

**AN AMAZING RESIGNATION!**

Adolphus Smythe's trick, which made Jimmy Silver & Co., the laughing stock of the school, also served to start a general feeling of dissatisfaction amongst the Fourth-Formers—and unlooked for consequences result!

**THE ELECTION AT ROOKWOOD!**

# Morby Butts In!

By Owen Conquest.

(Author of the Famous Stories of Rookwood in the "Boys' Friend.")

A Splendid, Long, Complete Story of Jimmy Silver & Co., of Rookwood School.



**THE FIRST CHAPTER.**

**Done to the Wide!**

"Rookwood at last!"  
"Thank goodness!"  
"Oh dear!"  
"What a day!"

It was almost a chorus of groans.

Never had Jimmy Silver & Co. felt so glad to see the gates of Rookwood School, and never had they returned there so tired in body and troubled in spirit as on the present occasion.

The junior cricketers had left that morning in the cheeriest spirits. They had returned in the depths of doleful dumps, as the dusk of evening closed in over the old red roofs of Rookwood.

They were tired, they were wrathful, and they were, perhaps, a little snappy and ratty.

It was not to be wondered at, considering what had happened to them that day.

Old Mack, the porter, blinked at them as they trailed in, and grinned a little. Several fellows in the quad stared at them, and grinned a good deal. Tubby Muffin of the Classical Fourth came rolling up to greet them.

"Beaten Greyfriars?" he asked.

"No!" grunted Jimmy Silver.

"Oh, my hat!" said Tubby. "Well, I must say you don't look like a winning crowd. But you shouldn't have let Greyfriars beat you, Jimmy. You shouldn't really, you know. You could have had me in the team if you'd liked—"

"Fathead!" growled Arthur Edward Lovell.

"Well, it might have made a difference," said Tubby. "In fact, I'm sure it would. How many innings did they beat you by, Jimmy?"

This question was intended to convey deep sarcasm.

"We haven't played the match, you silly ass!" was Jimmy Silver's reply.

Tubby stared.

"Haven't you been to Greyfriars?"

"No!"

"Oh, my word!" ejaculated the fat Classical. "You started for Greyfriars in Smythe's motor-car. Did you lose the way?"

"Oh, rats!"

"He, he, he!" cackled Tubby.

"What are you chortling at, you fat duffer?" snorted Lovell. Arthur Edward

Lovell did not see anything humorous in that day's disastrous happenings.

"You haven't been to Greyfriars!" chuckled Tubby. "He, he, he! Well, that takes the cake! You look a happy lot, too! He, he, he!"

"Oh, squash him!" growled Mornington. Jimmy caught the fat Classical by the shoulder.

"Where's Smythe of the Shell?" he asked.

"Blessed if I know," answered Tubby Muffin. "He went out with a crowd of his pals soon after you started in the motor-car. They haven't come in yet. I suppose they're making a day of it."

"Did they take cricketing things?"

"I noticed that some of them had cricket bags—"

"That settles it," said Valentine Mornington. "Smythe & Co. went to Greyfriars in our place, all right, after spoofing us to get into that dashed motor-car. Or, to speak more correctly, after spoofing you, Jimmy Silver."

Jimmy knitted his brows.

"We were all spoofed!" he said angrily. "How was I to suspect that Smythe had tipped the chauffeur to take us wandering across country, and keep us away from Greyfriars?"

Mornington shrugged his shoulders.

"I warned you that Smythe was up to some trick," he answered.

"You said he was!" snapped Jimmy. "But you're always suspecting somebody of something, Mornington. You couldn't give a hint as to what trick he was up to, anyhow."

"I guessed he had something up his sleeve!"

"A pity you couldn't guess what it was, then!"

"Look here—"

"Oh, rats! We're all as wise as you are, after it's happened!" said Jimmy Silver irritably.

"I told you—"

"Oh, rats!"

"Order!" murmured Tommy Dodd.

"No good ragging!" said Kit Erroll, interposing. Jimmy Silver and Mornington were looking at one another very grimly.

"We've all been taken in. Jimmy couldn't be expected to guess that Smythe intended to get us carried off by that cheeky ass of a chauffeur, and landed a hundred miles away. It never crossed my mind, I admit."

"Nor mine," said Raby.

"I knew there was something on, when Smythe offered us the car, and I said so!" answered Valentine Mornington obstinately.

"I advised Silver not to accept the offer, and he can't deny that."

"I don't deny it!" growled Jimmy. "And if you weren't a suspicious ass, always distrusting people for nothing, I might have paid some attention. But you are."

"Something in that!" remarked Newcome. "Oh, any excuse is better than none!" said Mornington angrily. "The fact remains that Smythe trapped us, and spoofed us out of going to Greyfriars, and that he's gone over there with his crowd of fumbling idiots to play the match instead of us."

"We're not sure of that yet," said Erroll. "I'm sure of it!" growled Mornington. "Smythe wouldn't have played such a trick on us for nothing!"

"We'll soon see," said Jimmy Silver. "As the rotters haven't come in yet, I—suppose they're gone to Greyfriars. But I'll ring up Greyfriars and ask Wharton."

"That's a good idea," said Lovell.

The tired and troubled cricketers tramped on into the School House.

They were all feeling sore and sorry.

Jimmy Silver was exasperated by the trick played on him by Adolphus Smythe of the Shell; but he could not see that he was to blame in the matter. But it was natural, perhaps, that Mornington should plume himself a little on the fact that he had suspected the dandy of the Shell of trickery.

And as Jimmy was junior captain, it certainly was up to him to see that his team reached Greyfriars to play the appointed match. Instead of which, they had spent half the day whizzing westward in a motor-car, and the other half in weary railway journeying to get home.

They trailed into the House, and fellows surrounded them on all sides with questions as to how the match had gone.

The answers of the cricketers astounded the questioners. Such a trick as Adolphus Smythe had played on Jimmy Silver & Co. was simply unheard of.

But it was clear that most of the Rookwood fellows looked on the affair with a humorous eye. It was cheeky of Adolphus Smythe to play such a trick; but it was decidedly soft of the Rookwood cricketers to fall victims to it. That was how the juniors looked at it.

Jimmy Silver hurried to Mr. Bootles' study to request permission to use the telephone. Mr. Bootles was out, as it happened, and Jimmy started on the telephone without asking permission. Greyfriars was a trunk-call from Rookwood; and he had to wait for his number.

He rested in Mr. Bootles' armchair while he waited, hoping that the Fourth Form master would not come in. Fortunately, Mr. Bootles did not come in, and Jimmy's number came through at last.

"Is that Greyfriars?" he asked into the transmitter.

"Yes; Mr. Quelch speaking."

Jimmy knew that Mr. Quelch was master of the Remove at Greyfriars.

"Jimmy Silver speaking, from Rookwood School," he said. "I hope you will excuse

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me, sir. I want to speak to Harry Wharton very particularly."

"Hum!"  
"I wouldn't have troubled you, sir, but it's very important. I hope you will allow Wharton to come to the telephone."

"H'm! Oh! Very well! I will send for Wharton."

"Thank you, sir!"

Jimmy Silver waited. A minute later there was a voice he knew well on the wires.

"Hallo! That Jimmy Silver?"

"Yes, Wharton. I suppose you can guess why I've rung you up? We started for Greyfriars to-day, and were tricked and kept away. Has anybody turned up from Rookwood?"

"Oh, my hat! Yes, rather!"

"Smythe?" asked Jimmy.  
"Yes; Smythe and Howard, Tracy, and that lot," came Wharton's reply. "We were rather surprised to see a wholly new team from Rookwood. We were expecting you, of course. But they explained—"

"Have you played the match?"

"Naturally!"

Jimmy set his teeth.

"I needn't ask how it went!" he said bitterly.

"Well, we won, you know."

"What was the margin?"

"Ahem! We won by an innings and some runs—ahem!—a good many runs."

"I could guess that. All serene! It can't be helped. You understand that we were prevented from coming over by a trick, and Smythe & Co. had no right whatever to play in the name of Rookwood."

"I understand now you've told me, Silver. But, of course, we never guessed anything of the kind at the time."

"Have they gone?"

"Oh, yes! They've been gone a good time now. Must be nearly home to Rookwood by this time, I should think."

"Thanks!"

"I'm sorry, Silver. You seem to have been badly dished."

"No mistake about that," said Jimmy. "Well, it can't be helped."

Jimmy Silver put up the receiver and left Mr. Bootles' study. The worst that he had feared had happened. And the only satisfaction that remained was the prospect of making Adolphus Smythe & Co. suffer for the trick they had played. The junior cricketers had not forgotten, either, how Smythe had nearly succeeded in keeping Jimmy Silver away from the recent match at St. Jim's.

## THE SECOND CHAPTER.

### Morny's Chance!

**J**IMMY SILVER came up to the end study in the Fourth with a knitted brow.

Lovell and Raby and Newcome were busy there, getting a very late tea.

The Fistical Four were hungry.  
"Well?" asked the Co. with one voice, as Jimmy came into the study.

"I've spoken to Wharton," said Jimmy. "It's as Morny suspected. Smythe & Co. have been over there, in the name of Rookwood Juniors, to play the match."

"And they've played it?"

"Yes."

"And lost it, of course?"

"By an innings and goodness knows how many runs!" said Jimmy. "I dare say that conceited idiot, Smythe, expected to win. The silly chump thinks he can play cricket; and his idea is that he's being kept out of the game. Now he's made us look a lot of asses, I don't suppose it will make any difference to him. He will still think he ought to be played in the next match."

Lovell clenched his hands.

"He's going through it when he comes in!" he said. "He can't play a trick like this without smarting for it!"

And the Fistical Four sat down to tea.

Meanwhile, Erroll and Mornington had gone to their study for tea. Both of them were looking very thoughtful, and there was an expression in Morny's eyes that made Erroll glance at him several times. The friendship between the two was deep and sincere; but they were very unlike in character, and Erroll did not always understand his chum. He could see now that Morny was in one of his wicked moods, and it troubled him a little.

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"It's been a muck-up to-day, hasn't it, Kit?" Mornington remarked, as he poured out the coffee.

"Rotten!" agreed Erroll. "It's hard on Jimmy especially."

"I don't see that."

"Well, as Jimmy's skipper, some of the fellows are inclined to lay the blame on him."

"Quite right, too."

Erroll shook his head.

"Jimmy wasn't to blame, Morny. He couldn't possibly suspect Smythe of such rotten trickery."

"I suspected him."

Erroll did not answer that. The quality he least admired in his chum was the sharpness which had made him suspicious of Smythe when Jimmy Silver had accepted the Shell fellow's offer with frank cordiality. Morny had been right, and Jimmy had been wrong, undoubtedly; but, to a certain extent, there was more credit in being wrong than in being right in the matter.

Morny frowned a little, probably guessing Erroll's thoughts.

"You think I'm too jolly keen," he said, with a slight sneer. "You admire Jimmy for his unsuspecting innocence—what?"

"I think it's a good quality in him," answered Erroll. "Hardly anybody would have suspected Smythe of treachery."

"But I did, after the St. Jim's match affair. And you don't like me for it."

"That's not quite fair, Morny. After all, you didn't suspect what Smythe was at; you simply distrusted him."

"If I'd been skipper we shouldn't have fallen into the trap."

"I suppose that's true."

"Wouldn't that have been better all round?" demanded Mornington.

"No doubt about that."

"The fact is, Jimmy Silver has let us down," said Mornington. "There's a cricket-match thrown away, and it counts in the record. They'll be laughing at us at Greyfriars when they know the facts. Rookwood doesn't want to be laughed at. Now, I like Jimmy Silver personally. I used to be up against him at one time, but that was more misunderstanding than anything else. I really like him, Kit."

"I'm glad of that."

"But personal friendship is one matter and cricket is another. I think I should make a good junior skipper."

"I'm sure you would, Morny."

"Good!"

"But Jimmy's skipper, so it's not a very important question just now," remarked Erroll, with a rather uneasy look at his chum.

"Junior skipper isn't appointed on the system of the Medes and Persians," said Mornington. "He can be changed, you know."

"Morny!"

"Look here, Erroll, I'm not up against Silver personally, but I don't see why I shouldn't stand up for the captaincy, when I think I should make a better skipper!" exclaimed Mornington impatiently. "I've thought so for a long time, and what's happened to-day is the last straw. The captaincy isn't a personal possession of Jimmy Silver's, is it?"

"No. But—"

"But you don't think I ought to oppose Silver?" exclaimed Mornington irritably.

"I'd rather you didn't."

"Why?"

Erroll paused.

"Well, I think Jimmy Silver's all right as captain," he said. "What's happened to-day is rotten enough; but it's nothing against Jimmy. Some of the fellows are dissatisfied, certainly. But—"

"I'm dissatisfied, for one," said Mornington. "I think new blood is required. And I think I've got a good chance. Dash it all, why shouldn't there be a new election, and let the best man win?"

"That is all right, I suppose," said Erroll reluctantly.

"You'd back me up?"

"Ye-es."

"And a lot of the Shell would vote for me," said Mornington, his eyes glistening. "Smythe & Co., 'frinstance. They'll be feeling pretty sore with Jimmy Silver, after they've been ragged for their trickery. They'd vote for anybody against him."

"They'll be feeling sore with us, too, I

suppose. We shall take a hand in punishing them."

Mornington laughed.

"Kit, old man, you don't know much about electioneering, if you're thinking of ragging the voters," he said.

Erroll compressed his lips.

"So you're going to leave that to Jimmy Silver?" he asked.

"Isn't he captain?" grinned Mornington. "So long as he's captain he can take captain's responsibility. When I'm skipper I sha'n't shrink from it."

"I don't like this, Morny. I don't like to say, but this looks to me like taking a mean advantage of Jimmy Silver."

"Preaching again, old chap?"

"Look here, Morny—"

Erroll was interrupted by a thump on the door. It flew open, and Arthur Edward Lovell put a rather excited face into the study.

"Come on, you chaps!" he exclaimed.

Mornington glanced round coolly.

"Anythin' on?" he drawled.

"Those rotters have come back, and we're going to scalp them!" said Lovell. "Come on, if you want to take a hand!"

And he disappeared.

Erroll rose to his feet at once.

"Sit down!" said Mornington.

"I'm going. You're coming, surely, Morny?"

"No jolly fear! I shall shortly be appealin' for their giddy suffrages, and I'm not goin' to begin by raggin' them."

"Look here—"

"You can take a hand if you like; I sha'n't!" said Mornington obstinately.

"Please yourself, if you don't want to please me!"

"I wish you'd come."

"Well, I won't!"

Erroll said no more, but quitted the study with a troubled brow. Morny was evidently in one of his wilful and obstinate moods. Kit Erroll was to be the only representative of Study No. 4 in the ragging of Smythe & Co.; and Erroll, though he wanted to think well of his chum, could not quite think that this was "cricket."

## THE THIRD CHAPTER.

### Rough Justice!

"O H gad!"

Adolphus Smythe, the ornament of the Shell, uttered that ejaculation in a weary tone, as he sank into his luxurious armchair.

Adolphus was tired.

He was also uneasy.

In his sublime conceit, Smythe of the Shell firmly believed himself to be a better cricketer than Jimmy Silver of the Fourth, and he persisted in regarding it as sheer "cheek" of Jimmy to take the lead in junior games as he did. The fact that Jimmy had been elected to the position by a good majority of the juniors did not make any difference to Adolphus. He hadn't voted for Jimmy—and he never would vote for him—and Adolphus seemed to think that his own sweet voice ought to outweigh the voices of a dozen other fellows.

So Adolphus had tricked the junior eleven with a clear conscience, and he had pictured himself returning victorious to Rookwood, to point out to the school generally that he—Adolphus Smythe—was the fellow who could win matches.

If he had returned victorious he could have pleaded his success as an excuse for the trick he had played. That was what he had anticipated.

Unfortunately, Adolphus' prowess as a cricketer existed only in the conceited imagination of the lofty Adolphus himself.

He had not won the match at Greyfriars with his nutty team. He had not even lost it by a narrow margin after a good game. He had gathered up the most crushing defeat in the annals of Rookwood. He had left Greyfriars chortling, and he had come home with fear in his nutty breast.

Howard and Tracy, his study-mates, shared his gloom.

Smythe & Co. were unhappy and apprehensive.

"We're in for it," said Howard gloomily. "The fellows are bound to cut up rough. Who'd have thought those Greyfriars kids would walk over us like that? They're a younger team, too."

"We had bad luck!" sighed Adolphus.

"We did, and no mistake," said Tracy.

"A Bad Beginning!"—a Rippling Tale of Rookwood—Next Week!



"There's goin' to be a row!" said Howard uneasily. "They know we've come in. I fancy they'll come along to this study."

"Tramp, tramp!"  
There was a sound of many footsteps in the passage.

"Lock the door!" howled Adolphus.  
"They'd only bust it in!" growled Tracy.  
"Leave the door alone!"

It was too late to lock the door, however, if that desperate expedient would have been of any use. Jimmy Silver & Co. had arrived.

The Fistical Four of the Fourth tramped into the study, and after them came the Colonial Co., and the three Tommies of the Modern side. A dozen other fellows crowded the doorway and the passage outside.

Adolphus and his nutty pals were on their feet now, with alarm in their faces. They had cause for disquiet. The looks of their unwelcome visitors were very grim indeed. "So you've got back!" said Jimmy Silver. "Yaas, deah boy," said Smythe feebly. "You bagged our match!" roared Lovell. "You—you see—"

"And how did you get on at Greyfriars?" demanded Erroll.

"Licked to the wide, of course!" growled Conroy.

Adolphus drew a deep breath. He knew that the facts must come out, but he was only thinking just then of postponing the evil hour, and escaping immediate punishment.

"The—the fact is, we beat them!" he gasped.

"What?" howled Jimmy Silver.  
Howard and Tracy stared at their leader. They had not thought of this amazing master-stroke.

"You beat them?" shouted Conroy.

"Yaas; beat 'em hollow, by an innings and fifty runs!" said Adolphus recklessly.

"Oh, my hat!"  
"Gammon!"

"You spoofing ass!" shouted Jimmy Silver. "They beat you by an innings and more runs than they troubled to count!"

"Look here, Silver—"

"I've telephoned to Greyfriars, and Wharton has told me!"

"Oh gad!" gasped Adolphus.

He hadn't thought of that. His master-stroke had missed fire, after all! He sank into his armchair again feebly.

"I—I was jokin', you know!" he stammered.

"And joking when you fooled us into taking your car, and joking when you fixed it up with the chauffeur to land us a hundred miles from everywhere!" Jimmy Silver exclaimed savagely.

"Ya-as. Only a—a—a joke, you know."

"It won't seem much of a joke to you when we're finished with you!" said Conroy.

"I—I say—you know—"

"You've played a rotten trick on us, and lost a match for Rookwood," said Jimmy Silver. "I suppose you know you're going through it?"

"If—if you play the goat, I'll yell for a perfect!" gasped Adolphus desperately.

"You'll yell, right enough, I dare say," said Jimmy. "If you bring the prefects here it's your own look-out. I don't think you'd care to explain to Bulkeley the trick you've played on us. The captain of the school wouldn't be likely to look on it as a joke."

"Collar them!" exclaimed Lovell impatiently.

"Hold on!" yelled Tracy. "We hadn't anything to do with it! We—we simply backed up Smythe—"

"Nothin' but that!" gasped Howard.

"We—we were really against it, you know," stammered Glibey.

"Collar them!"

Smythe & Co. were collared—the expostulations of the Co. passing quite unheeded.

What followed was painful.

Jimmy Silver & Co. were in deadly earnest. They intended to give the nuts of Rookwood a lesson they would be certain to remember if they were ever tempted to play tricks with the school matches again.

And the lesson Adolphus and his fellow-nuts received was one they were likely to remember for a very long time to come.

Never had so thorough a ragging been administered within the walls of Rookwood School.

It did not last long; but the incensed

cricketers put plenty of work into the time.

After ten minutes Jimmy Silver & Co. streamed out of the study, feeling that they had done enough.

They left four unhappy wrecks behind them, who thought that they had done a great deal too much.

Adolphus Smythe dragged his head wearily out of the ashes, sat up in a sea of ink, and blinked dimly at his fellow-sufferers.

"Oh gad!" he groaned.

"Wow-wow!" mumbled Tracy.

"Oh, my hat! Oh dear! Oh crumbs! Ow!"

"Wow-wow-wow!"  
"Groogh!"

It was quite a chorus in Smythe's study. There was no doubt that the nuts of Rookwood would remember that lesson—no doubt whatever.

While they gasped and groaned, Jimmy Silver & Co. were in quest of other victims. All the members of the nutty eleven had to go through it, and through it they went.

That evening Smythe & Co. felt that life was not worth living. They had learned once more the truth of the ancient text that the way of the transgressor is hard.

**THE FOURTH CHAPTER.**

**Putting it Plain!**

**J**IMMY SILVER did not look so sunny-tempered as usual the next day.

The affair of the Greyfriars match—utterly "mucked up" as it had been—naturally worried him, and as cricket captain he felt that most of the responsibility was on his shoulders. Worse than that was the fact that most of the fellows seemed to think the same, only more so.

It was not forgotten that Mornington



**A RAGGING FOR THE ROTTERS!** At the end of ten minutes the "nuts" of Rookwood began to feel that life was not worth living. Jimmy Silver & Co. had given them the ragging of their lives. The four unhappy wrecks sat up among the scattered study furniture and groaned. "My hat! Oh dear! Ow!" gasped Smythe. "Ow! Ow!" (See Chapter 3.)

had distrusted Smythe and his motor offer, and had remarked, in his sarcastic way, "Timeo Danaos," etc. Mornny would not have been taken in as Jimmy Silver had been. Why couldn't Jimmy have taken Mornny's tip, as Mornny seemed to have more sense? was a question asked by a good many of the juniors.

Tommy Dodd of the Modern Fourth was strongly of opinion that the whole disaster was due to the fact that the junior captain of Rookwood belonged to the Classical side. Tommy Dodd found general agreement with his opinion—among the Moderns. The Classics scoffed at it.

But the Classics weren't satisfied, either. Shell fellows had never been contented with a Fourth Form captain. Smythe & Co., naturally, were "up against" Jimmy Silver all the way. They didn't count much, except in an election, where every vote counted. But even in the Classical Fourth there was dissatisfaction, and when it looked out that Mornington was thinking of "putting in" for the junior captaincy, it looked as if he would receive a good deal of support in his own Form, as well as outside it.

Jimmy had not heard, as yet, of Mornny's

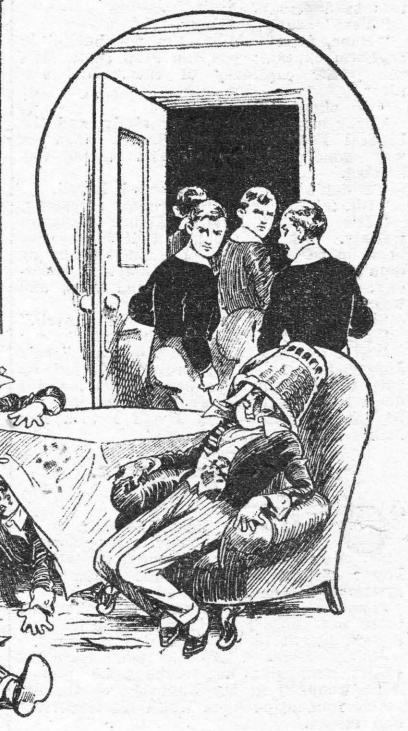
ambition; his old disputes with Mornny were dead and buried, and it had not occurred to him that the rivalry would be revived. His first intimation of the new state of affairs came from Mornington himself, who dropped in at the end study after tea, to apprise the junior captain of his intentions.

Having thought it over, and decided upon his course of action, Mornington thought it was only the "game" to let Jimmy Silver know what to expect. He did not want to be under-hand.

The Fistical Four were finishing tea when Mornny came in, with a smile on his face. Jimmy gave him a rather curt nod.

Jimmy had heard too much lately about Mornny's cleverness in having spotted Smythe's little game, and he was tired of the subject, and of Mornny, too. He did not admire that sharpness of Mornny's, though he was sorry he had not taken his advice on the occasion.

"Not interruptin' you, I hope!" said



Mornington blandly, as he lounged into the end study.

"We can eat sardines while you wag your chin," answered Jimmy Silver. "Don't mind us. But, for goodness' sake, Mornny, don't sing it all over again about your dashed brightness in spotting Smythe's game! It's possible to have too much of a good thing."

"Well, I've come here to speak out in plain English," said Mornington, rather tartly. "You mucked up the Greyfriars match, Jimmy Silver—you and Smythe between you."

"Rot!"

"Most of the fellows say so."

"Bosh!"

"And I think so myself."

Jimmy's replies could not be called polite; but he was "fed up," as he had said several times.

"To come to the point—" went on Mornny, unmoved.

"Oh, you are coming to the point?" asked Jimmy.

"Certainly!"

"Come to it, then, and get off the subject!"

"The point is this," said Mornington furly. "I think I should make a better junior captain than you, Jimmy Silver, considering the way the Greyfriars match has been clucked away!"

Jimmy's lip curled.  
"If you can get the other fellows to think so, the job's open to you," he answered. "It's not my personal property. I'm not specially keen on captaining a crowd of grousing asses, if you come to that."

"You don't object, then, to my buttin' in?" asked Mornington.

"I've no right to object, have I? Any fellow who likes can put up."

"But I jolly well object!" broke out Lovell warmly. "I think you're shoving your oar in where it's not wanted, Morny!"

"Sorry!" said Morny politely. "Well, I'll be getting along. It's understood, Silver, that if a certain number of fellows ask you, you'll resign and let a fresh election take place?"

"Yes!" snapped Jimmy.

"Done, then! Mind, I'm not buttin' in as Form captain; you can keep that. It's the junior captaincy of the school I'm after."

"Go ahead!"

Morny strolled out of the study, and the Fistical Four exchanged glances when he was gone. Jimmy Silver's brow was knitted.

"I don't like this!" growled Lovell.

"Oh, let him rip!" said Jimmy carelessly.

"It's mean," said Arthur Edward warmly. "I can see now that Morny has been up to his tricks. I wondered why he didn't turn up at ragging Smythe yesterday. He had this in his mind then, and was thinking of the votes."

"I shouldn't think that of him, Lovell."

"I believe it's so. And it's mean!"

"Give him the benefit of the doubt," said Jimmy Silver. "I'm pretty well fed up with the grousing I've heard to-day, and I don't care much if Morny bags the job. If he can do better than I can I wish him luck. Pass the jam, Raby!"

#### THE FIFTH CHAPTER. The Rivals!

"Oh, good!"  
Thus the great Adolphus.  
It was the day after Morny's visit to the end study, and all the Lower School at Rookwood knew how matters stood now.

Jimmy Silver's supremacy was challenged; there was another Richmond in the field, as Oswald put it in Shakespearian language.

Jimmy Silver took the new state of affairs smilingly; but perhaps he was a little wounded at the discovery of the unstable foundation upon which his leadership had rested.

He had plenty of friends to back him up certainly. But there was no doubt that Valentine Mornington had a good following.

Morny was a first-class cricketer, and splendid at games; and since he had given up slacking he had become a tower of strength to the junior eleven. He had often received recommendation from Bulkeley of the Sixth, who was captain of the school and head of the games. There was no doubt that Mornington would make a good skipper—not quite so easy-going as Jimmy Silver, but perhaps none the worse for that.

And the affair of the Greyfriars match helped. It was quite certain that Morny would never have been spoofed by the egregious Smythe as Jimmy Silver had been.

Morny had a good many backers in the Classical Fourth; possibly, to some extent, simply from a desire of change, and because some of the fellows considered that the end study had had it all their own way too long.

Of the best fellows in the Lower School, it was likely enough that Jimmy would have a majority; but it was not only the best fellows who voted in an election. Every fellow who was against Jimmy Silver, from whatever reason, was certain to rally round his rival, in order to give the junior captain a fall.

Adolphus Smythe & Co. heard the news with delight. They would have backed up Morny, or anybody else, against Jimmy Silver. Lattrey and his friends, the black sheep of Rookwood, took precisely the same view.

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There was no doubt that on Morny's side would be ranged all the nuts, and the slackers, and the shady black sheep.

That was not exactly gratifying to Mornington. But, as he told Erroll, it was no use being too particular in an election. Every vote counted, and a shady rascal like Lattrey or Gower was as valuable as a fellow like Lovell or Tommy Dodd, when it came to an election.

Erroll shook his head; but he did not argue with his chum. He was loyal to Mornington; though he had his doubts about the wisdom of Morny's new course.

Erroll, naturally, backed up his own chum; and the grave, quiet junior had a good deal of influence.

On the Modern side there was jubilation. "This is good—real good!" Tommy Dodd said. "When rogues fall out, you know—not that they're rogues; but when Classics fall out, it's a chance for the Moderns. They outnumber us too much for a Modern to get in unless they're divided. Now they're divided."

"Sure they are!" said Tommy Doyle. "And if they split their vote between Jimmy Silver and Mornington, bedad, you may get in on the Modern vote, Tommy!"

"It's a jolly good chance," said Tommy Cook, rubbing his hands. "And what Rookwood really wants is a Modern junior skipper!"

"That's it!" said Dodd.

So the three Tommies rejoiced.

And as there was not likely to be any split in the Modern vote, Tommy Dodd had a chance in a three-cornered contest for the captaincy. And Tommy set to work at once at the business of electioneering.

Mornington, on the same business, dropped in at Tommy Dodd's study, and found the three Tommies engaged in comparing notes and lists of names.

"Gettin' ready for an election?" asked Morny, with a smile.

"What-ho!" answered Tommy Dodd.

"You'll be voting for me?"

"Bow-wow!"

"Stickin' to Jimmy Silver?"

"Stickin' to myself!" grinned Dodd. "If there's an election, my pippin, there's going to be a Modern candidate, and I'm the man—see?"

"Oh!" ejaculated Mornington.

"With three candidates, I think we shall get our man in," said Cook. "What do you think, Morny?"

"I think you're a set of cheeky asses!" was Morny's reply. And he retired from the study rather discomfited, leaving the Modern trio chuckling.

On Saturday afternoon there was a notice on the board, calling a meeting of the electors of the Lower School in the Common-room. That meeting was to decide the question whether an election was to be held. If a good number of the juniors demanded it, it was understood that Jimmy Silver was to resign, and the matter was to be settled by a new election. Morny had high hopes that there would be a sufficient show of hands.

The meeting was a crowded one. Nearly all the Fourth and Shell were there, and a goodly contingent of the Third and Second.

The Fistical Four came in together, three of them frowning, and only Jimmy Silver wearing a smiling and placid expression. Jimmy's chums were a good deal more annoyed at the turn affairs were taking than Jimmy himself. The captain of the Fourth did not seem much troubled.

It was soon seen that the meeting was generally in favour of a new election—Smythe & Co. were vociferously in favour of it.

Jimmy Silver took it smilingly.

He did not remain many minutes at the meeting; but when he left the Common-room with his chums he was no longer junior captain of Rookwood, but only a candidate for the election, which was to take place on Monday.

His chums had insisted on that, and Jimmy had yielded to them; though he was more inclined personally to stand out altogether.

The notice of the election duly appeared on the board, with the names of three candidates—Jimmy Silver, Valentine Mornington, and Thomas Dodd.

"Cheeky Modern ass!" was Arthur Edward Lovell's comment. "Just like a Modern to butt in like that!"

"Tommy Dodd has as much right as anybody else!" remarked Jimmy Silver mildly. "He would make a good skipper, too!"

"A blessed Modern!" growled Lovell. "I'd rather have Morny than a Modern! It's got to be a Classical, of course!"

"Oh, rather!" said Raby.

Jimmy Silver nodded.  
"I agree to that!" he assented. "We want a Classical skipper. But it looks to me as if a Modern may get in with the Classical vote split."

"Morny ought to stand down, in that case!" growled Newcome.

"He's not likely to, as he's started the whole affair."

"Well, he ought; and I'll jolly well tell him so!" exclaimed Lovell. "Pretty state of affairs, if his shoving in like this should land us with a Modern skipper!"

And Arthur Edward snorted emphatically.

#### THE SIXTH CHAPTER. The Election!

THERE was a good deal of excitement in the Lower School at Rookwood on Monday. The election was fixed for six o'clock in the Common-room, and Bulkeley, the captain of the school, had consented to be present to count the votes. There had been keen electioneering on all sides. It was pretty certain that the Modern junior vote would be solid for Tommy Dodd; but the Moderns were so outnumbered by the Classics that Dodd's chances depended wholly on how the Classical vote was split. If it was split about evenly between the two Classical candidates, Tommy Dodd would squeeze in. But a big Classical majority for either Jimmy Silver or Mornington would send Tommy Dodd bootless home, so to speak.

Tommy Dodd hoped for the best; and as six o'clock drew near the three Tommies were very busy whipping up their voters. Not a Modern was to be allowed to miss the election, and the three Tommies had announced that any Modern who didn't turn up would be thumped till he was properly sorry for himself. Long before six the Moderns were crowding the Common-room.

Mornington was early on the scene, with Erroll and his friends. Among his friends, for that occasion at least, counted Smythe & Co., and Torny and his nutty pals of the Fourth, and Lattrey and Peele and Gower, the black sheep. His cousin, Mornington II., of the Second Form, brought in a crowd of fags to vote for him: They were counter-balanced, however, by an army of the Third, led by Jimmy Silver's cousin Algy, of that Form.

Conroy and Van Ryn and Pons, the Colonials, were there to back up Jimmy Silver. Tubby Muffin was there, undecided how he was going to vote. He had offered his valuable vote to Jimmy Silver for sixpence—an offer that was declined without thanks. Tubby had consequently offered it to Mornington at the reduced price of fourpence; but Morny—perhaps because Erroll was present—had refused to help his cause by bribery and corruption. So the fat Classical was still undecided.

But as Mornington spotted the fat Tubby in the crowd he gave him a genial smile.

"Catch!" he called out.

Tubby Muffin caught the packet of toffee Morny tossed to him, and his fat face beamed. There was no longer any doubt about Tubby's vote.

"Morny!" murmured Erroll.

"My dear chap, why shouldn't I give the fat boulder toffee? He likes toffee!" said Mornington.

"He's going to vote for you now."

"Why shouldn't he vote for the best man?" grinned Mornington.

Erroll said no more.

There was a cheer from some of the juniors as Jimmy Silver came in with his chums. Jimmy had done no electioneering; but Lovell and Raby and Newcome had done a great deal for him.

The Common-room was pretty well crowded now. Not more than a dozen fellows who were entitled to vote were absent.

The crowd had split into three groups. Jimmy Silver glanced over them with a keen eye. Mornington was surrounded by quite an enthusiastic army of backers, and his crowd looked as if it outnumbered Jimmy's supporters, though slightly. Tommy Dodd's crowd—all Moderns—outnumbered



each of the other two. Jimmy knitted his brows as he noted it.

Judging by appearances, the Classical vote was nearly evenly split, and if the voting went accordingly the election was safe for Tommy Dodd.

Arthur Edward Lovell noted it, too, as the bulldog expression on his eloquent countenance testified.

"There isn't twice as many Classicals as Moderns," he remarked, with a grunt. "If there were, it wouldn't matter. But there isn't. And if we're split into halves Tommy Dodd will beat both halves."

"Looks like it!" said Jimmy.

"May be different when the fellows vote," said Raby hopefully. "All those chaps round Morny mayn't mean to vote for him."

"I think they do," said Jimmy.

"Then we shall get a Modern skipper!" said Lovell in deep disgust. "That's going to be the outcome of Morny butting in."

Jimmy Silver was silent and very thoughtful. He liked Tommy Dodd personally, more than he liked Mornington; but he was a Classical, and he felt like the rest of the Classicals. The junior captaincy was not to go to the rival side of Rookwood, if he could help it.

So Jimmy had plenty of food for thought. There was a buzz as Bulkeley of the Sixth came in. It was time for the serious business of the election to be proceeded with.

"Well, are you kids ready?" asked the captain of Rookwood, with a good-humoured smile.

"Waitin' for you, Bulkeley," answered Mornington.

"Well, here I am! I understand that there are three candidates," said Bulkeley. "Let them come forward."

Mornington and Tommy Dodd came forward promptly. Arthur Edward Lovell nudged his chum.

"Get a move on, Jimmy! Can't you hear Bulkeley?"

Jimmy hesitated.

"Move on, you ass!" said Newcome.

Lovell gave Jimmy Silver a shove, and Jimmy joined the other candidates. Tommy Dodd gave him a cheery grin. Tommy had

been using his eyes, and he was assured of success now. His compact body of voters outnumbered either of the rival Classical crowds, and he looked on the election now as a walk-over for himself.

Mornington read Tommy's expression, and his own look was less cheery. He had intended to make a bid for the captaincy himself; but he had certainly not intended to squeeze Jimmy Silver out for the purpose of allowing a Modern to squeeze in. But it was rather too late to consider that now. As for standing down, Morny did not even think of it.

"Mornington, Dodd, and Silver," said Bulkeley, looking at them.

"That's right!" said Morny.

Jimmy Silver drew a deep breath.

"Count me out!" he said quietly.

"I understood that you were standing," said Bulkeley.

"I've changed my mind."

"Jimmy!" roared Lovell.

"I'm not standing for election," said Jimmy Silver quietly. "Two Classical candidates are one too many. I'm standing down."

And he walked back to where his chums were standing.

Tommy Dodd's face fell.

"Oh crumbs!" he murmured.

That absolute certainty of success vanished from Tommy Dodd's breast now. The retirement of one Classical candidate settled the matter for him. There was no doubt that Jimmy Silver's supporters would rally round Mornington now, rather than allow a Modern to get in.

Lovell grasped Jimmy by the shoulder, and fairly shook him in his wrath and indignation.

"Jimmy, you ass!" he gasped.

"All serene, old scout!" answered Jimmy Silver cheerfully. "The fellows want a change; but they don't want a Modern skipper. Let Morny go in and win."

"You—you ass, I—I—I'll—" stuttered Arthur Edward.

"You'll vote for Morny, old chap!"

"I won't!" roared Lovell.

"Yes, you will," said Jimmy Silver, with a smile.

Lovell's face was a study. But he put his hand up for Mornington. Jimmy Silver was out of the election, and anything was better than a Modern skipper, from the Classical point of view. And most of the other Classicals followed Lovell's example. There was a forest of hands for Mornington.

"Do you ask for a count, Dodd?" asked Bulkeley, with a smile.

Tommy Dodd grunted and shook his head. The show of hands was more than sufficient.

"N. G.," he answered. "It's all right!"

And Bulkeley of the Sixth announced that Valentine Mornington was duly elected junior captain of Rookwood. There was a burst of cheering for the victor. Mornington came over towards Jimmy Silver as the late junior captain was leaving the Common-room.

"I didn't ask you to stand out, Silver," he said; "but I fancy I shouldn't have got in if you'd stood against me. It would have been the Modern."

"That's why I stood out."

Mornington looked rather remorseful.

"I—I don't feel so pleased as I thought I should," he confessed. "Look here, Silver, if you think you've been badly treated I—I'm willing to chuck in my resignation on the spot, and leave things as they were before."

Jimmy Silver laughed.

"You couldn't very well do that," he said. "And I don't want you to. You're captain now, and that settles it. Go ahead and do your best, and you can depend on me to back you up."

Mornington of the Fourth was junior captain of Rookwood, and there was gloom in the end study. Jimmy Silver had fallen from his high estate. But he did not seem to mind. His chums groused to their hearts' content; but Jimmy Silver did not seem to find it difficult to live up to his own cheery maxim, and "keep smiling."

THE END.

(Particulars of next week's grand Rookwood story will be found on page 2.)

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