

AN AMUSING STORY OF THE RIVALRY BETWEEN ROOKWOOD AND BAGSHOT SCHOOLS!

PANKLEY'S LATEST!

A Grand Long Complete Story, telling how Pons, the Boy from Canada, came to Rookwood.

By OWEN CONQUEST.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

In the Hands of the Philistines!

JIMMY SILVER, by gum!" Three cheery-looking youths, lounging by the stile in Coombe Lane, uttered that ejaculation together.

From the direction of Rookwood School a cyclist was pedalling up the lane towards the village at a leisurely pace.

It was Jimmy Silver, the captain of the Fourth Form at Rookwood.

And Pankley, Putter, and Poole, of the Fourth Form at Bagshot School, grinned as they recognised him.

"This is where we come in!" remarked Pankley.

"We do—we does!" assented Poole.

"How kind of Jimmy to come and provide us with a little entertainment on a half-holiday!" chuckled Putter. "How kind of him to come alone! He's generally got Lovell and Raby and Newcome with him. Of course we can lick the four of them—"

"Of course!"

"Still, it's very kind of him to come along alone. We ought to show him how we appreciate his kindness."

"And we're going to!" chortled Cecil Pankley. "Come on!"

Jimmy Silver of Rookwood was pedalling along cheerfully, unconscious of danger. He did not see the three heroes of Bagshot until they came out from under the trees by the stile. And then it was too late.

"Halt!" sang out Pankley.

"Bagshot bounders!" ejaculated Jimmy.

"Stand and deliver!"

"Rats!"

Jimmy Silver drove hard at his pedals, and rushed on. Rookwood fellows never met their old rivals of Bagshot without a raging, and, though Pankley & Co. did not admit it, the advantage generally lay with the Fistical Four, of whom Jimmy Silver was leader.

But this time Jimmy had landed himself fairly in the hands of the Philistines. Not that he had any hard usage to expect, for the "Bagshot Bounders" were fair foes, and quite good-tempered. But certainly there was a raging in store for him unless he could get clear.

The bike gathered speed, but it was too late. Jimmy intended to charge the enemy, and trust to luck; but before he could get fairly going, Pankley & Co. closed on him.

Poole seized the handle-bars, and Pankley and Putter seized Jimmy.

Jimmy Silver let go the handles to hit out, and the bike curled up, and four fellows went sprawling to the ground with it.

There was a wild howl from Poole. A flying pedal had caught him on the shin, and he jumped up on one leg, hopping in anguish. Jimmy Silver struggled on the earth with the other two.

Jimmy was a mighty man with his hands, but he was not quite equal to the odds. In a few minutes he was safe on his back, with Cecil Pankley sitting on his chest, and Putter standing on his legs. Then Jimmy gave it up.

"Looks like a win for us—what!" grinned Pankley.

"Yow! Don't squash me, you ass!" gasped Jimmy.

"Yow-ow-ow!" came from Poole.

"What are you making that thumping row for, Poole?"

"Yow-ow! My shin!"

"Oh, never mind your shin!"

"Yow! I'm hurt!"

"Never mind!"

"But I do mind!" yelled Poole. "I've got a bruise as big as an egg! Yow-ow-ow!"

"All in the day's work," said Pankley cheerfully. Pankley seemed able to bear Poole's injury with great fortitude—much more than Poole showed. "Now, we've got this Rook-

wood rotter, and we're going to make an example of him. There's a law been passed at Bagshot, Jimmy Silver, that Rookwood rotters are not allowed in the village on half-holidays."

"You cheeky ass!" gasped Jimmy.

"Shush!" said Pankley chidingly. "When a chap calls me a cheeky ass, I always pull his nose—like that—"

"Gugggggg!"

"Or like that—"

"Mummmmmmm!"

"Queer language they talk at Rookwood," said Pankley. "What may that happen to mean, Jimmy Silver?"

"Ow!" gasped Jimmy. "Lemme get up, and I'll wallop the lot of you!"

"Not good enough," said Pankley, with a shake of the head. "We came out to wallop, not to be walloped."

"Look here, you ass— Groogh! Leab by dose alone! Wow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look here," gasped Jimmy, "I'm willing to make it pax!"

"I dare say you are!" grinned Pankley. "The under dog generally is. Pax is off, my son."

"I've got to get to Coombe by three—"

"I'm sorry to say that your arrangements will be upset a little. I've an idea that you won't get to Coombe at all."

"Look here," said Jimmy. "Bootles has sent me to meet a new kid at the station. I've had to leave the footer to do it. So chuck this rot, and let me get on."

"So that's why the merry Co. are not with you!" grinned Pankley. "Lucky for them! We should have made an example of the lot."

"You silly ass! I wish they were here! We'd mop you up baldheaded! Yow-ow! Leggo by dose!" spluttered the captain of the Rookwood Fourth.

"So you're going to meet a new kid?" said Pankley thoughtfully.

Jimmy gasped for breath, and glared up at the Bagshot junior.

"Yes. Let me go!"

"What sort of a new kid?" asked Pankley, appearing to be thinking the matter over.

"A chap from Canada."

"Oh! A merry Colonial?" asked Pankley, with interest.

"Yes. Gerroff!"

"What's his name?"

"Pons—Charles Pons."

"Pong!" ejaculated Pankley. "Is that a name?"

"Not Pong, fathead—Pons! Yow-ow-ow!"

"Mustn't call me names, dear boy! I feel bound to pull your dear little nose every time—"

"Oh, you rotter! Yow-ow!"

"A French kid—what?" asked Pankley, grinning down at the infuriated Rookwood junior.

"No, ass! Yow-ow! A Canadian—a French-Canadian, I suppose, from his name. Look here," said Jimmy, "the kid expects to be met. He's a stranger in the place—only lately come over from Canada—and he was put in the train in London by somebody, and was to be met here. Make it pax, and let me get on."

Pankley shook his head.

"Couldn't think of it," he replied. "But the dear kid shan't fail to be met. You know what nice chaps we are—always doing kind deeds. We'll go and meet the new kid for you."

"Oh, you rotter! Yooocoop!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I call that ungrateful," said Pankley. "Here we're willing to spend" a half-holiday looking after a new kid for Rookwood, and you only call us names. You can't be surprised if I pull your nose!"

"Groogh!"

"I say, we're not going to waste time meet-

ing a fatheaded Rookwood kid at the station, Pankley," objected Putter.

"Yes, we are," said Pankley. "I dare say we can get enough fun out of a new moon-faced Rookwood kid to pay us for our trouble."

"Oh, I see! We're going to jape him?"

"Has that just dawned on your mighty brain, old scout?" asked Pankley pleasantly.

"Oh, rats!"

"I'm sorry to say we can't take you along, Jimmy Silver. Nice boys like us can't be seen with a dusty fellow like you. You're awfully untidy. You must go back to Rookwood like a good boy."

"I jolly well won't!" roared Jimmy Silver.

"I think you will, dear boy. Pick up that bike, Poole."

"Yow-ow!"

"Look here, Poole, you've done enough rowing over your blessed shin. Get a move on, and pick up that bike!"

Poole snorted, and obeyed. The bike was set up. Then Jimmy Silver was jerked to his feet, Pankley and Putter keeping tight hold of his arms.

"You've got a whipcord, Poole?"

"Yes, I grunted Poole.

"Well, leave off rubbing your silly shin, and tie Jimmy Silver's wrists to the handles while we hold him."

"Look here—" yelled Jimmy.

"Shush!"

The Rookwood junior began to resist violently. But the odds were too great. His hands were dragged to the centre of the handlebars, and the grinning Poole tied them there with the whipcord.

Jimmy looked at the Bagshot fellows with a look that a Hun might have envied.

"Now go home!" said Pankley. "Good-bye, Bluebell!"

"I can't go home like this!" yelled Jimmy, in dismay.

"I think you can, if you try. For instance, I'm going to do goal-kicks till you start—like that!"

"Yaroooh!"

"There! I said you could do it," remarked Pankley.

It was awkward enough for Jimmy to wheel his bike along with his hands tied on the handlebars. But with Pankley's boot to help him from behind, he found that he could do it.

Jimmy Silver, with feelings too deep for mere words, started for Rookwood, the Bagshot fellows standing in the lane and roaring with laughter as he went.

"I fancy there'll be a smile at Rookwood when Jimmy Silver gets in," remarked Pankley. "I rather think the great Jimmy will be down off his perch for a bit. Now come along, and let us meet the dear, new boy—it's close on three!"

And the Bagshot fellows, in great spirits, sauntered away to the village, to meet Charles Pons from Canada. And Jimmy Silver wobbled away down the lane with his bike, with unhappy anticipations of the merriment that would greet him when he arrived at Rookwood.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Pankley's Latest!

THAT'S the merry youth!"

Pankley & Co. were on the platform in the little country station of Coombe, when the train came in from Latchan.

Cecil Pankley, of Bagshot, prided himself upon being a humorist. The Rookwood fellows had had many samples of his humour—which they had appreciated more or less.

But "Pankley's latest" was what the great Pankley regarded as a "corker." The unsuspecting new boy arriving for Rookwood was to be the unsuspecting victim, and Pankley

had elaborated a really great scheme for his benefit.

The train stopped, and among the passengers who alighted was a slim, dark-haired, dark-eyed lad, whom the Bagshot fellows had no difficulty in guessing was the new boy for Rookwood.

The newcomer alighted from the train with a bag in his hand and a rug over his arm, and stood looking up and down the platform, evidently in the expectation of being met there.

Pankley made a sign to his comrades, and they approached, raising their caps with great politeness as they did so. Pankley & Co. could be very polite when they liked.

The new boy looked at them, and raised his hat in acknowledgment of their salute, and gave them a bow. The graceful and polite bow greatly tickled Pankley's fancy. It was evident that the new junior had French blood in his veins.

"Master Pong, I believe?" asked Pankley courteously.

"My name is Pons," said the new junior, with a slight trace of French accent.

"New chap for Rookwood School?"

"Yes."

"I thought so. We've come to meet you," said Pankley gracefully.

"Mr. Bootles wished you to be met here and taken to Rookwood."

"Yes, I understand so," said Pons. "Thank you very much for coming."

"Not at all. If there's one thing we delight in, it's being nice and kind to new boys. That's our special line."

"Our special line," said Poole solemnly.

"You are very kind," said Pons, looking a little puzzled.

"Not a bit of it. We're going to take you to the school," said Pankley. "First, we'll give directions about your box. I suppose you brought a box from Canada?"

"I have a box, certainly," said Pons.

"We'll let the station people take it to Rookwood. Here, porter! Leave it to me, young'un. I'm an old hand, you know."

Pons was quite willing to leave it to the kind youth who was taking so much trouble for him.

"Better give him your bag and rug as well," said Pankley. "You won't want those till you get to Rookwood."

"Very well."

Bag and rug were handed to the porter, to be sent on to Rookwood along with the box. Then the three juniors led the unsuspecting newcomer from the station.

Pons' handsome, dark face was very cheery. It was plain that he appreciated the kind attentions that were paid him. Naturally, it did not occur to his mind for one moment that the three juniors did not belong to Rookwood at all. Pankley had not said that they did. But from his remarks Pons naturally inferred that they did.

"You don't mind walking?" asked Pankley, as they came out of the station.

"No; I am a good walker."

"Good! This way, then."

"What a pretty old village!" remarked Pons, as he walked down the quaint, ancient High Street of Coombe with the Bagshot juniors.

"Yes, it's pretty old," said Poole.

Pons smiled.

"There are some sights to be seen here," remarked Pankley. "The railway-station, for instance. That dates from the reign of King John."

"Does it?" ejaculated Pons, in astonishment.

"Quite so."

"But—but there weren't any railways in the time of King John."

"Not in Canada," said Pankley. "Here it is quite different. Here's the Red Cow. It's a pub now, but it was once a monastic establishment, dissolved by Henry the Eighth. You've heard of Henry the Eighth—the old scout who had six wives, and never smiled again?"

"Ye-e-es," said Pons dubiously.

"This is the bridge—built in the reign of King Cole. You've heard of Old King Cole? He was famous for being a merry old soul."

"I—I didn't know he was a real king."

"This old fountain marks the spot where Oliver Cromwell died when a boy—"

"But—but Oliver Cromwell lived to be a man, didn't he?" asked the astonished Pons.

"I thought he died in London, middle-aged."

"Possibly," assented Pankley. "But he was a queer old codger. This is where he died when a boy."

never heard of Bagshot or the Bagshot Bounders.

"Here we are!" said Pankley at last.

They had arrived at the gates of Bagshot School.

Pons glanced up at the building as they entered the gateway, and there was a shade of disappointment in his face.

"That Rookwood?" he asked.

"Don't you like the place?"

"I understood it was a very old place," said Pons. "My uncle was a Rookwood chap, and he told me about it. I—I thought it was a very ancient building, with grey walls, and—and ivy, and all that. Not a new brick horror like that."

Pankley & Co. looked at the Canadian as if they would eat him. They were very proud of Bagshot, which was new—comparatively speaking—from end to end, with the very latest improvements in the way of architecture.

It contrasted very favourably, in their opinion, with a mouldy old place like Rookwood, which had been standing for centuries



Jimmy Silver came panting up to the gates, his hands tied to the handlebars of his bike and perspiration streaming down his face. "Oh, crumbs, it's Jimmy!" gasped Lovell. "Ha, ha, ha!" roared the juniors. (See page 14.)

"Oh!"

Pankley imparted a considerable amount of historical information to Pons as they walked down the High Street to the lane. The Canadian junior regarded him very curiously. He was very quiet in his manner, but he was not exactly the "moony-faced" new kid the Bagshot Bounders had expected.

The juniors arrived at the cross-roads, and took the turning to Bagshot.

Pons paused, and made a gesture towards the signpost, which indicated the way to Rookwood.

"Isn't that the way?" he asked.

"Short cut," said Pankley urbanely.

"Oh, I see!"

Pons walked on cheerily with Pankley & Co. He could not help suspecting that the humorous Pankley was "pulling his leg" with regard to his historical information about the village of Coombe. But he had no suspicion that he was heading for Bagshot School, and not Rookwood at all. He had

—parts of it for twelve or thirteen centuries. Pons' candid opinion—which would have been endorsed by any Rookwood fellow—was not flattering to Pankley & Co.

"You young ass!" growled Poole.

"You fathead!" said Putter.

Pons coloured.

"I—I am sorry," he faltered. "I—I did not mean— Please, excuse me. I—I suppose you like the place."

"There isn't another place like it in England, or in Scotland, or Wales, or Ireland, either!" exclaimed Pankley warmly.

"Why, look at it!" exclaimed Putter indignantly. "Compare it with a mouldy, worm-eaten, dingy old den like— Ahem—hum—ah!" Putter checked himself just in time.

"I—I mean— Let's get on and don't talk rot!"

And Charles Pons, of Canada, considerably abashed, followed the Bagshot fellows into the quadrangle of Bagshot.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Taking the Stranger In!

"HALLO, Panky!"
 "What's that?"
 "New kid!"
 A number of juniors gathered round Pankley & Co. as the cheery trio arrived at the big, red-brick building with their companion. Pons was not looking so cheery now, though he tried to.

His uncle in Canada had told him a great deal about Rookwood School—its ancient walls, its tottering old clock-tower, its beeches that had defied the storms of ages, its stained-glass windows that were almost unique, its dusky old panelled library, where ancient Latin records of the place were to be found; its abbey ruins, shattered by the cannon of Cromwell's troops when the place was held for King Charles; its Royal Room, where Richard Cœur de Lion had once slept, with the very same bed still preserved.

Pons had thought a great deal about it all. And he found this brand-new place in its stead—evidently the old school had been rebuilt, and its present occupants were satisfied with the change. Pons couldn't feel satisfied.

The best news Pons could have received at that moment would have been that he wasn't at Rookwood at all. But he did not suspect that yet.

He was regarded curiously by the juniors who gathered round.

"Yes, a new kid," said Pankley airily. "His name is Pong—"

"Ye gods! What a name!"
 "It is not exactly Pong," said the Canadian, with a smile. "Pons."

"Yes, Pong," assented Pankley. "He has come all the way from Brazil—"

"Canada," said Pons.

"Isn't Canada in Brazil?" asked Pankley innocently.

Pons stared.
 "Of course not! Why—"

"Make a note of that, you fellows," said Pankley, with owl-like solemnity. "Canada is not in Brazil. That's worth knowing. It may come in useful in an exam. That's the advantage of meeting a chap who comes from the place. He can tell you just where it is, and where it isn't!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"
 "There's nothing to cackle at, you asses! It's very kind of the new chap to tell us. Of course, if we'd thought a minute we should have known that Canada was in Honduras."

"But it isn't!" exclaimed Pons. "Canada's a hundred times bigger than Honduras."

"You're pulling our leg," said Pankley, with a shake of the head.

"No, really!" said the perplexed Pons. "Honduras is in Central America, and Canada is in North America."

"Not really?"

"Yes, indeed!"

"Make a note of that," said Pankley to the grinning juniors. "That may come in useful in an exam, too. And what is North America in, Pong?"

"Eh?"

"Is it in New York?" asked Pankley.

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the juniors.

"Oh, if you're making fun of me—" said Pons.

"My dear chap, we wouldn't think of it—on your first day at Rookwood, too," said Pankley.

"Rookwood!" shrieked a dozen voices.

"I don't see anything to yell at. We went to the station specially to meet this new chap and bring him here," said Pankley. "He didn't know the way to Rookwood, so we guided him."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Bagshot fellows fairly yelled. Pons looked round him with a puzzled expression, not understanding the cause of the merriment. The idea of a Rookwood fellow coming to Bagshot without the least idea that he was in the wrong school tickled the juniors' greatly. Certainly, Pankley's "latest" was a little jape quite out of the common.

"Come in," said Pankley. "We're going to show you over—ahem!—Rookwood."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Pons went in with the cheery Co., leaving a crowd yelling outside.

"I don't quite see what they're laughing about," said Pons.

"Must be some sort of a joke on," said Pankley gravely. "Never mind them. I suppose you'd like a bit of a wash after your journey. Like to go to your room?"

Pons' eyes opened.

"Do I have a room to myself here?" he asked. "My uncle told me that junior boys

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slept in a dormitory and shared a study—two or three to a study."

"Things have changed a bit since your uncle's time. So long as you're at this school you'll have a room to yourself."

"Oh, good!"

"And here it is," said Pankley.

He led Pons down the Sixth Form corridor and opened a door. The room he showed the unsuspecting Canadian into was that of O'Malley of the Sixth Form at Bagshot.

O'Malley was on the football-field at present, as Pankley was well aware. What the senior would think—and do—when he came in to change and found a junior installed in his study was a very interesting and entertaining problem to Pankley & Co.

"This is a ripping room!" said Pons, looking about him. "Do all juniors have rooms like this?"

"Like it?" asked Pankley affably.

"Oh, yes, rather!"

"Well, make yourself at home here," said Pankley. "If you're hungry, you'll find grub in the cupboard here—everything ready for tea."

"I say, that's topping!"

"Yes; we look after new kids here at—at Rookwood, I can tell you. Don't spare the grub—you're to eat all you can. We'll leave you to it for a bit. By the way, if a big fellow comes in here and starts any nonsense, don't put up with it. A rather big chap with an Irish accent. He's not a bad sort, but he's liable to come down heavy on new kids—like his cheek, you know, but these seniors will be cheeky. I shouldn't stand it."

"I won't!" said Pons warmly.

The Canadian's eyes flashed at the idea.

"That's right," said Pankley approvingly. "If the bouncer comes shoving in here, give it to him straight. It would be just like him to wedge in here and treat the room as his own!"

"My hat!"

"Biff a cushion at him if he does."

"You bet."

"We'll see you later," said Pankley. "Come down when you've had your tea, and we'll take you round the place."

"Thanks very much!"

"Not at all," said Pankley airily.

Pankley & Co. quitted the study, a most suffocating. Not till they had reached the end of the passage, however, did they give expression to their feelings. Then they yelled.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh crumbs!" gasped Poole. "Oh, dear! Did you ever hear of anything like it?"

"Ha, ha! Hardly ever!"

"And Rookwood chaps think they can keep their end up against us!" sighed Pankley. "Did you ever hear of a Bagshot chap being taken to Rookwood by mistake, an' thinking he was in Bagshot all the time?"

"Ha, ha! Not likely!"

"I—I wonder how he'll get on with O'Malley?" gasped Poole. "He'll be in from footer soon, and when he finds that kid there—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"O'Malley's rather an excitable chap," grinned Pankley. "I think there'll be fireworks. We'd better be ready to rescue the merry Canadian out of his clutches. We don't want him hurt."

"Oh, no! Ha, ha!"

The story of the unsuspecting Rookwood junior making himself at home in the Bagshot Sixth-Former's study made the juniors howl when Pankley told it in the quad. Half the Lower School was looking forward to O'Malley's return to his quarters after football practice.

Pons, never having heard of O'Malley, and not having the faintest idea that he was in the wrong school, was cheerfully making himself at home.

After removing the stains of travel, he sat down to tea feeling hungry after his journey. He found everything he could want in the study cupboard—indeed, as O'Malley was standing tea that day to some friends, the supplies were on a very liberal scale.

Pons rather wished that his new acquaintances had stayed to tea. But he sat down in a very contented mood.

True, the school had disappointed him a little at the first view. But he felt that he could be quite happy there.

Pankley & Co. were jolly fellows, and very obliging; and all the fellows seemed jolly, too. Even now he could hear roars of laughter from the quadrangle.

Upon the whole, the junior from Canada was very well satisfied, and he made a hearty tea in great spirits. And he had just finished, when the study door was thrown open, and a big, red-faced, freckled senior came busting

in, with a coat and muffler thrown on over his football garb.

Pons rose to his feet.

The big senior evidently did not expect to find anybody in the study.

He blinked at Pons.

His gaze travelled over the tea-table—over the used crocks, the fragment of cake, the broken eggshells, the remains of a ham—and then rested upon the new junior again. And the expression upon his face could only be described as terrific.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Rookwood to the Rescue!

"O H, crumbs!"

"Great pip!"

"Jimmy Silver!"

Lovell and Raby and Newcome, of the Classical Fourth, stared at the strange figure that came limping up the road, pushing a bike.

Football practice being over, Lovell & Co. had strolled down to the gates of Rookwood to look for their chum.

Mr. Bootles, the master of the Fourth, had called Jimmy Silver away from the practice to send him down to Coombe to meet the new boy. Jimmy had gone cheerfully enough, on hearing that the expected junior was a new arrival from a distant Colony. He had not returned so cheerfully.

Lovell & Co. could scarcely believe their eyes.

They had expected to see Jimmy wheeling his bike, and the new junior walking by his side. There was no sign of the new junior, however. Jimmy certainly was wheeling his bike, but in a very extraordinary manner.

Jimmy came up to the gates, panting, with a crimson face. It was a cold day, but the perspiration was pouring down Jimmy's brow. Wheeling the bike had been hard work, with his hands tied to the bars. The machine had shown an obstinate disposition to curl up at almost every step, and Jimmy's legs had received a good many clumps from the pedals.

Lovell and Raby and Newcome stared at him. It was clear that their great leader had been in the wars, and his chums ought to have been sympathetic. They were sympathetic, really; but the comical side of the affair seemed to strike them irresistibly, and they roared.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Jimmy glared.

"Ha, ha!" shrieked Lovell. "Oh, Jimmy!"

"Hallo! What's the joke?" asked Oswald of the Fourth, coming down to the gates.

"Why, what—Hallo! Ha, ha, ha!"

"Let me loose, you cackling duffers!"

"How—how on earth did you get like that?"

"Tare an' 'ouns!" yelled Flynn of the Fourth, arriving on the scene. "Phwat's the game intirely, Jimmy darling?"

"It's Jimmy Silver!" yelled Townsend, catching sight of the captain of the Fourth from the quad. "Ha, ha! Look!"

"By gad! What a merry guy!" chuckled Mornington.

"Oh, my hat!" shouted Tommy Dodd, the Modern. "Jimmy—Jimmy! Why do you do these funny things, Jimmy?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Jimmy Silver groaned inwardly. He had had a faint hope of getting loose before his plight became known to all Rookwood. That hope was ill-founded. A crowd was gathering in the old gateway to stare at him and yell.

"Will you let me loose, you chumps!" said Jimmy Silver, in concentrated tones.

"Oh, my hat! W-w-wait a minute till I get my knife open!" gurgled Lovell.

"Buck up, fathead!"

"But phwat did you tie yourself up like that for, Jimmy?" asked Tommy Doyle.

"You silly Modern chump!" roared Jimmy. "Do you think I tied myself up? How could I tie myself up?"

"Then who did?" asked Tommy Cook. The three Tommies of the Modern side seemed to be enjoying the peculiar plight of the Classical leader.

"The Bagshot rotters!" growled Jimmy Silver.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And you let them!" exclaimed Tommy Dodd.

"You fathead, how could I help it when they were three to one?"

"Of course you couldn't help it," grinned Tommy Dodd. "You Classical chaps can't keep your end up against Bagshot. You ought to give them a wide berth, and leave it to the Moderns."

"Hear, hear!" chuckled Cook and Doyle.
 "Buck up with that knife, Lovell, you ass!"
 "I'm bucking up—"
 "Yooop!" yelled Jimmy Silver.
 "Eh! What's the matter?"
 "You're skinning me, you howling ass!"
 "Well, you told me to buck up."
 "You—you—yah! Oh!"
 "Better keep your hands still, and not talk," suggested Lovell calmly.

Jimmy Silver gave his chum an expressive look, and kept his hands still. Lovell saved at the whipcord that fastened them to the handle-bars.

"But where's the new kid?" asked Newcome. "You went to the station to meet a new kid, Jimmy—a Canadian chap or something."

"Lost him?" grinned Tommy Dodd.
 "How could I go, when I was tied up like this and chivvied off?" howled Jimmy Silver.
 "Then you haven't been?" exclaimed Van Ryn.

"Of course I haven't, fathead!"
 "Then there's nobody to meet the new kid. That's rotten!" Van Ryn was rather interested in the new boy, as he was a Colonial himself.

"I couldn't help it, could I, duffer? Besides, there is somebody to meet him. Pankley and Poole and Putter have gone to meet him, and they're going to jape the poor beast!" grunted Jimmy Silver.

"And you've let them!" said Tommy Dodd.
 "Just like you Classical asses!"
 "I'll punch your silly head when I get my hands loose, Tommy Dodd!"

"There you are," said Lovell.
 Jimmy rubbed his chafed wrists. Lovell had given him a scratch or two, in addition to the chafing of the cord.

Jimmy was looking very exasperated. It was bad enough to have been handled so ignominiously by the enemy, without being yelled at by half Rookwood when he got home. He resolved to punch Tommy Dodd's nose as some compensation for his injuries. Dick Van Ryn interposed as he was starting towards the Modern junior.

"Hold on!" said Van Ryn. "If those Bagshot chaps have got hold of the new chap we ought to chip in."

"Sure you're done cackling?" asked Jimmy Silver sarcastically.

"Ha, ha, ha!"
 "They won't hurt him," said Lovell. "But they can't be allowed to jape a Rookwood chap. Let's go to the rescue, Jimmy."

"All right, if you've done gurgling."
 "Good idea!" said Tommy Dodd. "We'll come along and show you Classics how to handle them."

Jimmy Silver snorted, but he did not demur. The three Tommies were great fighting-men, and would be very useful if there was a "scrap" with a crowd of the Bagshot fellows.

Jimmy strode along the way he had come, leaving Tubby Muffin to wheel in his bicycle. His chums followed him, with a crowd of the Fourth, both Classical and Modern. Some of the fellows were interested to learn what had happened to the new junior, and all were ready for a "scrap" with the rival school.

There were a good many chuckles en route. The Rookwooders seemed to find something entertaining in Jimmy Silver's frowning face.

Somewhat to their surprise, nothing was seen of the new junior on the way to the station. They arrived in Coombe. As it was past four o'clock, and the train had come in at three, the new fellow must have arrived an hour ago, and they wondered what had become of him.

"Where the dickens is he?" exclaimed Lovell. "The Bagshot bouncers can't have eaten him, I suppose?"

"They're japing him somewhere," grunted Jimmy Silver. "Pankley had some scheme in his head; I could see that. Let's go to the station. They may have left him there."

But at the station the new junior was not to be found, and there was no sign of the Bagshot trio.

Jimmy Silver questioned the porter. He began to think that perhaps Pons had not come by the appointed train after all.

But he was soon enlightened upon that point.

"Master Pong!" said the old porter. "Yes, sir; he's left his box and bag and rug to be taken up to Rookwood, sir. That's the name."

"Where did he go?"
 "He went away with the three young gents, sir. I heard one of them say they'd take him to the school."

"To—to the school!" ejaculated Jimmy.
 "Yessir."

Jimmy Silver drew a deep breath. He understood now. Pankley & Co. were taking Pons to the school; but certainly they hadn't taken him to Rookwood. Jimmy came out of the station with a worried face.

"Well, where's the merry Canadian?" asked Tommy Dodd.

"He's gone off with Pankley & Co., and, from what I can make out, they've taken him to Bagshot!"

"To—to—to Bagshot!"
 "Yes; it's a jape, of course. That was what Pankley was chortling over."

"But—but what on earth are they going to do with him at Bagshot?" gasped Lovell.

Jimmy Silver snorted.
 "It's a jape, fathead! Goodness knows what they are going to do—make a fool of him somehow, I suppose. The blessed rotters—"

"Well, what are we going to do?" asked Raby.
 "I know what I'm going to do. Bootles sent me to bring the kid in, and I'm going after him."

"To Bagshot!" exclaimed Tommy Dodd.
 "Yes, you Modern ass! If you don't want to come, you can crawl home."

"But—but we can't raid Bagshot for him!" exclaimed Lovell.
 "I'm going there, and you can come if you like!" snorted Jimmy Silver, and he started.

And the Rookwood fellows, who were not liked to let their leader enter the lions' den alone, followed him.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Pons in Hot Water!

CHARLES PONS stared at the big Sixth-Former in the study, and the big Sixth-Former stared at Charles Pons. Pons was quite on his guard.

He guessed that this was the fellow Pankley had alluded to, who was "down" on new boys. As for O'Malley, of the Bagshot Sixth, he couldn't guess who Pons was. He had never seen him before, and supposed that he was a new junior in the school. Finding him making himself at home in his study in that free-and-easy way, took O'Malley's breath away. For a full minute he could only blink at the junior across the table.

He found his voice at last.
 "Howly Moses!" he gasped.

Pons was sure now. This was the Irish accent Pankley had mentioned. Pons was very much on the alert.

"What are ye doing here?" roared O'Malley.
 "I've been having tea," said Pons, surprised by the question.

"Having tay here?"
 "Certainly!"

"Without so much as saying by your lave!" ejaculated O'Malley.

"Why not?"
 "Oh, howly Moses! I suppose it's a new boy ye are?"

"Yes."
 "Then ye've got to learn manners to begin with," said O'Malley. "Faith, I never heard anything like it in all me natural!"

It was not surprising that O'Malley was excited, under the circumstances. The good things he had laid in for a feast among his friends had suffered considerably. Pons had brought a good appetite with him from Canada. But the astounding check of a junior asking himself to tea in a Sixth Form prefect's study was what excited O'Malley more than anything else. A new boy with so astounding a nerve wanted teaching his place immediately and drastically, in the Bagshot senior's opinion.

He started round the table after Pons. The junior dodged round at the same time, keeping the table between him and the enraged Sixth-Former.

"Hands off, you know!" he exclaimed. "I'm not going to stand any bullying!"

"I'll give ye bullying!" roared O'Malley.

"Mind, I shall biff something at you if you don't keep off!" shouted Pons, dodging round again as O'Malley rushed upon him.

The Sixth-Former did not heed. He came on like a bull, only anxious to get his hands upon the junior.

In single combat it was not much use for the slim junior to think of tackling the burly senior. But the Canadian did not mean to take a licking, especially for nothing, as it seemed to him. So far as he could see, there was no excuse whatever for O'Malley's irruption into the study and his violent behaviour.

He seized the butter from the table as he dodged, and hurled it.

There was a squelch as it landed full upon

O'Malley's red and furious face, and the prefect staggered.

"Groooh! Oh! Ah!"
 An egg followed, and it squashed on O'Malley's nose.

"Howly smoke! Groooh! Why, ye limb of Satan! Groooh!"

"Keep off, then!" panted Pons.
 "I'll slaughter ye intoirely!" yelled O'Malley, gouging egg out of his eyes, and butter from his nose. "I'll pulverise ye! Oh crumbs!"

He raced round the table again. Pons dodged towards the door, but O'Malley cut him off. The study window was open, and the junior made a dash for it, and leaped through, lowering his head to escape the sash.

O'Malley's hands swept through the air an inch behind him as he leaped.

Crash!
 "Yow-ow-ow!"

"Yah!"
 "Oh! Yah!"

It is an old saying that one should look before one leaps. But Pons had had no time to look. He had leaped without looking. And Pankley, Putter, and Poole, who were gathered under the study window to enjoy the scene, had the benefit of it.

The flying junior landed fairly upon them.

Pankley went spinning as Pons' knee caught him fairly on the nose. Peele reeled back from a boot that landed under his chin, and Putter sprawled on the ground, with Pons sprawling over him. Falling on Putter had broken Pons' fall, and from the sounds that proceeded from Putter it might have been supposed that he was broken, too.

Pons rolled dazedly off the junior. At the study window O'Malley was almost raving.

Pons staggered up. Putter remained on his back, gasping, with all the wind driven out of him. Pankley and Poole yelled with anguish.

"Oh!" gasped Pons.
 "Come back!" roared O'Malley. "I'll make shavings of ye! I'll pulverise ye to powder, bedad! I'll—I'll—I'll—"

Words failed the eggy, buttery, and indignant prefect. He put his hands on the sill and vaulted out, quite forgetful of his dignity as a prefect of the Sixth.

"Cut off, Pong!" gasped Pankley.

Pankley was rather dismayed. He had "planted" Pons in O'Malley's study as a joke, but the prefect's look showed that it would be no joke if he reached the new junior—not for Pons, at all events.

But Pons did not need bidding.

He flew.
 But O'Malley was thirsting for vengeance, and he bore down fast on the fleeing junior. There were yells of encouragement from the juniors in the quadrangle as they watched the race, roaring with laughter.

"Go it, O'Malley!"
 "Put it on, Pong!"
 "Ha, ha, ha!"

Pons was heading for the football ground, where there was room to dodge. He looked back over his shoulder. O'Malley was almost within reach, his hand outstretched, and his look Hunnish.

The junior ran on, and suddenly halted, and threw himself on the ground.

The big senior came pounding on, and before he knew that Pons had stopped, he had stumbled over him.

His knees caught Pons, and he fairly flew over him, landing upon his hands on the other side of the junior.

"Yoooop!"
 "Ha, ha, ha!" came from the quad. "Well done, Pong!"

Pons leaped up again like a flash, and fled. O'Malley slowly sat up, breathless and dazed. After that sudden concussion with the earth he was not feeling fit to continue the chase. Pons vanished round the gym.

"Howly smoke!" gasped O'Malley. "When I get hold of that young scaramoosh, sure I'll pull him to pieces! Ow, ow, ow, ow!"

And the prefect limped away towards the house. Pons, peering round a corner of the gym, was very glad to see him go.

"My hat!" murmured Pons. "This is a jolly queer school, where they treat a new kid like that! Bless if I thought Rookwood was anything like this! Hallo! Leggo!"

A hand had dropped on Pons' shoulder, and he spun round. It was Raleigh of the Sixth, the captain of Bagshot, who had collared him. Pons clenched his fists—a proceeding that made Raleigh stare.

"Who the dickens are you?" asked Raleigh.
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"I'm a new boy."

"I suppose so, as I've never seen you before. I didn't know there was a new kid coming to-day."

"Well, I've come," said Pons independently. "Leggo my collar!"

"I've just seen your little game. I don't know where you've come from—"

"Canada," said Pons cheerfully.

"Oh, Canada! Well, perhaps they forgot to tell you before you left Canada that you mustn't trip up prefects at Bagshot," grinned Raleigh.

"As they forgot, I'm going to impress it on your mind—see?"

"Bagshot!" repeated Pons blankly.

"Yes. Come with me."

"What for?"

"I'm going to lick you, of course!"

"You're jolly well not!" said Pons hotly.

"I didn't come to Rookwood to be licked by every silly ass I came across!"

"Rookwood!" repeated Raleigh.

"Yes, fathead!"

"I suppose you're a funny merchant?" said Raleigh.

"I think it's about time you had some of the fun taken out of you. I think perhaps a licking will help. Come along to my study!"

Pons had no intention of going to the captain of Bagshot's study. Why he should be picked on in this way was a mystery to him, but he did not mean to take it lying down. As Raleigh marched him off towards the house by the collar, Pons suddenly hooked his leg in Raleigh's, and with a sudden jerk—totally unexpected on the senior's part—brought him to the ground with a bump.

"My hat!" ejaculated Raleigh.

He sat up blankly.

Pons had vanished round the gym.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER. A Startling Discovery!

LOOK here, Pankley—if that's your name—what the dickens does it mean?"

Raleigh, after looking for the elusive new boy for about ten minutes unsuccessfully, had gone in. Then Pons joined the crowd of juniors in the quadrangle in a worried and excited frame of mind.

"What does it mean?" he repeated.

"What's the game? Is everybody off his dot at Rookwood?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Yes, I believe so," grinned Pankley. "In fact, Rookwood's famous for it."

Pons stared at him, unable to guess why Pankley's reply was followed by a howl of laughter.

"Blest if I catch on to it!" he said. "First, a bullying bounder comes and chases me out of my room—"

"Your room! Ha, ha, ha!"

Then another silly ass collared me, and is going to lick me! What does it mean? I suppose this isn't the way new boys are always treated here, is it?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Bagshot juniors yelled. Only Pankley and Co. were not so hilarious as before. They had suffered severe damages when Pons landed on them from O'Malley's study window, and they had not quite recovered. Pankley's nose, especially, looked like an over-ripe strawberry.

"As for that big chap who collared me," continued Pons, "he seems fairly potty. He looked astonished when I mentioned the name of the school—as if he doesn't know the name of his own school—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And he was speaking about Bagshot. What's Bagshot? Is it a school?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Pons stared round at the yelling juniors. A suspicion was beginning to work in his mind at last.

"I—I say," he stammered, "this—this—is this Rookwood, isn't it?"

The juniors shrieked.

"You brought me here, you grinning ass!" shouted Pons, beginning to understand at last. "Isn't this Rookwood?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, my aunt!" gasped Pankley. "No, you Rookwood fathead, it isn't Rookwood! It's Bagshot! Nobody here would be found dead in Rookwood if he could help it. We've been japing you, you silly ass!"

"Oh!"

"And now we're going to send you home where you belong, with a face painted like

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a Red Indian, and a fool's cap on your head," said Pankley.

Pons swerved back.

"Hands off!"

"Collar him!"

The Bagshot juniors closed round Pons. Pankley's latest was to wind up with a striking climax, in which the Rookwood new boy was to play the leading part—at least, that was Pankley's idea. It was not Pons' idea, however. The prospect of arriving at his new school painted like a Red Indian, and with a fool's cap on his head, and a crowd of yelling Bagshot fellows at his heels, was not exactly attractive. The Canadian junior was quick to act.

He dodged the closing crowd, and made a rush for the gates.

"Stop him!"

"Collar him!"

The Bagshot juniors fairly swarmed after Pons. Fellows in the quadrangle headed him off from the gates, and Pons swerved and dashed along the inner side of the wall. He seemed as fleet as a deer.

"He can't get out, and he's not going out till he's decorated!" chortled Pankley. "Run him down, my infants!"

On all sides the fellows were closing in on Pons, and there seemed no way of escape. The school wall bordering the road was high, and he had no time to climb it, if it could have been climbed.

But Pons was not at the end of his resources.

He dashed straight at the wall, as if he were going to run into it, with the Bagshot fellows close behind.

As he came close to the wall, he made a tremendous jump and caught the top with his hands.

"Great Scott!" gasped Pankley.

It was a jump such as few of the juniors there could have made. Pankley rushed forward to catch at Pons' legs. A boot caught him on the nose, and he gave a muffled roar.

The next moment Pons had whirled himself to the top of the wall, and had one leg over it.

He grinned down at the Bagshot crowd breathlessly.

"Good-bye!" he gasped.

And he swung himself over the wall to the road, and dropped. There was a terrific yell as he did so. He had dropped on somebody!

"Come on!" roared Pankley. "He mustn't get away!"

Pankley led a rush to the gates, and the Bagshot fellows swarmed out into the road.

As the Rookwood party came up the road they heard the loud shouting from the other side of the school wall. They did not need telling that something unusual was proceeding in the Bagshot quad.

"I suppose they've got that ass there!" growled Jimmy Silver. "Come on; he's a Rookwood chap anyway, and we're going to—"

"Yoooop!"

Jimmy Silver did not mean to wind up with that remark, but he did, as a flying figure came over the school wall, and dropped fairly on him.

Jimmy went on his back in the road, and Pons, in a state of great astonishment, sat on him and gasped for breath.

"Mon Dieu!" stammered Pons.

"Owl! Yow!"

"What—who?"

"Draginoff!" shrieked Jimmy.

Lovell & Co., yelling with laughter, seized Pons and dragged him off the captain of the Fourth.

Jimmy Silver sat up dazedly.

"Oh crumbs! Where did the silly idiot come from? Who is it?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Shut up cackling, you dummies! I'm nearly squashed!" shrieked Jimmy Silver.

"Who is that silly idiot?"

"Hallo, here come the Bagshot bounders!" shouted Oswald, as Pankley & Co. came streaming out of the gates.

"Let me go!" gasped Pons, struggling in the grasp of Lovell and Raby and Newcome.

"They are after me!"

"Eh? Who are you?"

"I belong to Rookwood School, but those fellows—"

"My hat! This is the merchant we're looking for!" exclaimed Lovell. "Are you Pong?"

"I am Pons—"

"Here they come!" shouted Rawson. "Line up!"

"Here he is!" shouted Pankley. "Rookwood rotters, by Jove! Mop 'em up!"

Jimmy Silver leaped to his feet.

"Give 'em socks!" he shouted.

A dozen Bagshot fellows had streamed out into the road, expecting to find Pons there,

and not in the least expecting to find fifteen or sixteen Rookwood fellows. But they found them!

Rookwood made a rush, not at all sorry to get to close quarters with their old rivals.

"Go for 'em!" roared Lovell.

"Down with Bagshot!"

"Hurrah!"

There was a terrific tussle in the road. But the Rookwood fellows had the odds on their side, and Bagshot were driven back.

Pons stood staring breathlessly at the exciting scene for a moment or two. Then he realised that it was his own future school-fellows who were engaged with the enemy, and he rushed in to help.

He chose Pankley for his special victim, and he closed with the Bagshot leader; and they rolled on the ground together.

"Give 'em socks!" howled Tommy Dodd "Hurrah for us!"

Back went Bagshot with a rush to the school gates, leaving Pankley in the hands of the enemy.

"Now we'd better clear before the whole tribe comes out!" grinned Lovell. "Hallo! Pong's got a prisoner!"

"Wow-wow!" came from the prisoner.

"Gerroff my neck, blow you!"

"My hat! It's Pankley!"

"Bring him along!" shouted Jimmy Silver. "Prisoner of war!"

Pankley, grasped by a dozen hands, was rushed off down the road by the retreating Rookwooders. And when the Bagshot fellows rallied, with reinforcements, and came out to the rescue, Jimmy Silver & Co. were well on the way to Rookwood. There was instant pursuit, and half-way to the village the Bagshot Bounders came upon their great leader.

Pankley was sitting by the roadside. His hands were tied by the sleeves of his jacket, jerked off for the purpose, his cap was stuffed down his back, and his bootlaces were tied together, securing his feet. His face was a deep black, from a coating of thick mud, and a sheet of notepaper pinned on his waistcoat bore the inscription, in Jimmy Silver's hand:

"ROOKWOOD WINS! RATS!"

"Oh, my hat!" said Poole.

Pankley gave his rescuers a muddy glare.

"Gerrafellow loose!" he mumbled. "Don't stand there cackling! Can't you gerrafellow loose, you cackling dummies?"

And the grinning Bagshot fellows got Pankley loose, after some trouble. Jimmy Silver & Co. had vanished, and there was nothing for them to do but to take Pankley home. The great Pankley was in quite a subdued mood as he went. "Pankley's Latest!" had not worked out such a howling success as Pankley had anticipated.

"So this is Rookwood?" said Pons, as he came in the ancient gateway with the crowd of Rookwood fellows.

"Yes, fathead!" said Jimmy Silver.

"What the merry thunder did you go to Bagshot for?"

Pons explained.

Jimmy Silver & Co. stared at him blankly as he did so.

When he had finished, Jimmy drew a deep breath.

"Well, of all the duffers——" he said.

"I—I couldn't help it!" stammered Pons.

"I—I thought they were Rookwood chaps. They didn't exactly say so, but—but I thought——"

"Rats! You can't think!" snorted Lovell.

"I—I say, you know——" stammered poor Pons.

"Oh, rats!"

"Come along with me!" said Van Ryn, slipping his arm through the new junior's.

"You couldn't help it, old chap. Come on! You're going to share my study, if you like."

And Pons, with a grateful heart, went with the South African junior, leaving the Rookwood fellows grinning and sniffing. It was rather hard on Pons; but Jimmy Silver & Co. did not like the idea of Rookwood being "done" by their old rivals. But in Van Ryn's study Pons found comfort.

THE END.

(There will be another splendid long complete story of Jimmy Silver & Co., entitled: "An Affair of Honour!" Order next week's issue at once.)