"Out here in Pretoria there are many admirers of the Companion Papers, but there are few who ever write to give you "Gert," writing from Pretoria, says

admirers of the Companion Papers, but ther admirers of the Companion Papers, but there are few who ever write to give you their opinions of the stories. The distance is apt to dishearten them a bit. Then most of them think you can only read British English, not African slang English. If, however, you were to receive the verdicts of everyone here, I am sure you would be of the opinion that you have a loyal band of followers of the Companion Papers out here in South Africa."

I am extremely obliged to this corre-

I am extremely obliged to this correspondent. Doubtless, ere this, she has had a chance to see some of the stories in which Ernest Levison's sister figures. Many of herpoints are real winners. The letter deals with facts, and would carry weight anywhere. I was proud to get it.

## SO MUCH FOR BUCKINGHAM.

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A staunch reader tells me that I often refer to various counties in Chat, while there is never any mention of leafy Bucks. So here goes! All the same, I think there is a mistake here, but no matter, as the man said, when he picked up a five-pound note in the street. To my mind, Buckinghamshire is a most interesting county. Burnham, where my correspondent lives, is a regular football village. The scenery all round is hard to beat. The walks about the Cliveden district are wonderful. They are that! Then, again, Bucks is one of those counties which are unspoiled by big towns. Buckingham, up in the north, used to be the county town. Aylesbury has the honour now. Buckingham is cheery enough, not much more than a village. At the station all the notices used to be put up in French as well as English, because the French Royal Family used to live at Stowe House, the old seat of the Dukes of Buckingham. This title is now extinct Aylesbury is a town which should be visited. The old George Inn has a minstrel's gallery, and pictures of the period when this country was fighting Napoleon. Not far away is Hartwell House, where another exiled French King lived for years. But Bucks need not rely merely on picturesque memories. It is a beautiful county all the way from Slough or Denham—the latter the daintiest, village anywhere—

county all the way from Slough or Denham-the latter the daintiest, village anywhere— in the south, right away into the Verney region.

I can congratulate my chum on his interesting reminder. I remember, during a stroll round Burnham, coming upon a smart little picture house right away from the houses. The owner told me he was doing excellent business. I wonder if he is still there! there!

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