

A Splendid, Long, Complete School Story of JIMMY SILVER & CO., the Chums of Rookwood.
By OWEN CONQUEST.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

The Fourth Form Mean Business!

"DEAR me!" said Mr. Bootles. The master of the Fourth Form at Rookwood blinked round the Form-room over his spectacles.

Mr. Bootles was a minute late for his class that morning.

Naturally, he expected to find the Fourth there waiting for him.

But of all the Rookwood Fourth, Classical and Modern, there was only one member in the Form-room, and that was Mark Lattrey, the outcast of the school.

"Bless my soul!" went on Mr. Bootles, in great surprise. "Lattrey, where are your Form-fellows? What—what?"

He blinked inquiringly at Lattrey. "They haven't come in yet, sir," muttered Lattrey.

"Most extraordinary!" ejaculated Mr. Bootles. "Very extraordinary!" Lattrey came forward towards the master.

There was a harassed look on his thin, sharp face.

"If you please, sir—" he began. "Well?"

"I—I think it's got something to do with me, sir."

Mr. Bootles raised his eyebrows. "With you, Lattrey?"

"Yes, sir."

"I really do not understand you," said Mr. Bootles testily. "Do you mean to say that the whole Form are staying away on your account? Don't talk nonsense, Lattrey!"

"There—there's something on, sir," muttered Lattrey. "The—the fellows want me to leave Rookwood!"

"Quite natural, under the circumstances!" snapped Mr. Bootles. "You can hardly expect the boys to feel otherwise, Lattrey, after your ruffianly action which resulted in depriving one of your schoolfellows of his sight."

"Dr. Chisholm allows me to stay," said Lattrey sullenly. "It isn't for the fellows to decide."

"Quite so—quite so. I must see into this matter," said Mr. Bootles hastily. "Do you know where the juniors are at present, Lattrey?"

"I think in the Common-room, sir."

"Very well. You will remain here."

"Yes, sir."

Mr. Bootles whisked out of the Form-room, somewhat excited and angry.

Lattrey sat down in his place, his face dark and clouded.

The black sheep of Rookwood was bent upon "sticking it out" at the school, in spite of the scorn and avoidance of all the other fellows.

He hoped in time to live down what had happened.

That was not likely, however.

Mornington, of the Fourth, was blind, and it was Lattrey who had caused that terrible catastrophe.

It was a thing that the Rookwood fellows were not likely to forget or forgive.

Mr. Bootles whisked away towards the junior Common-room.

All the other Forms were at work, and the master of the Fourth was very irritated by this insubordination on the part of his own Form.

He threw open the door of the Common-room, and found himself in the presence of the Fourth.

The whole Form was there, Classical and Modern.

First lesson was taken with Mr. Bootles by both divisions of the Form.

And in staying "out" this morning it was clear that Classicals and Moderns were in agreement.

It was but seldom that the rivals of Rookwood found themselves in accord.

But in this case the accord was complete, and almost unanimous.

Jimmy Silver, the captain of the Fourth, was addressing the Form from a chair, when the door opened, and Tommy Dodd, the leader of the Modern side, was punctuating his remarks with "Hear, hear!" which was a sufficient proof in itself that the lion and the lamb had made it pax, so to speak.

Jimmy jumped down as the Form-master whisked in.

The buzz of voices died away.

All the fellows realised that the situation was serious.

Tubby Muffin and Leggett backed out of sight behind the window-curtains.

Peele and Gower looked very uneasy, but most of the fellows faced the Form-master calmly.

"Bless my soul!" exclaimed Mr. Bootles. "You—you are here! What!"

"Yes, sir," said Jimmy Silver quietly.

"Why are you not in the Form-room?"

"We are staying out, sir."

"We are—we is!" murmured Arthur Edward Lovell under his breath.

"Bless my soul! Are you out of your senses, Silver?" exclaimed Mr. Bootles. "You have no permission to stay out this morning."

Jimmy Silver pointed to Mornington. The blind junior was there, with Kit Erroll, his chum, by his side.

"You see Mornington, sir," said Jimmy Silver quietly. "You know what's happened to him. Lattrey ought to be sent to prison. At least, he ought to be turned out of Rookwood. We refuse to go in to lessons with Lattrey!"

"You—you refuse?" ejaculated Mr. Bootles, in amazement.

"We're all in this, sir," said Erroll quietly. "The Head knows that Lattrey ought to be expelled. He's chosen to let him stay, but he can't compel us to associate with him."

"Do you venture to dictate to your headmaster?" exclaimed Mr. Bootles.

"In this—yes, sir!" said Jimmy Silver.

"Bless my soul!"

Mr. Bootles was at a loss.

The juniors were looking grim, and it was clear that they did not intend to obey his order to proceed to the Form-room.

Exactly what Mr. Bootles was to do was not clear.

Certainly, he could not take the whole Form by the scruff of the neck and march them in.

"Once more, I order you into the Form-room!" he said at last.

Silence. But the juniors did not stir.

"I must, then, call the Head to deal with you," said Mr. Bootles.

He paused a moment or two, but there was no reply, and no movement. He left the Common-room somewhat agitated.

The Fourth-Formers looked at one another in grim silence.

They awaited the arrival of the Head.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Unconquered!

"NOW for it!" murmured Lovell. A heavy footstep was heard in the corridor.

Jimmy Silver drew a deep breath, and looked towards the door.

Jimmy was the prime mover in the

matter, though the other fellows were backing him up heartily.

Whether the juniors would face the Head, as they had faced the Form-master, remained to be seen.

It was not easy to think of disobeying the orders of the Head in his stately presence.

There was a hush in the Common-room as the stately figure of the Head, with rustling gown, appeared in the open doorway.

Dr. Chisholm's face was hard and set. His reasons for allowing Mark Lattrey to remain in the school were not known to the juniors.

They were not reasons he could have explained, even if he had considered it necessary to make explanations to the Lower School.

But he did not in the least.

The Head was a great disciplinarian, and anything in the nature of questioning his authority was sure to arouse his ire, whatever motives the mutineers might have.

His look was thunderous as he gazed into the Common-room.

Some of the fellows evinced a disposition to get out of sight behind the others.

But the majority stood firm.

"So!" The Head's voice rumbled like distant thunder. "So it appears that this Form has taken upon itself to disobey a Form-master's orders, and to question the authority of the head-master of Rookwood!"

Silence.

"Go into your Form-room this instant!"

The Head made a commanding gesture.

There was a hasty movement among some of the fellows. But Jimmy Silver's voice rang out.

"Stand where you are!"

The movement ceased.

"Silver!" thundered the Head. "Are you instructing your Form-fellows to disobey me?"

"We have explained to Mr. Bootles, sir."

"Mr. Bootles has informed me of your unexampled impertinence!" thundered the Head. "I decline to hear it repeated. You are plainly the ringleader in this mutiny, Silver. I order you into your Form-room! Disobey me, and you shall be taken to the station by a prefect within ten minutes, and sent back to your home!"

"Oh crumbs!" murmured Tommy Dodd.

Jimmy Silver's face was pale now.

But he did not stir.

"Lattrey, sir—" he began.

"I am not here to discuss Lattrey with you, Silver. I am here to see you return to your duty. If the Fourth Form does not obey me at once, you, Silver, will be immediately expelled, and every other member of the Form will be publicly flogged."

There was a gasp from Tubby Muffin. The fat Classical scuttled out from behind the window curtains and started for the door.

Peele and Gower hurried after him.

Lovell caught Jimmy Silver's arm anxiously.

"Come on, Jimmy!"

"We're staying out, Lovell."

"You're not going to be sacked, you fathead!"

"Look here—"

"Come on, ass!"

Lovell fairly dragged the captain of the Fourth to the door. The rest of the juniors followed.

Dr. Chisholm stood aside, frowning, as the juniors passed.

Not a fellow remained in the Common-room.

Jimmy Silver's face was white with anger as he went. But the Head's threat was too much.

Jimmy pictured his sudden return home early in the term—the dismay and amazement of his father and mother. It was too much.

After the first moment's resistance he went quietly along with Lovell.

With a stern face, the Head followed the juniors into the Fourth Form-room.

Mr. Bootles was there, awaiting them.

Mr. Bootles' kind face was very distressed.

He sympathised to a great extent with the rebels, and the whole incident was painful to him.

In grim and gloomy silence the Fourth Form went to their places.

The Head surveyed them with a frowning brow.

"This Form will be detained for two hours this afternoon, as a punishment for insubordination!" he said. "If there is no recurrence of it, I shall allow the matter to drop there. But remember this—if the slightest disrespect or disobedience is shown to Mr. Bootles this morning the delinquent will be punished with the greatest severity. I am ashamed of this Form!"

And with that Parthian shot the Head swept out.

"Ahem—ahem!" murmured Mr. Bootles.

The crushing of the revolt had been complete—so far!

But Jimmy Silver & Co. had yet another card to play—unknown either to the Head or the Form-master.

The "staying-out" had been only the first step.

That action had made it clear to the Head in what light the Fourth regarded his amazing leniency to Lattrey.

If he did not choose to do what the whole school expected of him, there were consequences to follow—already decided upon.

Mr. Bootles had no trouble with his class that morning, although he had quite expected it.

The juniors liked their Form-master, and had no desire to give him trouble.

They knew, too, that in his heart, Mr. Bootles shared their feeling with regard to Lattrey.

The good little gentleman's only desire was to smooth over the matter, hoping that there would be no more of it.

But Lattrey, at least, knew that there would be more of it, and his face was clouded that morning.

It was a half-holiday that afternoon, but the sentence of detention had to be carried out.

When morning lessons were over, Mr. Bootles directed his class to return to the Form-room at the usual hour for afternoon classes.

The juniors left the Form-room quietly.

Mark Lattrey looked round rather nervously outside the Form-room. But the other fellows did not approach him, or speak to him.

They moved off at once to the junior Common-room.

The plan of campaign was to be discussed before dinner.

Erroll took Mornington out into the quadrangle, the blind junior walking with his arm in his chum's.

But the rest of the Fourth turned up at the meeting.

Jimmy Silver mounted on a chair.

"We've taken the first step, you fellows," he said. "It hasn't been a success."

"Rotten failure!" remarked Townsend.

"Shut up, Towny!"

"We didn't know how it would turn out," continued Jimmy Silver, unheeding Townsend. "We wanted to make it clear to the Head that we wouldn't stand Lattrey in the school at any price. It was his duty to kick Lattrey out, and he hasn't done it. He knows what we think now, and he's taken no notice."

"An' he won't!" said Peele.

"Now we've got to take the second step," said Jimmy Silver. "The Head won't expell Lattrey. But Lattrey's going to be expelled!"

"Hear, hear!"

"Gammon!" said Gower.

"Dry up, Gower!"

"Order!"

"If the Head won't expel him, the Fourth Form will do it," resumed Jimmy Silver. "We've decided on that, and we're going to carry it out."

"You'll get sacked," said Topham.

"I'm risking that!"

"I'm jolly well not goin' to risk it!"

"Yah! Funk!" bawled Lovell.

Townsend shrugged his shoulders.

"Funk or not, I'm not backin' up against the Head," he answered. "It's not good enough. Come on, Toppo; I'm fed up with this!"

Townsend and Topham cleared off, and two or three other fellows followed them.

The matter was getting too serious for their taste.

"Anybody who feels funky had better clear out while he's got the chance," said Jimmy Silver quietly. "Once in, there's no drawing back."

Jimmy's invitation was accepted by several more fellows.

But the majority, both Classical and Modern, remained.

"Now the Bolos have gone, let's get on with the washing," remarked Raby, and there was a laugh.

"You know the programme," said Jimmy. "Lattrey is going to be sacked. He's entitled to an inquiry by the Head, and a just sentence—and he's getting neither. The Fourth Form are, therefore, going to take the matter in their own hands, and give him a fair chance, and sack him."

"Hear, hear!"

"He will be sentenced to expulsion by the Form, and sent away!" said Jimmy Silver firmly. "I know it's an unusual thing—"

"My hat! It is, rather!"

"But what else can we do? Are we going to stand that rascal here?"

"Never!"

"The Head refuses to do his duty, and we're going to do it for him. Lattrey will receive his sentence, and he will be taken away and put in the train for home."

"Great Scott!"

"There'll be trouble with the Head afterwards," said Tom Rawson.

"I know that!"

"And it will be jolly serious, bedad!" remarked Flynn.

"We shall have to face that together. We've got to stick to one another, of course. If one or more fellows get the sack, the others have got to leave the school with him, and see him through. If it comes to expelling nearly the whole of the Fourth Form, the Head will have to call a halt."

"Hear, hear!"

"Any fellow who funks it can get out while there's still time."

But there were no more defections. Jimmy Silver had the hearty support of the Fourth.

"Look here," said Tommy Dodd, "it's THE POPULAR.—No. 158.

all very well about letting the funks off, but I don't see it. The Fourth ought to stand together as one man against the enemy. United we stand, divided we fall."

"That's so."

"If it comes to a tussle, we want the Form all in it," continued Tommy; "and I vote for compelling the shirkers."

"Hear, hear!"

"It may not come to that," said Jimmy. "If the Head lets Lattrey go when we turn him out, well and good. We don't want trouble in the school. But one thing's dead certain—we don't stand that rascal Lattrey here any longer!"

"Hear, hear!"

Upon that point there was unanimity and grim resolve, and the meeting broke up in a mood of great determination.

Lattrey was to go, and if there was trouble with the Head afterwards, Jimmy Silver & Co. were prepared to face it.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

The Outcast!

MR. BOOTLES was relieved to see his Form turn up for their detention at the appointed hour.

He had feared a repetition of the morning's outbreak, and the necessity for another intervention by the Head.

Mr. Bootles flattered himself that the trouble had blown over.

But the quietness of the Fourth was only the calm before the hurricane, if he could have guessed it.

The juniors went steadily through their detention task.

Lattrey was not detained with the rest; he was the only member of the Form who had not given offence that morning.

But the cad of the Fourth was not very cheerful that afternoon, though he had escaped detention.

He was "gated" by order of the Head, since his surreptitious visits to a certain disreputable inn had come to light.

His only resource was to "mooch" about the quadrangle, and smoke cigarettes in his study, and wonder how long it would be before the affair blew over.

The other Forms were enjoying their usual half-holiday, and a football match was going on, on the playing-fields, between Classical and Modern fags.

Lattrey, bored with cigarettes in his study, strolled down to the football ground to look on.

Fag football was mostly kick and rush and roar, and the scene was quite lively.

Lattrey did not find it very interesting, however.

Algy Silver, Jimmy's cousin in the Third Form, was looking on, with his hands in his pockets and a frown on his brow.

Algy had made friends with Lattrey, though he had not spoken to him since the accident to Morningson, excepting to tell him to keep his distance.

But the "sport" of the Third looked so ill-tempered and disconsolate now that Lattrey was encouraged to make advances again.

Even the company of a discontented fag was better than "mooching" about with his hands in his pockets.

Moreover, Algy Silver prided himself upon being "goey," and it was a keen enjoyment to Lattrey to encourage Jimmy Silver's cousin in breaking the rules of the school, and sinking deeper into blackguardism.

"Not playing, kid?" remarked Lattrey, joining the fag near the goal-posts.

Algy Silver looked round surlily.

THE POPULAR.—No. 158.

It was on his lips to tell the outcast of Rookwood to sheer off, but he did not.

He was feeling lonely himself.

"Wegg won't play me in the Third," he said, with a sneer. "He says he won't play a goat who smokes! Silly fool!"

"Cheeky ass!" agreed Lattrey. "You've got good little Georgies in the Third, it seems, same as we have in the Fourth."

"I'm sick of Rookwood!" growled Algy. "Dull hole, after what I was used to at High Coombe. Rotten shame to send me here!"

"You have the great advantage of being under your cousin Jimmy's eye, and brought up the way you should go," suggested Lattrey.

"Oh, rats!"

"You don't enjoy that?"

"No, I don't!"

Lattrey smiled.

"Your Form's detained," remarked Algy, looking at Lattrey rather curiously. "Was it because they won't stand you any longer? 'Erbert says so."

"'Erbert's a sneakin' little cad!" said Lattrey.

"But was it?"

"Never mind! You don't get on with your cousin Jimmy any better than I do," sneered Lattrey. "Are you keen on watchin' this game?"

"Bored to tears!"

"Come up to the study, then."

Algy hesitated.

He fully agreed with the rest of Rookwood in being "down" on the rascal of the school, and he did not want to have anything to do with Lattrey. But he was in a perverse mood, and he was angry and peevish.

He nodded at last.

"Banker?" he asked.

"Yes; if you like."

"All serene; I'm on!"

"Trot along, then," said Lattrey cheerfully.

They moved off towards the School House.

"Silver II.!" bawled a fag. "Let that cad alone. He's in Coventry!"

"Go and eat coke!" was Algy's reply.

And he went into the House with Lattrey.

A few minutes later they were in Lattrey's study and cards were on the table, and the two young rascals were smoking and playing.

That was Lattrey's honourable occupation while his Form-fellows were grinding through their detention task.

Lattrey was finding his afternoon enjoyable, after all.

In the present odium in which he was held he had been unable to indulge his favourite vice of gambling of late.

It was a pleasure to him to see the glimmer of the cards and to hear the chink of the money once more.

It was not so much pleasure to the reckless fag of the Third, because Lattrey was winning his money.

But the more he lost, the more the fag was determined to win it all back—which exactly suited Lattrey's game.

The silence was broken suddenly by the tramp of many feet in the passage outside. Lattrey started.

The detention was over, and the Fourth Form were released.

They had evidently returned to their quarters.

Lattrey rose quickly from the table.

"Better look the door!" he remarked.

Algy chuckled.

"Safer, perhaps," he agreed. "We don't want cousin Jimmy lookin' in here just this minute."

Lattrey crossed quickly to the door.

He uttered a savage exclamation of

anger as he found that the key was missing from the lock.

"By gad!"

"What's the row?" asked Algy, looking round from the table.

"Have you seen my key?"

"No; is it missin'?"

"Yes," said Lattrey, between his teeth.

"My hat! Looks as if your pals meant to pay you a visit this afternoon, and didn't want you to lock them out," grinned Algy. "Somebody's taken it!"

The same thought was in Lattrey's mind, and he was looking round hastily for some means of securing the door.

He seized a chair, and shoved it against the door, to jam it back under the handle.

But before he could do so the handle was turned from without, and the door pushed open.

"He's in here!" It was Lovell's voice. "Come on!"

Lattrey, alarmed now, jammed his foot desperately against the door, while he strove to shove the chair in position under the handle.

"Hallo! He's holding the door!"

"Shove away!"

"Now, then, altogether!"

"Help me, Algy!" breathed Lattrey.

The fag rose hesitatingly. But his help would not have been of much use, and there was no time for it.

Half a dozen fellows were shoving hard on the outside, and Lattrey was pressed back.

He yielded at last, and the door flew violently open, and Jimmy Silver & Co. swarmed into the study.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

In the Hands of the Philistines!

LATTREY jumped back, panting.

The Fistical Four were first in the study.

After them came the Colonial Co. and the three Tommies of the Modern side.

Lattrey cast a wild look towards the doorway.

But outside the juniors were swarming.

There was no escape for the outcast of Rookwood.

Algy Silver stood by the table, a cigarette still smoking between his fingers, quite at a loss.

Jimmy started as his eyes fell upon his cousin.

"You here, Algy!" he exclaimed.

The fag gave him a look of defiance.

"I can be here if I like, I suppose!" he retorted.

Jimmy suppressed the angry reply that rose to his lips.

He was not there for a dispute with his cousin.

"Get out!" he said briefly.

"I'll get out when I choose!" said Algy independently.

In answer to that, Jimmy Silver strode towards him and grasped him by the shoulders.

Algy roared.

"Let go! Leggo, you rotter!"

"Stand clear, there, you fellows!"

said Jimmy quietly.

"Right-ho!"

"Ha, ha!"

The crowd outside the door surged back.

With a swing of his strong arms Jimmy Silver sent the sport of the Third whirling out.

Algy swept through the doorway, and collapsed on the floor.

Three or four boots impinged upon his

YARN OF THE ROOKWOOD CHUMS.

By OWEN CONQUEST.

person as he sprawled there, and helped him along the passage.

The fog disappeared, with a howl.

Then the crowd closed up in the doorway again.

Lattrey would gladly have followed the fog, but there was no chance of that.

With clenched hands and a bitter look on his face, the cad of the Fourth waited for what was to happen.

Jimmy Silver turned to him, his eyes gleaming.

"Come with us, Lattrey!"

"I won't!"

"Take his arms, Lovell and Newcome!"

"What-ho!"

Lattrey backed away, breathing hard.

"What do you want?" he muttered thickly. "What do you want with me, hang you? I'll yell, and bring Bulkeley here, as I did before!"

"You won't yell this time?" said Jimmy Silver grimly. "You'll have your mouth stopped fast enough if you do."

Raby picked up a duster and folded it, evidently for use as a gag, if wanted.

Lattrey, with Lovell and Newcome grasping his arms, was propelled towards the door.

In the passage he made a desperate attempt to shout for help.

But a hand was clapped over his mouth at once, and the intended shout died away in a gurgle.

"No, you don't!" remarked Conroy.

"Stick the duster in his mouth, Raby!"

"You bet!"

"Gurrrrrr!" came from Lattrey, as the duster was driven into his mouth, filling it, and effectually silencing him.

Van Ryn produced some whipcord, and whipped it round the duster and knotted it behind Lattrey's head.

"That does it!" he remarked. "Now march!"

Lattrey's eyes were dilated now.

The measures that the Fourth-Formers had already taken showed that they were in deadly earnest.

His face was pale with mingled fear and fury.

He had a hope that he was to be taken down to the Common-room, and that a prefect of the Sixth Form might spot what was going on, and come to his rescue.

But Jimmy Silver & Co. were not taking the risk of that.

They were determined not to be stopped, even if Bulkeley himself, the captain of Rookwood, had chipped in.

But they did not want trouble with the prefects, if it could be helped.

Their business was with Lattrey.

Instead of going downstairs they headed up the passage, and Lattrey's brief hope died away.

It was into the box-room that he was taken.

It was a large room, but it was pretty well filled by the time Jimmy Silver & Co. had crowded into it.

"Shut the door!" rapped out Jimmy.

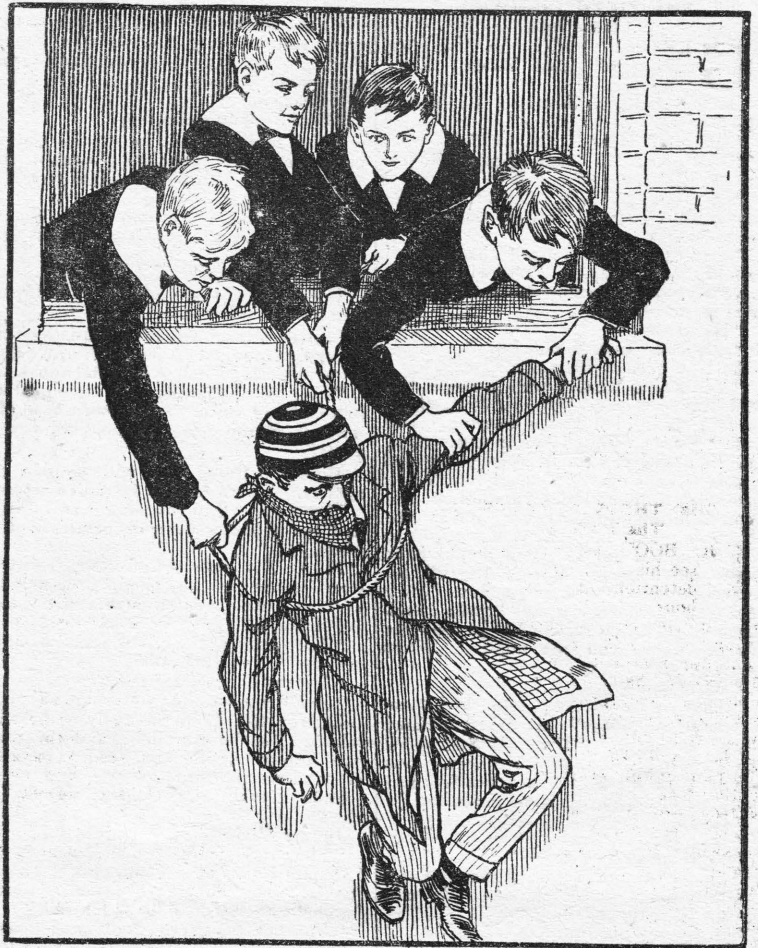
Tommy Dodd closed the door and locked it.

The Fourth were safe from interruption now, even if a prefect came along.

Lattrey had sunk down on an empty box, and he was sitting there, his dilated eyes watching the grim juniors.

He had never seen Jimmy Silver & Co. in a mood like this before.

He was wondering what was coming.



Jimmy Silver passed a rope round Lattrey under his arms, and fastened it. Then four pairs of hands swung him out of the box-room window in the gathering dusk, and he was lowered to the ground. (See Chapter 5.)

It was only too clear that the Fourth Form did not mean to accept the Head's decision unquestioningly.

But at all events they could not turn him out of Rookwood, he said to himself savagely. And if there was a ragging there would be punishment for the raggars.

But he was feeling extremely uneasy and apprehensive.

"Now to business!" remarked Tommy Cook.

Jimmy Silver removed the duster from Lattrey's mouth.

Lattrey gasped for breath.

In the box-room, at the end of the long corridor, his shouts were not likely to be heard if he shouted for help.

The Fourth-Formers gathered round eagerly.

"What is this foolery for?" hissed Lattrey. "I warn you that if there's any ragging I shall go straight to the Head about it!"

"There isn't going to be any ragging," said Jimmy Silver.

"Oh! What's the game, then, confound you?"

"You are going to be expelled from Rookwood."

Lattrey jumped.

"What?" he ejaculated.

"Stand there!" said Jimmy. "You're going to be given a fair hearing, same as if you were before the Head. If you've got anything to say in defence, you can

say it, and you'll be heard. We're doing this duty because the Head's left it undone."

"You—you fool!" panted Lattrey. "How can you expel me? Are you mad?"

"Not at all."

"Sure, it's aisy enough," remarked Tommy Doyle. "You'll be kicked out and put in the thrain for home, you spalpeen!"

"You can't do it!" shouted Lattrey furiously.

"You'll see!"

"You dare not!"

"Wait and see!" grinned Tommy Dodd.

"Yes, rather! Wait and see. And not so much of your irrelevant rhetoric!" chuckled Lovell.

Lattrey clenched his hands.

The hare-brained scheme was evidently a deliberate intention. The juniors were in earnest.

Yet Lattrey could hardly believe that Jimmy Silver & Co. would have the hardihood to carry such a plan into effect.

What would the Head say? What would he do?

But the Fourth Form of Rookwood were facing that. From their point of view their headmaster had failed in his duty, and they were determined that that duty should not remain undone.

THE POPULAR.—No. 158.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Expelled!

"GET on with the washing, Jimmy!" said Tommy Dodd briskly.

"Go it, Jimmy! You're the Head now!"

"Good old Head! Ha, ha!"

"I'm going it!" said Jimmy Silver.

"Now, Lattrey—"

"Oh, shut up!" snarled Lattrey. "Do you think I'm going to take this foolery seriously?"

"You can please yourself about that," said Jimmy coolly. "We're taking it seriously, and that's enough for us. You're accused—"

"Hang you!"

"Silence!" rapped out Lovell.

Lattrey ground his teeth.

"You know what you're accused of," said Jimmy Silver. "If you've anything to say, we'll give you a hearing. You biffed Morny with a stone in a snowball, and he licked you for it, as you deserved a dozen times over. You hit him in the face with a heavy metal candlestick, and injured him, and he became blind in consequence. You might have been sent to a reformatory for it. You would have been, only Morny himself begged his guardian not to prosecute you. After that you've the nerve and brazen impudence to stay at Rookwood! There's the charge against you in a nutshell. Have you anything to say?"

"Hang you!"

"That isn't evidence!" remarked Pons.

"Anything else?" remarked Jimmy Silver, unmoved. "I've said that you'll have a fair hearing, if you choose. You can look on me as the headmaster, empowered to expel you from the school."

"Fool!"

"Is that all?"

"You rotter! You—"

"That's enough!" said Jimmy Silver. "You've no defence to make. We can get on with the washing."

Lattrey set his lips.

"It was an accident about Morny," he muttered at last. "You can't believe I ever meant—"

"I know that. But you hit him in the face with a heavy weapon, never thinking or caring of what the result might be."

"I—I—"

"It was the act of a cowardly ruffian, a sneaking Hun, not the kind of fellow we want at Rookwood," continued Jimmy Silver. "If it hadn't had such an awful result it would still have been a dirty, cowardly, hooligan trick, that you ought to be sacked for. As it was, it blinded Mornington. He may never recover his sight. And you're the cause. If you had as much decency as a Prussian you'd want to get away from the school. How you can look any fellow in the face here after it beats me."

"I'm not going!" said Lattrey between his teeth. "I'll stick it out here, in spite of you all!"

"That's your intention, is it?"

"That's it; and I'm sticking to it."

Jimmy Silver looked round.

"I want to be fair to the worm," he said. "The sentence goes by the majority. I put it to the Fourth Form of Rookwood that that reptile ought to be expelled from the school. Hands up for expulsion."

A forest of hands went up at once.

The meeting was unanimous.

Of all the Fourth, Classical and Modern, not more than six or seven fellows were absent, and all present assented.

"Hands up against!" added Jimmy Silver.

THE POPULAR.—No. 158.

NEXT FRIDAY!

"THE REBELS!"

Not a single hand was raised.

"That settles it!" said Jimmy. "Lattrey, you are sentenced by the Fourth Form to be expelled in disgrace from Rookwood School!"

"Hear, hear!"

"Fool!" shouted Lattrey.

"The sentence will be carried out at once. You will pack your box, if you choose, and it can be sent after you."

"I shall pack nothing!"

"As you like. Will one of you fellows cut away and get Lattrey's coat and cap?"

"I'm your man!" said Lovell.

The door was unlocked, and Lovell quitted the box-room.

Lattrey stood breathing hard, looking savagely from face to face. In every face he read nothing but grim determination.

"You fools! You fools!" he muttered, in a choking voice. "You can't even get me out of the school! You know you can't!"

Jimmy Silver did not trouble to answer. He waited for Lovell to return.

The early winter evening was falling, and the shadows were deepening in the room.

In a few minutes Arthur Edward Lovell came back into the box-room, with Lattrey's coat over his arm and the cap in his hand.

"There you are, Lattrey," said Jimmy quietly. "Put them on!"

"I won't!"

"Put them on him, you fellows!"

Lattrey struck out savagely as he was seized. But he was held, and the coat was forced upon him, and the cap jammed on his head.

Then Lovell and Conroy seized his arms.

Jimmy Silver looked at his watch.

"The last train from Coombe to Latcham leaves at six," he said. "That's the train Lattrey is to catch. From Latcham he can look after himself."

"I'm not going to Coombe!" hissed Lattrey.

"You are!"

Jimmy Silver opened the box-room window.

"Shove that duster over his jaws again, Lovell!"

"What ho!"

Lattrey uttered one desperate shout before the duster was jammed into his mouth.

The whipcord secured it in place again. He stood silent, in the grasp of the juniors, his eyes burning.

Jimmy Silver took a strong knotted rope from a trunk, where it had evidently been placed in readiness.

He passed the rope round Lattrey, under his arms, and fastened it.

Lattrey understood then, and his teeth bit furiously into the duster.

Three or four pairs of hands swung him out of the window in the gathering dusk, and he was lowered to the ground.

The Fistical Four followed him from the window. The rest of the Fourth left the box-room by the door.

"Come on!"

The Fistical Four gathered closely round Lattrey, and hurried him away in the gloom.

Lattrey could not resist with an iron grasp upon both of his arms, and he could not call for help, with the duster choking all utterance.

With burning eyes he tramped in the midst of the four Classics, as they led him by devious ways round the School House, taking care to keep out of sight from the windows.

Jimmy Silver & Co. reached the school wall, where it was darkly shadowed by

the beeches, and there they found a crowd of the Fourth already arrived.

It was clear to Lattrey that all the proceedings had been cut and dried in advance.

Conroy and Pons and Van Ryn were "bunked" to the top of the wall, the trees screening them from the view of the quad, if anyone had been out of doors in the chill evening gloom and mist.

Jimmy tossed the rope up to them.

The three Colonials grasped it, and Lattrey was drawn up the old stone wall, and landed on the top.

He began to struggle there, but he was dragged outside the wall, and lowered into the shadowed road.

The three Colonials jumped down after him, and he was pinioned again, as he was making clutches at the gag in his mouth.

"No, you don't!" smiled Conroy.

And he replaced the gag firmly.

The Fistical Four followed, and then the three Tommies.

The rest of the Fourth remained within walls.

There were ten juniors gathered in the road with Mark Lattrey—more than ample to look after him.

Lattrey, unable to resist, walked among the juniors, till the dim glimmer of the village lights came in sight at last.

Jimmy Silver looked at his watch by the light of a match.

"Plenty of time for the train!" he remarked.

"I say, we can't take the rotter into the station like this," remarked Tommy Dodd doubtfully.

Jimmy shook his head.

"No, we can't," he agreed. "But we're going to take him. You cut on and take Lattrey's ticket, Lovell—take it to Latcham—that will save any delay. We'll give you five minutes."

"Right ho!"

Lovell was back with the ticket within five minutes, and the juniors hurried on to the village with Lattrey.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

The Last of Lattrey!

JIMMY SILVER halted just outside Coombe.

The duster and whipcord were removed, and Lattrey panted for breath.

His eyes were glittering in the gloom.

"Do you think you'll get me to the train?" he hissed. "The moment we set foot in the High Street I'll yell for help!"

"I don't think you will," said Jimmy Silver quietly. "I've thought of all that, Lattrey. Hold him, you fellows, and smash him if he makes a sound."

"I've got my knuckles ready for his nose!" said Lovell.

Jimmy Silver took out his pocket-knife and ripped the duster.

"Open your jaws, Lattrey!"

"I won't!"

"Take his nose and chin, you chaps!"

"Yow-ow! Groogh!"

Lattrey's jaws came open, with Lovell's grip on his nose and chin. He had no choice about that.

Jimmy Silver jammed the portion of the duster into his mouth, just filling it, and at a sign from him Lovell jammed Lattrey's jaws shut again.

Then Jimmy took Lattrey's handkerchief and his own, and tied them together round Lattrey's mouth, chin, and one side of his face in the manner of a bandage.

(Continued on page 17.)

A GRAND YARN OF THE ROOKWOOD CHUMS. BY OWEN CONQUEST.

By Order of the Fourth!

(Continued from page 6.)

Lattrey's eyes glittered at him with helpless fury.

He could not open his mouth now, but the tied handkerchief looked only like a bandage, as if he had a very bad tooth-ache.

And the juniors, grasping his arms, would look only as if they were supporting the victim of an accident.

His rage was too great for words—if he could have spoken.

"I rather think that will pass muster," remarked Jimmy Silver, with satisfaction. "If anybody speaks to us, leave the talking to me."

"Right-ho!"

"Now come on!"

Jimmy Silver led the way into the village street, followed by Lovell and Raby, with Lattrey between them, tightly gripping his arms, the rest of the juniors bringing up the rear.

The village street was gloomy enough with its few gas-lamps. But about the railway-station there was a good deal of light.

A portly form loomed up in front of the juniors as they approached the station.

"Good-evening, Mr. Boggs!" said Jimmy Silver politely.

"Hevenin'!" said P.-c. Boggs. "Haccident—wot?"

His official eye blinked at Lattrey's bandaged face.

Lattrey made a furious effort to get his jaws loose. But Jimmy Silver had done his work too thoroughly for that.

"We're looking after him," said Jimmy Silver, without directly replying to the question. "Come on, you fellows! Cheer up, Lattrey! We'll be at the station in a minute or two now."

The last remark was judiciously uttered for the hearing of Mr. Boggs.

The juniors marched on with their prisoner.

Lattrey threw his whole weight on Lovell and Raby, and they half-carried him along. But Lovell gave his arm a twist as a hint to walk, and Lattrey decided to walk.

The party of juniors entered the station.

As the ticket for Lattrey was already taken, they proceeded directly to the platform.

The porter glanced at them curiously. But the man knew the Fistical Four well, and, naturally, made no demur about their assisting the bandaged junior to the platform.

Lattrey, his eyes burning with rage, found himself upon the platform with his conductors, in the shadiest part of the station. There they waited.

Lattrey turned his eyes upon Jimmy Silver's face more than once with savage questioning. But he read no sign of relenting there.

It was borne in upon his mind that the juniors were in grim earnest. That he was to go—that the train was to bear him away from Rookwood by order of the Fourth Form.

And there was no return train that night, at all events.

From Latcham he could proceed to his home, if he liked, but he could not return to Rookwood until the morrow.

He almost choked with rage as he thought of it.

"Train's signalled!" said Raby at last. "Here she comes!"

The train stopped in the station, and Jimmy Silver ran forward to secure an empty carriage, if possible.

There were few passengers, and an empty carriage was easy enough to secure at Coombe.

Farther up the line it was likely to fill. Jimmy tore the door open, and beckoned to his comrades.

Lovell & Co. scuttled across the platform with Lattrey, giving the cad of the Fourth no chance to resist.

"In with him!"

Lattrey was bundled into the carriage. Lovell followed him in, and jammed him down on the seat.

"I'll stay here till she goes," grinned Lovell.

"Only half a minute." The juniors gathered round the door, watching the guard.

Lovell, with a grip of iron, held Lattrey upon his seat. The guard waved his flag.

"Come on, Lovell!"

Arthur Edward Lovell jumped out, and Jimmy slammed the door. In the carriage, Lattrey staggered to his feet, tearing at the bandage over his jaws.

The train moved.

"Stand back, there!"

With a shriek from the engine the train rolled out of the station.

The juniors stood on the platform and watched it go.

The long line of windows curved down the line, and from one window a white,

furious face looked and a savage fist was shaken.

Lattrey disappeared from the sight of the juniors as the train vanished down the line.

Jimmy Silver drew a deep breath.

"He's gone!" he said.

"Expelled!" grinned Lovell.

"And—and, my hat!—what will the Head say?" murmured Newcome.

"Let him say what he likes!" said Jimmy Silver resolutely. "We've done what he ought to have done! If Lattrey comes back, we'll turn him out again—with a flogging thrown in. Head or no Head, Lattrey won't stay at Rookwood!"

"Hear, hear!"

The juniors left the station in a somewhat serious mood.

The excitement of their proceedings had debarred them from much reflection so far. But now it was over, now that Mark Lattrey was gone, they realised that the matter was terribly serious.

They had realised it before, but not so clearly. Lattrey was gone. They had done their self-imposed duty, and now the consequences were to be faced.

But Jimmy Silver & Co. had the courage to face them.

The juniors ran all the way back to Rookwood, and found themselves just in time for call-over when they dropped in over the school wall.

Mr. Bootles was taking roll-call, and there was no answer when he came to Lattrey's name.

"Lattrey!" repeated the Form-master.

But no voice answered "Adsum!"

Mr. Bootles marked Lattrey down as absent, frowning portentously. He little dreamed where the missing junior was.

A crowd of fellows gathered round Jimmy Silver & Co. as they came out of Hall.

"Well?" inquired a dozen voices. "Is he gone?"

"He's gone," said Jimmy Silver quietly.

"Good egg!" said Oswald. "But—but— My only hat! What a shindy there'll be when the Head knows!"

"Keep smiling!" said Jimmy Silver.

Whether the juniors could keep smiling or not, there was no help for it now.

With all the resolution they could muster, the Fourth Form of Rookwood waited for the bursting of the storm.

THE END.

(There will be another long complete tale of Rookwood next week.)

RESULTS OF "POPLETS" COMPETITION.

No. 44.

The splendid Match Football has been awarded to:

WILLIAM SCOTT,
424, Parliamentary Road,
Glasgow.

The prizes of Five Shillings Each have been sent to the following readers:

Eric Arthur, 20, High Street Buildings, Dorking, Surrey; Albert Turley, 35, Stockwell Road, Handsworth, Birmingham; Miss Dorothy Huntley, 41, Severn Avenue, Weston-super-Mare, Somerset; S. Jackson, 4, Chandos Street, Netherfield, Notts; J. Evans, Beccroft, Sheriford Lane, Four Oaks, Sutton Coldfield, nr. Birmingham; Percy Whiting, 9, Wimbledon Street, Northampton; Mabel Wood, 11, Myrtle Road, Dorking, Surrey; S. Griffin, 13, Kirtleton Avenue, Weymouth; Miss Mary Edwards, 35, St. Paul's Terrace, York; C. S. Blackmore, Kimpton, nr. Andover, Hants.

No. 45.

The splendid Match Football has been awarded to:

LESLIE ALLEN,
16, Clare Street,
Chesterton,
Cambridge.

The ten prizes of Five Shillings Each have been sent to the following readers:

Lilian Rapley, 1, Dene Street Gardens, Dorking, Surrey; H. Harp, 114, Bayards Road, Peckham, S.E. 15; Philip Edge, 50, Adswold Lane E., Stockport; H. Miller, 2, Greggs Cottages, Ulverston, Lancashire; Nellie Shroll, 94, Grafton Road, N.W. 5; Percy Lynch, 8, Greenhough Street, Ancoats, Manchester; H. Purvis, 28, Warton Street, Bootle, Liverpool; A. Gregory, 4, Vilette Place, Trafalgar Road, Old Kent Road, S.E. 5; Frank Johnson, 42, Andrews Street, Leicester; John Harpin, 19, Grove Lane, Handsworth, Birmingham.

Omitted from Result of Competition No. 42: Miss J. Schroll, 94, Grafton St., N.W.5.

NEXT FRIDAY!

"FAGS TO ORDER!"

A SPLENDID TALE OF THE JUNIORS OF GREYFRIARS. BY FRANK RICHARDS.

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