

easily; but he's not done that, so as to fag somebody in the Fourth."

"I know."
"And you've let him do it!" shrieked Lovell.

"Why not?"
"Why rot? Why, you—you silly ass—you—you—"

"Easy does it," urged Jimmy Silver.
"Nothing to rag about."

"You—you—," stuttered Lovell.
"Hallo, what's the row?" asked a cheery voice.

Mornington and Erroll, coming away from Little Side, met the Fistical Four in the quad.

"Not rowing, surely, you chaps?" asked Erroll, with a smile.

"Not at all," answered Jimmy. "Lovell seems excited about something, that's all."

"I put it to you, Mornny, as junior skipper," shouted Lovell, "do we fag for the Fifth?"

Mornington frowned.
"No jolly fear!" he answered emphatically.

"That's what Jimmy's doing."
"Rot!"

"He is, I tell you!" shrieked Arthur Edward. "Hansom's given him a list of stuff to get at the tuckshop, and he's going to get tea in Hansom's study in a quarter of an hour. What do you think of that?"

"Bosh!" answered Mornny. "I suppose Lovell's offside, as usual, isn't he, Jimmy?"

"Naturally."
"I tell you—"

"I'll explain how the matter stands, if you like," said Jimmy Silver, with a yawn.

"Hansom is standing us a tea in the end study—"

"Wha-a-at?" stammered Lovell.
"He's given me an order on the sergeant for the stuff. Now, we're not on the best of terms with the Fifth; but if Hansom chooses to stand us a tea, why refuse?"

Lovell blinked.
"He told you to take the stuff to his study!" he howled.

"I believe he did," assented Jimmy.
"But I'm going to take it to my study, old top."

"You—you said you'd get tea in a quarter of an hour."

"So I shall—in our study."
"Oh!"

"Understand at last?" asked Jimmy cheerfully. "I think this will be rather a valuable lesson to Hansom about fagging the Fourth. And we're stony, and this feed will come like corn in Egypt in one of the lean years. Come on!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Raby and Newcome.
Lovell grinned.

He understood at last.
"Good man!" chuckled Mornington, and Erroll laughed. "You're full of good ideas, Jimmy! Go it!"

"You two fellows come to tea with us," said Jimmy Silver. "There's lots for a whole family. And I think we may have a visit from the Fifth before tea is over. You never know."

"Ha, ha, ha!"
"We'll come," said Mornington. "I'll bring a cricket-stump with me, in case it's wanted."

"Come on, you chaps," said Jimmy.
And the Fistical Four headed for the tuckshop again, in quite a cheery and contented mood now.

Four faces were smiling brightly as Jimmy presented Hansom's list to Mr. Kettle.

The old sergeant had the goods ready. It was evidently, as Lovell had said, a "put-up" job on the part of Edward Hansom. He was going to establish the right of fagging the Fourth, and he was beginning with Jimmy Silver.

Jimmy Silver & Co. left the school shop laden with Hansom's parcels.

In the distance, Hansom and his friends, sauntering through the arch from Little Quad, caught sight of them and smiled.

"Faggin' for us, begad!" said Talboys.
Hansom smiled superior.

"I think I told you so," he remarked.
"You did, old chap!" said his chums admiringly. "You did!"

And Edward Hansom's nose was an inch higher as he strolled on.

Doubtless the Fifth-Formers would not have felt so satisfied if they had known the real destination of the good things.

The Fistical Four did not head for the Fifth Form quarter in the School House—

far from it. They headed for the end study in the Fourth Form passage. Tubby Muffin joined them as they progressed along that passage with their parcels.

"Feed on?" asked Tubby, with keen interest.

"Yes. Like to come?" grinned Jimmy Silver.

"My dear old chap, I'm your man!" said Reginald Muffin affectionately.

And he came.
Teddy Grace was met farther along the passage, and he also was invited, and accepted. "Putty of the Fourth" was a good man in a scrap, and Jimmy thought it probable that there would be scrapping later on.

There was soon quite a festive scene in the end study.

The Fistical Four, Mornny and Erroll, Tubby Muffin and Putty, made quite a numerous party.

But there was enough for all. Hansom's goods were quite enough to go round, and the Fourth-Formers piled in with a will.

The good things vanished fast under the attacks of eight hungry juniors.

Tea in the end study was rapid, and it was nearing its end when Conroy, the Australian, looked in.

"You kids been asking the Fifth for trouble?" he inquired.

"They've been asking us," said Jimmy Silver. "And the answer was in the affirmative, as the political chinwaggers say in the House of Chinwag."

"Ha, ha, ha!"
"Well, they're coming," said Conroy.

"Let 'em all come! Try these biscuits, Conroy, they're good. Hansom paid a good price for these biscuits."

"Hansom did?" ejaculated Conroy.
"Exactly."

"Oh, so that's why—"
Jimmy Silver explained, and the Australian junior roared. He called in his chums, Pons and Van Ryn, to help him try the biscuits.

They were also on the scene, ready for the expected arrival of the Fifth. If Hansom & Co. came to the end study they were likely to wake up a very serious hornets'-nest there.

**THE THIRD CHAPTER.
Not According to Programme!**

"READY?" asked Edward Hansom.
He glanced into his study in the Fifth Form passage.

Hansom had allowed a good quarter of an hour to elapse. He wanted to give his fags time to get tea nicely for him.

Hansom was judicious in this. Later on he could hurry up his fags, and cuff them for delay, and so forth, like the great men of the Sixth. But this was an experiment, at present; and he was anxious to break the ice successfully, as it were. So he gave Jimmy Silver plenty of time to get tea.

And his tone was quite cheery and polite as he looked into his study and asked if it was ready.

His expression changed the next moment, however.

Study No. 1 in the Fifth was empty. There was no sign of tea, and there was no sign of fags. The grate was cold and empty. There was no fire—no pile of warm toast. There was no set table—in fact, there was nothing that hadn't been there when Hansom had left his study.

"By gad!" ejaculated the Fifth-Former. He stared into the study blankly.

The captain of the Fifth could not quite make it out. He had ordered Jimmy Silver to get his tea ready in a quarter of an hour, and he had allowed him twenty minutes in which to do it. And there was no tea, and there was no Jimmy Silver.

It was quite perplexing.
"All serene?" asked Cecil Talboys, from the passage.

"Numo!"
"Isn't tea ready?" inquired Lumsden.

"N-no!"
"My word! Give those fags a jolly good hiding, then!" exclaimed Brown major wrathfully. "They've had plenty of time."

"They—they're not here."
"Eh?"

Lumsden and Talboys and Brown major looked past Hansom into the study.

They were surprised, like their leader, to find it empty.

"Jolly queer!" said Lumsden. "Where are they?"

Hansom knitted his brows.
He had "swanked" over his success in fagging the Fourth; but secretly he had been very much surprised at his easy success. It was now dawning upon him that he had not been so successful as he had believed.

"I—I think—" he began haltingly.
"Well, they're not here!" said Talboys.

"Where are they, Hansom?"
"And where's tea? I'm hungry."

"I—I think perhaps they— It's jolly odd," said Hansom, colouring. "I—I suppose that young cad Silver wouldn't have the nerve to disobey my orders—my direct orders, you know—"

"Hum!"
"Hem!"

Hansom's followers thought it very probable, as a matter of fact, that Silver would have the nerve.

"I—I say, what's become of the grub, though?" exclaimed Brown major in dismay. "They had that right enough; we saw them carrying it away from the shop."

"They—they've got that!" stammered Hansom. "They—they wouldn't have the cheek to—to—to—"

He stopped.
The Fifth-Formers looked at one another. The dreadful truth occurred to all of them at once. They understood rather too late the real reason of Jimmy Silver's meek submission. He was not fagging for the Fifth, after all. He was bagging the Fifth Form spread, which was quite a different matter, and not at all gratifying to the hungry heroes of the Fifth.

"Let's go and look for the young sweeps!" said Lumsden abruptly.

Hansom nodded, and the four seniors hurried off towards the Fourth Form quarters. They met Rawson on the staircase, and inquired if he had seen Jimmy Silver. It was then that Conroy spotted them, and took the news to the end study.

"Seen Jimmy Silver?" asked Rawson reflectively. "Oh, yes!"

"Well, where did you see him?"
"In the Form-room."

"Come on, you chaps!" said Hansom hurriedly. "They're feeding on our stuff in the Form-room! Out of the way there, you know! We—we'll jolly well slaughter them!"

The Fifth-Formers rushed downstairs to the Fourth Form-room, deserted at that hour. Rawson grinned and went into his study. His statement had been well founded; he had seen Jimmy Silver in the Form-room. He only omitted to mention that he had seen him there during lessons a couple of hours earlier.

But his meaning dawned on Hansom & Co. when they rushed into the Form-room with warlike looks, and found it empty.

"They—they're not here, begad!" ejaculated Talboys.

Hansom gave a snort of fury.
"That cheeky young rascal was pulling our leg!" he howled. "Come on! We shall find them in Silver's study, I expect."

"Oh, gad!"
In a frame of mind by this time that was almost Hunnish, Hansom & Co. rushed upstairs again.

This time they did not inquire after Jimmy Silver; they rushed along to the end study to see for themselves.

The door was shut. It opened with a crash as Hansom drove his boot against it.

The four seniors rushed in.
"Here they are!" gasped Hansom.

The rush of the Fifth had to stop. The study was crowded. There were eleven juniors in the room; and junior studies were not planned for parties of eleven. There was not much room for the seniors. And there were loud and wrathful exclamations as they collided with the Colonial Co., who were nearest the door.

"Hallo, you fellows! Want anything?" asked Silver.

"Ha, ha, ha!"
"Where's my tuck?" yelled Hansom furiously. He had forgotten for a moment his claims to fagging service, in his anxiety for the spread.

Jimmy Silver jumped up.
"Only one egg left, old bean."

"What?"
"But you can have that!" added Jimmy Silver kindly.

Whiz! Crack!—Smash!
 Hansom received the egg—on his nose!
 "Grooooh!"
 "Ha, ha, ha!"
 Hansom made a wild jump at Jimmy Silver. The egg was streaming down his face, and the Classical juniors were roaring with laughter. The Fifth-Former grove his way through the juniors and reached Jimmy Silver.

"Back up!" roared Jimmy.
 "What-ho!"
 "Collar 'em!"
 "Kick 'em out!"
 "Hurrah!"

And the scene that followed was worthy of the pen of a Homer, or, at least, the typewriter of a Kipling.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.
Vas Victis!

"BACK up!"
 "Give 'em socks!"
 "Yaroooh!"
 "Down with the Fifth!"
 "Hurrah!"
 "Oh! Ow! Yow! Yoop!"
 Against the Fistical Four alone the four seniors would no doubt have proved themselves victors. But eleven juniors were rather too much for them. Even Tubby Muffin was not a warrior; but he was equal to sitting on anybody who was down, and he sat on Hansom when that warlike youth was floored.

And when Tubby Muffin sat on a person, that person was hors de combat. There was no arguing with Tubby's avoidpouis. Hansom crumpled up as Tubby sat on him.

Lumsden and Talboys and Brown major were still putting up a losing fight. Apparently they had expected to walk over a gang of fags with ease. What happened was quite the reverse. The gang of fags walked over them.

Lumsden went down with his head in the ashes, and three or four juniors pinned him there, and Putty playfully sprinkled ashes over his upturned, furious face. Brown major rolled under the table, with juniors pommelling him on all sides. Cecil Talboys struggled with Morny and Conroy and Van Ryn, but he struggled in vain. The dandy of the Fifth was chiefly concerned about his clothes, on which the juniors showed no mercy whatever.

"Mind my collar!" wailed Talboys in tones of anguish. "Mind my necktie! Oh, gad!"
 His collar came off in Van Ryn's grasp; what time Conroy jerked out his necktie. And three or four grasping hands rent his elegant jacket up the back.

"Oh, you awful rotters! Yow-ow! I give in!" gasped Talboys. "I give in! Stoppit! Yaroooh!"
 "Kick him out!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"
 "I say, I'm goin', you know—
 Yoocoo!"
 Talboys went. Three or four boots behind him helped him to go; and he left the end study almost whizzing.
 Fourth-Formers were hurrying along the passage now to the scene of the uproar. The alarm had gone forth that the Fifth had invaded the sacred quarters of the Fourth; and there was not a man in the Fourth Form who was not prepared to do battle with the invaders. Even Peele and Gower and Lattrey, even Towny and Toppy, rushed up with the rest. And Talboys, as he fled, had to run the gauntlet of the new arrivals.
 "Kick him out!" yelled Jimmy Silver from the doorway of the end study.
 And his direction was obeyed.

Every foot in the passage seemed anxious to get a kick at Cecil Talboys as he fled; and there seemed to be innumerable feet. The hapless Talboys felt like a football by the time he reached the stairs, and bounded down them three at a time.
 "Any more there?" roared Higgs from the passage.
 "Three more!"
 "Chuck 'em out, and we'll give 'em beans!"
 "What-ho!"

Jimmy Silver turned back into the study. The end study had rather a wrecked appearance, but it did not look so wretched as Hansom and Lumsden and Brown major. Those three unhappy youths were wriggling painfully under the weight of the juniors who pinned them to the floor.
 "Brown next!" said Jimmy Silver.
 "Leggo!" roared Brown major. "I—I'll go, if you like—"
 "You will, old top!"
 "On your neck!" grinned Lovell.
 Brown major was hauled to the door and hurled forth.

He landed on his hands and knees in the midst of the excited crowd of juniors outside.
 A dozen feet found him as he dropped on the floor.
 "Oh, my hat! You young villains! Help! Yaroooh!"

"Punish him!" roared Higgs. "Kick him out! Gerroust of the way, Peele! I've only kicked him once!"
 Brown major picked himself up and fled. A hurricane of kicks accompanied him along the passage, till he scrambled down the stairs and escaped.

Lumsden was the next.
 He was tossed out of the end study like a sack of coke, and kicked along to the stairs, amid yells of laughter.
 Edward Hansom was left till the last. The captain of the Fifth looked very apprehensive as he was yanked to his feet.
 "Your turn now!" grinned Jimmy Silver.
 "Chuck him out!"

Hansom gasped. Tubby Muffin's weight had told on him. He was in a breathless state as he was hustled to the door.
 "You—you young sweeps! Leggo! Oh crumbs! Oh crickey! Yaroooh!"
 "Do you want us to fag for you any more, Hansom?"
 "Ha, ha, ha!"
 "Yaroooh!"

Hansom went out headlong. He fell into the crowd outside; and Jimmy Silver & Co. followed him up. His comrades had fared roughly; but their experience was a joke to Hansom's. By the time the captain of the Fifth reached the stairs, he felt as if he had been through an earthquake and a cyclone and an air-raid rolled into one. And even then he was not done with. The exuberant juniors rolled him down the first flight of stairs, bumping him on each stair. He was allowed to roll down the next flight by himself; and he lay on the next landing in a dazed state.

The unfortunate fagger of the Fourth was just able to crawl away.
 He was followed by yells of derision from above, and loud invitations to come back and fag the Fourth again; but the hapless Hansom was not thinking just then of fagging the Fourth.

He picked himself up and limped off to his study, where he sank into his armchair, and for the next quarter of an hour was chiefly occupied in gasping and groaning.
 The Fourth-Formers cheered loudly as they went back to their studies, victorious.

Jimmy Silver and his chums came back into the end study, chuckling. The study was in a deplorable state; but they set to work very cheerfully putting it to rights.

"I rather think that Hansom will be tired of fagging this study, after this!" Raby remarked.

"I shouldn't be surprised!" grinned Jimmy Silver. "I don't think the Fifth got much change out of us this time. Anyhow, they're pretty certain not to send us for tuck again."

"Ha, ha, ha!"
 "But where did Morny come in?" grinned Lovell.
 "Morny?"

"Well, Morny's junior captain now, and it was up to Morny to deal with the Fifth. But it's left to this study to take Hansom down a peg." Arthur Edward Lovell chortled. "Morny was in a back seat all the time—it was Jimmy Silver first, second, and all the time."

Jimmy Silver looked rather serious.
 "I don't want to be taking the lead now Morny's captain," he said. "A fellow must play the game. But—"

"But it can't be helped, old top. You're a bit of an ass, in your way, Jimmy, but you ought to be skipper, and you know it. Morny isn't really big enough for the job."
 "Oh, rot!" said Jimmy uneasily.

But other fellows in the Fourth took Arthur Edward Lovell's view. There had been a tussle with the rival Form, and the Fifth had been beaten; and it was Jimmy Silver who had been the leader. And from Morny's very thoughtful look, when Jimmy saw him again, Jimmy could guess that the same thought had occurred to him.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.
A Fag at Last!

"IT'S the principle of the thing!"
 Edward Hansom of the fifth made that remark a couple of days later in his study.

His audience consisted of his study-mates, Lumsden and Talboys.
 Both of them were looking dubious.
 "The principle of the thing!" repeated Hansom. "That's what we've got to think about!"

"The fact is, old chap," said Lumsden, with a cough, "it looks to me to be more trouble than it's worth. The unruly little beasts—"

"Unruly little beasts require ruling with a firm hand."
 "Well, after all, we ain't prefects, and the Fourth don't matter a tuppenny button to us."

"I'm fed up with the scrubby little scoundrels," said Talboys. "I know they simply ruined my clobber the other day!"
 "Both your clobber!" said Hansom irritably.

(Continued on page 16.)

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ADVENTURE		

"Hansom's Mistake!"

(Continued from page 12)

"The tailor man is chargin' me a guinea for repairs. Perhaps you'd like to stand the guinea, Hansom?" suggested Talboys, rather sarcastically.

"If you can't talk sense, Cyril, old man, you'd better give your chin a rest!" said the exasperated Hansom. "Now, as I was saying, it's the principle of the thing. We're seniors, and therefore we have a natural right to fag the juniors. The Sixth do. Carthew of the Sixth was sniggering at me this morning over our affair the other day in the fag quarters. Carthew thinks he can manage fags."

"Carthew's a bully!"
"Well, a certain amount of bullying isn't bad for kids, you know, when they don't know their place. But I'm not thinking of ragging the Fourth. The fact is, I was rather hasty the other day."

"You were!" agreed Lumsden.
"I started with Silver—a thoroughly obstinate little beast, if ever there was one. I would have been wiser to begin with a less obstinate young scoundrel—like Muffin, for instance."

Lumsden grinned.
"Muffin would fag for any blessed chap at Rookwood if he was offered a jam-tart!" he said.

"We can't bribe the fags!" said Hansom loftily. "We've got to remember that we're seniors; and there's the dignity of the Fifth Form to consider. But a thick ear would do it. Offer him a thick ear for refusing, and a fat little funk like Muffin would come to heel fast enough. It's making a beginning and breaking the ice. I ought really to have started with Muffin instead of Silver; I can see that now. What I want is to get the principle of the thing recognised."

"Well, go ahead!" said Lumsden. "We'll back you up, of course; the young rascals ought to fag for us!"

"They ought, for certain!" assented Talboys. "A fag would be no end useful to me; brushin' clothes, and all that. But—"

"I've told Muffin to come to this study," said Hansom casually.

Lumsden indulged in a wink at the ceiling. "Will he come?" he asked.

"I've given him orders to come."

"Hem!"
Tap!

Hansom gave his study-mates a triumphant glance as a tap came at the study door.

The door opened, and the fat face of Reginald Muffin, of the Classical Fourth, looked in, with a beaming, fat smile on it.

"Oh!" ejaculated Lumsden, taken aback.
Tubby Muffin had evidently obeyed orders.

"Come in, Muffin!" rapped out the captain of the Fifth.

"Yes, Hansom!"
The fat Classical rolled in.

"Shut the door!"
Tubby closed the door obediently.

Lumsden and Talboys looked on in surprise. Here was a member of the Fourth Form obeying Hansom's orders, at all events. True, Tubby Muffin was likely to obey anybody's orders rather than take a licking. But he hadn't been licked yet, at all events. Yet his only object in life at the present moment seemed to be to make himself agreeable to Hansom.

Hansom was growing loftier than ever in look. He had rather a weakness for "showing off" before his friends.

"Muffin!" he rapped out.
"Yes, Hansom?"

"Put some more sticks in the fire, and shove the kettle on!"

"Certainly, Hansom!"
Tubby Muffin carried out those directions with cheerful alacrity. It really looked as if Hansom had found an obedient fag at last.

But when the kettle was disposed on the blazing sticks, Tubby Muffin turned towards the captain of the Fifth with an inquiring look.

"Where are they?" he asked.
Hansom coughed.

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"Oh, I said you could have some tarts, didn't I?" he remarked carelessly. "There they are—in the bag."

"Oh!" murmured Lumsden.
The tarts were in the bag; but the cat was out of the bag now. The magic power that had turned the fat Classical into an obedient fag for the Fifth was not Hansom's eye of command or the terror of his glance. It was the promise of jam-tarts.

Hansom avoided meeting his chums' eyes as Tubby Muffin travelled through a couple of jam-tarts. They did not take him long. Two jam-tarts were much to Tubby Muffin. Two dozen would probably have left him inquiring for more.

"Is that all, Hansom?" he asked.
"Yes," grunted the Fifth-Former. "Do you think I keep a tuckshop here for fat fags?"

"Well, you said tarts!" answered Reginald Muffin, in rather an aggrieved tone. "Of course, two tarts are tarts. But I thought—"

"You needn't trouble to think!" snapped Hansom. "You're not wanted to think, Muffin! You're wanted to do as you're told!"

"Oh, am I?" said Tubby warmly.
"Yes. And don't argue!"

"I'll argue if I like!" retorted Reginald Muffin independently.

"You'll get a licking if you do!"
Evidently the fagging was beginning in earnest. The fly had walked into the spider's parlour—attracted by jam-tarts. It was not going to be so easy to walk out again.

That consideration seemed to dawn upon fat Muffin's brain, for he began to back towards the door.

Hansom raised his hand.
"Stop!" he commanded.

Edward Hansom was firmly under the impression that, like the lamented parent of the Prince of Denmark, he had "an eye like Mars, to threaten and command." He was exercising it now.

So far, however, from being awed by Hansom's eye like Mars, Tubby Muffin made a jump for the door. He scented danger.

Hansom jumped up.
His commanding eye was evidently useless in this case. But a commanding hand dropped on Tubby's fat shoulder before he could get the door open and swung him back.

Hansom had a heavy hand, and it was much more efficacious than his eye.

"Now, then, you cheeky young rascal—"
"Yaroooh!"
"Shurrup!"
"Help!"

"You silly young ass!" roared the exasperated Hansom. "Stop making that row! I haven't touched you!"

"Leggo!"
"Now, Muffin—"
"Rescue!"

"Give me that cane, Lummy!"
"Here you are," said Lumsden, grinning.

"Hold out your hand, Muffin!" said Hansom, just as if he was a prefect of the Sixth Form.

Muffin blinked at him.
"Mum-mum-my hand!" he stuttered.

"Yes; sharp!"
"Wha-a-at for?"
"I'm going to cane you!"

"Kik-kik-cane me!" howled Tubby Muffin indignantly. "Yah! Do you think you're a prefect, you silly clown? Yah!"

Lumsden and Talboys grinned; they couldn't help it. Hansom flushed with wrath.

"Hold out your hand!" he thundered.
"Yah!" retorted Tubby Muffin.

"Then you'll get it harder!"
Whack, whack, whack!

The hapless Tubby did get it—across his fat shoulders. Hansom laid it on with great energy. He felt that he was upholding the dignity of the Fifth, as well as establishing the important rule that the Fourth fagged for the Fifth. Tubby Muffin squirmed and howled.

But there was no help at hand for poor Tubby. He was in the spider's parlour, far from help.

"Whack, whack, whack!"
"Yoop! Stoppit! I say, Hansom, old chap—Yaroooh! You beast! Chuck it! I say, old fellow, leggo! Yaroooh!"

"There!" said Hansom severely. "I think that ought to be a lesson to you, Muffin!"

"Yow-ow-ow!"
"Do you want any more?"
"No!" howled Tubby.

"Then set to work, fagging!" commanded Hansom. "Clear the tea-table, tidy up the grate, and put the kettle away, and—dust the room! I'll watch you do it!"

"I'm not going to fag for the Fifth!" roared Tubby.

"Whack!"
"Yaroooh!"
"What did you say, Muffin?"

"I—I said—I mean, I'll fag for you with pleasure, old fellow!" gasped the unhappy Tubby.

"Don't call me old fellow! I don't like it from fags!"
"All right, old fellow—I mean, you beast—I meaner say, yes, Hansom! All right!"

"Pile in!" commanded Hansom.
Tubby Muffin cast a longing glance at the door. The fat Classical was paying dearly for two jam-tarts. With a furious face he set to work fagging, under the commanding eye of Hansom of the Fifth.

Hansom had bagged a fag at last!

THE SIXTH CHAPTER. The High Hand!

JIMMY!"
"Hallo, porker!"

Jimmy Silver was on his way to the cricket-ground, when Tubby stopped him, red and wrathful and pumtive at the same time. Jimmy paused good-naturally.

"Been in the wars?" he asked.
"Yow-ow-ow!"

"Well, what's the trouble? Lovell's yelling to me!" said Jimmy Silver.

"I've been fagging for the Fifth!" gasped Tubby.

"What?"
"They got me into Hansom's study," groaned Tubby dolorously, "and then the beast licked me till I fagged for him, Jimmy!"

Jimmy Silver frowned.
"You oughtn't to have done it," he said.

"What could I do?" demanded Muffin warmly. "Think I could fight three of the Fifth? Three of the Fourth would be as much as I could tackle."

"And a little over, I think," said Jimmy, laughing.

"Well, ain't you going to take it up?" exclaimed Tubby. "Are those Fifth Form cads going to fag the Fourth, and wallop 'em?"

"No fear! But—but—" Jimmy hesitated. "Morny's junior captain now, Tubby; it's Morny's bizney to take it up for the Form. You'd better go to Mornington."

Tubby Muffin gave a snort.
"Morny's no good!" he answered.
"Go to Morny!" answered Jimmy Silver.

"Why, you young sweep, you voted for him at the election—"

"Well, he stood me a feed, you see—"
"Well, Morny's your man!" grunted Jimmy, and he detached Tubby's fat hand from his sleeve and joined his chums, who were waiting for him impatiently.

Tubby Muffin blinked after him, and then rolled away to Valentine Mornington's study. Tubby was simply athirst for vengeance for his manifold wrongs, and although he had voted for Mornington at the junior captain's election, his faith was stronger in Jimmy Silver. But there was no choice for him now, and he rolled away to pitch his tale of woe to the new skipper.

Morny was alone in Study No. 4; Erroll was on the cricket-ground. The new junior captain was wrestling with French conjunctions, a task set him by Monsieur Monceau, when Tubby rolled in. He pointed impatiently to the door.

"Travel!" he snapped. "I'm busy!"
"Look here, Morny—"

"Shut the door after you!"
"Do you call yourself junior captain?"

roared Tubby Muffin, in a white heat of indignation. "Am I going to be fagged by the Fifth, and nothing said about it? Jimmy Silver would have made the rotters sit up for it, when he was captain, I can tell you!"

"Oh! Is that it?" Mornington laid down his pen and rose to his feet. "The Fifth have been fagging you, have they?"

"Yes; Hansom and Lumsden and Talboys, in their study!"

"And you fagged?"

"I had to. Hansom whacked me till I did. I—I fought hard!" said Tubby Muffin. "I—I knocked him flying once—fairly spinning. But there were three of them—"

"Didn't you knock them all spinin'?" asked Mornington sarcastically. "Why didn't you take all three, and bash their heads together?"

"Well, I would have, only—only after I'd knocked Hansom down the others, you know—"

"You should have knocked them down, too!" grinned Mornington.

"Well, I did, you know," said Tubby. "I fought like a—lion. But altogether they were too much for me. See? And—and I've been thrashed, and made to fag, and it's your bizney to take it up as junior captain, Morny, you know it is!"

Mornington frowned.

"You're such a thumpin' fat little liar!" he said. "I don't know how much there is in your yarn. But I'll go and see Hansom about it."

"Fat lot of good that will be!" grunted Tubby Muffin discontentedly. "Jimmy Silver would have—"

"Never mind Jimmy Silver now—I'm skipper. Shut up, and leave it to me!" snapped Mornington.

The junior captain left his study and made his way to the Fifth Form quarters. That was rather a reckless proceeding on his part in the circumstances, but Morny did not stop to think about that; he was reckless by nature, and it did not occur to him to be prudent.

There was a sound of laughter in Hansom's study as Morny reached the door. He threw it open.

Hansom & Co. seemed in a merry mood. The principle of the thing, as Hansom termed it, had been established—the ice had been broken. The Fourth had started fagging for the Fifth. True, only Tubby Muffin had started; but it was a beginning.

Edward Hansom confidently predicted that Muffin's example would be followed, especially if a few more thrashings were handed out. And Hansom was prepared to hand them out as fast as required.

The three Fifth-Formers stared at Mornington, still smiling.

"Hallo! Did you tell this fag to come here, Hansom?" yawned Talboys.

Hansom shook his head.

"No; I'm not wanting a fag at present," he said. "You can cut, Mornington. I'll call you when required!"

"You silly chump!" was Morny's reply.

"Cut off at once!"

"I want to know whether you've been fagging Tubby Muffin, of my Form?" said Mornington.

Hansom nodded genially.

"Yes; I believe it was Muffin who fagged here," he assented. "One of your scrubby gang, anyhow. I think it was Muffin."

"I think you're already aware that the Fourth don't fag for the Fifth!" said Mornington.

"We're going to knock all that nonsense out of you, my boy," assured Hansom. "I shall probably want you to-morrow. Be ready."

"You picked Muffin, I suppose, because he's a funky ass, to begin with?" said Mornington disdainfully.

Hansom glanced round.

"Where's that cane?" he asked.

"Here you are, old top!" said Talboys.

"Now, Mornington," said Hansom, taking the cane, "you've been cheeky. Cheek to the Fifth isn't allowed. I'm sorry for you, but I've decided to put down this unruliness among the fags with a firm hand!"

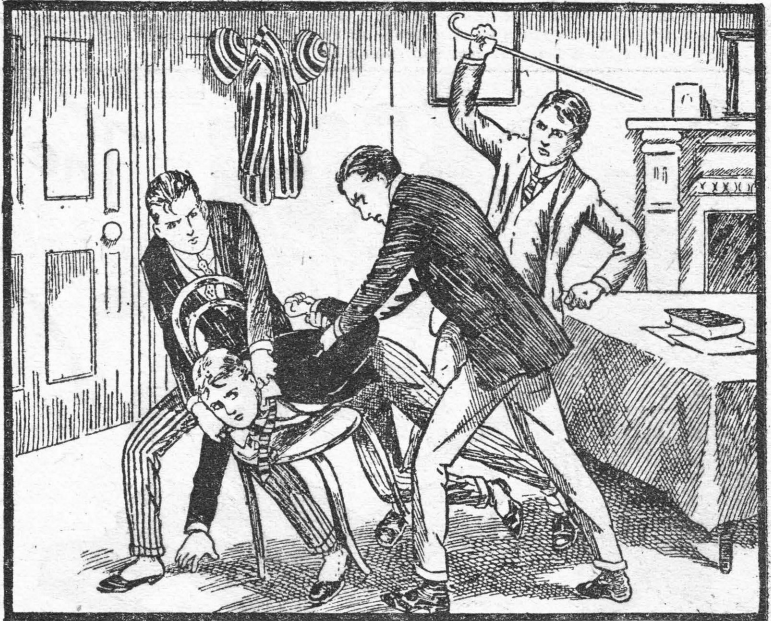
"You silly ass!"

"Hold out your hand, Mornington!"

Valentine Mornington laughed. He was not likely to hold out his hand at the Fifth-Formers' bidding.

"You hear me, Mornington?" said Hansom darkly.

"Oh, don't talk out of your neck!" said



MORNY GETS IT HOT! "Lay him across the chair!" commanded Hansom. Mornington was fighting like a tiger, but the seniors got him down at last. Then Hansom started in with the cane. Whack! Whack! Whack! "Now are you going to hold out your hand when you're told?" asked the senior. (See Chapter 6.)

Morny contemptuously. "Do you think I'm another Tubby Muffin, you swanking duffer? I've got this to tell you, Hansom—Tubby Muffin personally don't matter two pins; but you won't be allowed to fag the Fourth, not even Muffin. I'm goin' to make you sit up for it. That's all."

And Mornington swung round on his heel to walk away.

The next moment Hansom's hand was on his collar, and he was swung back. Without a word, Mornington hit out, and Hansom staggered back.

"Ow!" he gasped.

Mornington darted into the passage again, and almost into the arms of Brown major, who was coming to the study. Brown major grasped him at once.

Mornington struggled fiercely. But the big Fifth-Former held him securely enough, and bundled him back into the study.

Hansom closed the door and put his back to it.

"Now I think you'll sing a different tune, my pippin!" he said savagely. "Hold out your hand, Mornington!"

"Rats!"

"Will you obey orders?"

"Oh, don't be a goat!"

"Lay him across a chair!" commanded Hansom.

Lumsden and Talboys laid Morny across a chair. It required both of them to do it, for Morny was fighting like a tiger. There were signs of damage about the two seniors, and they were panting when they had Morny safely down at last.

Then Hansom started in with the cane.

Whack, whack, whack!

Mornington still struggled furiously, but in vain. The grasp on him was too strong.

"Now, are you going to hold out your hand when you're told?" chuckled Hansom.

"No, you rotter!"

Whack, whack, whack, whack!

Not a cry left Morny's lips; but he still struggled savagely. Hansom laid on the cane with great vim. It was a chance that might not occur again, and he was making the most of it.

"I say, that'll do!" said Lumsden at last. "He's had enough!"

"Well, perhaps that'll do," assented Hansom. "I don't want to be hard, even on a cheeky fag. Chuck him out now he's licked! I dare say he'll do as he's told to-morrow!"

Brown major opened the door, and Mornington was dropped into the passage. The door closed again, and the hapless Morny

heard loud laughter from within as he staggered to his feet. Hansom & Co. were enjoying their triumph.

Valentine Mornington limped away.

Tubby Muffin met him on the staircase. The fat Classical blinked inquiringly at him, and then grinned. It did not need much perspicacity to discern what had happened.

"He, he, he! Call yourself junior captain?" hooted Tubby. "Do you think Jimmy Silver would have—Yarooooh!"

Mornington smote, and the fat Classical sat on the stairs with a yell. Then Morny strode on to his study, leaving Tubby Muffin yelling.

There was excitement in the Fourth Form at Rookwood when Reginald Muffin spread the news—which he very quickly did.

The Fifth Form had started fagging the Fourth successfully! And they had licked the junior captain for objecting! The Rookwood Fourth was quite wild with wrath, and on all sides the question was loudly asked—what was Morny going to do about it? And upon the answer to that question Morny's leadership of the Lower School at Rookwood depended.

THE END.

Another Long, Complete Tale of Jimmy Silver and Co., The chums of Rookwood, entitled

"TIT for TAT!"

By Owen Conquest,

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