

SMYTHE'S UNDERHAND TRICK!

Jimmy Silver & Co., and he schemes a weird and wonderful plot. But he forgets that there's many a slip 'twixt cup and lip!

OUT FOR A WIN!



A Rollicking, Long Complete story of Jimmy Silver & Co., the chums of Rookwood.

By
OWEN CONQUEST.

(Author of the famous stories of Rookwood appearing in the "Boys' Friend" every Monday.)

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

The Eleventh Man!

"KICK-OFF at two-thirty!" said Jimmy Silver.

Adolphus Smythe nodded.

"Yaas!" he assented.

"You'll be ready?"

"Oh, yaas!"

Jimmy Silver, junior captain of Rookwood, eyed Adolphus Smythe of the Shell curiously.

He could not catch on.

It was Wednesday afternoon—a half-holiday. On that afternoon a football match was to be played—a match that was remarkable in the eyes of all the Lower School of Rookwood.

On one side was Jimmy Silver's team—the junior eleven. On the other was Smythe's team—comprising all the knuts and slackers of the Fourth and the Shell.

The challenge had come from Adolphus Smythe, and it had been accepted in a rather merry mood by Jimmy Silver & Co.

Smythe was standing at the gateway now, looking out into the road. His pals Tracy and Howard were with him, and Townsend and Topham of the Fourth. They all seemed in high good humour, although the time was fast approaching when they were to stand up to the doughty players of the junior eleven on the football-field.

"You'll find us on the ground all right, Silver," continued Smythe reassuringly. "Don't you worry! Tell your men to pull up their socks—we're goin' to give them some hard work!"

"Yes, rather!" grinned Tracy.

"You've made up your eleven?" said Jimmy. "I think you mentioned that you were looking for an eleventh man?"

"That's settled," said Smythe. "A friend's comin' to visit me this afternoon—I mentioned him to you. He

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will be eleventh man. Chap of the name of—of Jorrocks."

"Not a Rookwood chap?" said Jimmy.

"No; chap from—from another school," said Smythe calmly. "Friend of mine. You're not startin' difficulties, I suppose? I mentioned to you that perhaps I couldn't make up a full team among my friends here, and that perhaps I'd ask my pal Jorrocks to play for us. That was understood."

"Right as rain," said Jimmy. "I've no objection that I know of."

"That's all right, then."

"Waiting for your friend now, I suppose?"

"You've got it," said Smythe. "He's comin' in a taxi from the station. He's come by railway from—from Oxford."

"That's a jolly long way!"

"Yaas, isn't it?" assented Smythe.

And the knuts all smiled. Jimmy Silver could not quite see why they should smile, but they did. He glanced round at the smiling faces rather suspiciously.

"Well, we'll be ready for you," he said at last; and he strolled away in some perplexity.

Smythe & Co. grinned at one another.

"Dear old Uncle James!" murmured Smythe. "Not a suspish. I wonder what he would say if he knew my pal Jorrocks' real name?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"If he knew," continued Smythe, with great enjoyment, "that I've bagged Teddy Leech, the Lanbury winger, to play for us—and that they're up against a player who's good enough for Tottenham Hotspur or Manchester United!"

The knuts chuckled joyously.

"Here's a taxi!" said Topham.

"It's Leech—I mean Jorrocks!"

The taxi stopped at the school gates. Adolphus Smythe hurried forward to greet the individual that alighted.

At Lanbury, ten miles away, the whole population would have recognised Teddy Leech, the diminutive winger. But at Rookwood School he was quite a stranger.

He was over nineteen, but he was slight and small, and he certainly did not look sixteen. Adolphus Smythe was half a head taller.

It was amazing that so diminutive a fellow could be such a power on the football-field. But the knuts had seen him play for Lanbury, and they knew his quality.

Jimmy Silver & Co. had heard of him, but they had never seen him—and certainly they had not the remotest suspicion that Adolphus Smythe had conceived the extraordinary scheme of bringing him to Rookwood to play in that afternoon's match.

"This way in, old bean!" said Smythe, as the Lanbury winger glanced about him. "Trot in with me!"

"Yes, sir!" said Leech.

"Don't call me 'sir' here, for goodness' sake!" said Smythe, in alarm. "Call me Smythe."

"Right-ho, sir—I mean Smythe!" said Leech.

"You're takin' the place of a chap who can't play," said Smythe. "Chap—friend of mine—named Jorrocks. The fellows'll suppose you to be Jorrocks. All the same to you, I suppose?"

"I don't see that it matters."

"Quite so—it doesn't. Come on!"

Smythe & Co. led their friend across to the School House. There was a rod in pickle for Jimmy Silver & Co. that afternoon—and the rod in pickle had arrived!

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Mysterious!

"BLESSED if I understand it!"

This from Valentine Mornington.

A group of the junior footballers stood outside the School House,

chatting to pass away the time until the football match was due.

Some of them looked thoughtful and puzzled—especially the Fistical Four—Jimmy Silver, Lovell, Raby, and Newcome. The four prided themselves on being rather wary birds, and on knowing who was who and what was what. But they had to admit that they were perplexed now.

Smythe's challenge to the junior eleven they had looked on as a piece of astounding cheek and absurd swank. That the slackers of Rookwood should fancy for a moment that they could stand up to Jimmy Silver's crowd was really too funny for words. That they should go around the school bragging of the victory they expected to score was still more absurd.

But that was what Smythe & Co. had been doing for the past few days. Somehow, they expected to win.

Jimmy Silver & Co. had taken on the match, intending to give the slackers the time of their lives in the match. They had fully expected that Smythe would repent of his swank before the kick-off came, and would attempt to retreat on some lame excuse.

Far from that, Smythe was quite keen on it, and showed no signs whatever of wanting to retreat.

"Blessed," repeated Mornington, "if I understand it! It beats me to the wide! They know they can't win."

"They must know!" assented Jimmy Silver.

"Look at their team!" continued Mornington, wrinkling his brows in puzzled thought.

"Smythe must be depending on his eleventh man to pull him through!" said Jimmy.

"Who's the man?" asked Erroll.

"Some chap who's visiting him here this afternoon—chap named Jorrocks, he told me," answered Jimmy.

"Must be a wonderful man if he can pull that crowd through a football match!" grunted Arthur Edward Lovell.

"He can't!" said Jimmy. "If he's a friend of Smythe, it's not likely he knows much about footer! But if he's ever so good a player, he's not likely to be better than we are!"

"No fear!"

"Anyhow, he's only one—and the rest of the team are slacking fumbler!" said Mornington. "Yet Smythe is braggin' of beatin' us at our own game! What does it mean?"

"Give it up!" said Jimmy.

"Hallo! Here they are!" said Lovell. "I suppose that's Smythe's visitor with them."

Smythe & Co. were coming in from the gates, with Teddy Leech walking in their midst.

"That your eleventh man, Smythe?" called out Newcome.

"Yaas!"

Smythe rather hurried his eleventh man into the House. He did not want him to exchange words with Jimmy Silver & Co.

The footballers eyed the new recruit very curiously as he went in. He looked very fit and very active; but he did not impress them.

"So that's Jorrocks!" said Raby.

"Doesn't look very dangerous!" remarked Arthur Edward Lovell.

"Smythe is welcome to a win if his pal can help him to it!"

Valentine Mornington stared after the newcomer till he had disappeared into the house. Then he glanced at the Fistical Four with a thoughtful wrinkle in his brow.

"Where does that chap come from?" he asked.

"Oxford," said Jimmy.

"Smythe told you so?"

"Yes."

"Does he belong to a school?"

"Smythe said so."

"It's jolly queer," said Mornington.

"I've seen his face before somewhere. Either his chivvy or a photograph of it."

"I don't quite see how you could have," said Jimmy, in surprise. "I'd never heard of him till Smythe mentioned he was coming on a visit here. Of course, you might have seen a photograph of him in Smythe's study."

Mornington shook his head.

"It was in a newspaper, I think," he said.

"In a newspaper?"

"I believe so," said Mornington. "I can't quite recall where or when, but I feel certain I've seen that chap's photograph in a newspaper!"

Some of the footballers laughed.

"Smythe's got some reason for playing that chap," said Valentine Mornington. "There's a catch it in, somewhere!"

"I don't see how," said Jimmy Silver.

"Well, I don't quite," said the dandy of the Fourth. "But Smythe's got somethin' up his sleeve, and it's that chap Jorrocks. Anybody ever heard the name before?"

There was a general shaking of heads.

The name of Jorrocks was new to Jimmy Silver & Co.

"Let's get along to the ground," suggested Lovell. "We can punt a ball about while we're waiting for those duds!"

"Let's!" assented Jimmy Silver.

The footballers moved off, with the exception of Mornington. He remained where he was, thinking deeply. Kit Erroll looked back.

"Aren't you coming along, Morny?"

"Not just yet—it's half an hour to kick-off, anyhow. I'll join you later."

"Oh, all right!"

Erroll followed the rest of the footballers, leaving Mornington alone. The dandy of the Fourth strolled into the School House.

Mornington was as sharp as a razor in his wits, and he was puzzled and suspicious. Unless Smythe was fairly "off his rocker," he couldn't expect to win the match with his crew of slackers—yet he obviously did expect to win.

The only explanation to Morny's mind was that for some mysterious reason Adolphus Smythe placed amazing faith in his new recruit.

Why? A fellow from a school in Oxfordshire—a friend of Smythe's—was

not likely to be so wonderful a player that he could carry ten passengers through a football match. It was in Morny's mind that he had seen a newspaper photograph of that slim and rather good-looking lad. Who was he? And what was he?

He strolled into the Shell passage, and heard a buzz of merry voices from Smythe's study. That study was crowded. Adolphus was standing tea and cake to the new arrival; not wholly from motives of hospitality. Smythe was anxious to keep him dark till the very moment of the match.

Mornington tapped at Smythe's door and looked in.

The crowd of knuts looked round at him.

"Time?" asked Tracy.

"Oh, no! Lots of time yet!" answered Mornington.

His eyes were upon Jorrocks.

"Then run away, dear boy," said Smythe; "we're rather crowded in here already."

"Won't you introduce your friend?" asked Morny.

"I've introduced him to my pals," answered Smythe. "As you're not a pal of mine, Morny, you can cut!"

"Had a good journey from Oxfordshire, Jorrocks?" asked Valentine Mornington pleasantly.

The Lanbury winger stared at him.

"From Oxfordshire?" he repeated.

"Yes. You come from Oxford, I hear."

"Not at all. I—"

"Get out, Morny!" roared Smythe. "What the dooce are you buttin' into my study for? Shut the door on him, Towner!"

Slam!

Mornington's eyes glittered for a moment. But he had not come there for a rough-and-tumble with the knuts, and he stepped out quietly into the passage, and the door slammed after him.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

A Slip 'Twixt Cup and Lip!

"GREAT pip!" Valentine Mornington uttered that exclamation in startled tones.

Morny had retired to his study to think it out. There was plenty of time yet before the football match, and Morny was very keen on the mystery of Smythe's recruit.

He knew that there was some mystery about it—some trick—though he could

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not fathom what. It was only too clear that Smythe was keeping Jorrocks dark in his study—keeping him away from the Rookwooders. And Jorrocks' surprise when Morny had asked him about the journey from Oxford had revealed with perfect clearness that Smythe had lied on that subject. The new recruit was not from a school in Oxfordshire.

Why had Smythe lied on that point? What was he concealing? Jimmy Silver, probably, would not have troubled his head about the matter, but Morny was keen to know. He felt instinctively that somehow the Rookwooders were being tricked. He was haunted, too, by his vague remembrance of Jorrocks' face—seen as he believed, in some newspaper photograph. Who could the fellow be for his photograph to be published in a newspaper?

Morny sat on his study table and thought it out. And his eyes fell carelessly on a copy of the "Lanbury Gazette" that lay there—a week-old copy.

The "Lanbury Gazette" was a little local paper, and seldom or never found its way two miles outside Lanbury, which was ten miles from Rookwood. But the Lanbury winger, Teddy Leech, had been heard of at the school, and some of the fellows had been keenly interested in what they had heard of the diminutive forward. Erroll had bought a copy of the Lanbury paper for an account of the football match between Lanbury and Bunbury, played a week before on the Lanbury ground—a match, Morny knew that Smythe & Co. had motored over to Lanbury to witness.

The sight of the Lanbury paper recalled something to Morny's mind. He picked it up and opened it hastily.

It was then that he ejaculated: "Great pip!"

For at the head of a column-long account of the football match was a photograph of the darling of Lanbury.

Mornington had glanced at it carelessly a few days before, and forgotten it. But the sight of "Jorrocks" had brought it back vaguely to his mind.

Now he knew!

The newspaper photograph was not a work of art, but the likeness was unmistakable.

Smythe's friend from an Oxford school, Jorrocks, was one and the same with Teddy Leech, the Lanbury winger!

Instead of a schoolboy of sixteen the new recruit was an experienced player of nineteen, said to be already approached by several secretaries of League teams for his services.

Valentine Mornington whistled.

He had discovered Smythe's little scheme now—there was no doubt about that. It was the Lanbury winger that Adolphus proposed to "spring" upon the unsuspecting Rookwooders—a player who, slight and youthful as he looked, was fully able to take his place in a Cup-tie match. Adolphus & Co. could fool and fumble as they liked; the Lanbury winger would win the match for them, and could probably have won it against the Rookwood Sixth!

"So that's it!" murmured Morny.

He stood up, thinking hard:

His first thought was to acquaint Jimmy Silver with his discovery. Jimmy had a right to object to the new player on the ground of his age and by reason of the trickery of a false name.

That, however, would put the Rookwood eleven into the position of "crying off" the match; and if Smythe lied, and Jorrocks backed him up to it, it would not be easy to prove that

Jorrocks was in actual fact Teddy Leech. The resemblance of an ill-printed newspaper photograph would not be admitted as conclusive.

Mornington thought it out.

He made up his mind at last, and strolled from the study. Outside the School House he caught sight of Smythe & Co. heading for Little Side in a merry crowd, with Jorrocks in their midst.

Morny glanced at his watch. It wanted five minutes to the time fixed for kicking off the ball.

There was no time to waste. But Mornington's counter-scheme was clear in his keen mind.

He glanced in at the prefects' room, and observed Bulkeley of the Sixth there, engaged in a game of chess with Neville. Then he strolled along to Mr. Dalton's study.

Mr. Dalton, the master of the Fourth, was out that afternoon, as Morny knew. He stepped into the Form-master's study, and closed the door.

Then he picked up the telephone-receiver.

"Number, please?"

Mornington gave the number of the telephone in the prefects' room at Rookwood.

"Hallo!"

It was George Bulkeley's voice that came through in answer. Mornington grinned as he recognised it.

The buzz of the telephone-bell had interrupted Bulkeley's game of chess. But the captain of Rookwood certainly could not guess that he was being rung up from Mr. Dalton's study, only a few yards away.

"Is that Rookwood?" asked Mornington, affecting a deep bass voice as he spoke into the transmitter.

"Yes."

"Teddy Leech is wanted at once."

"Eh?"

"Teddy Leech."

"Nobody of that name at Rookwood."

"I mean Teddy Leech, the Lanbury winger; you must have heard of him."

"Oh, I've heard of him all right!" answered Bulkeley. "But he's not at Rookwood. Never been here, to my knowledge."

"He came over to-day to play football, as a member of a junior eleven."

"Wha-a-at?"

"He's probably on the junior football ground at this moment."

"Impossible!"

"I tell you it's a fact. For goodness' sake tell him to come home at once!"

"But—but I don't catch on."

"Tell him there's a fire in his house, and he's to come back to Lanbury as fast as he can."

"Good heavens!"

"Quick!"

"If he's here, I'll tell him," said Bulkeley. "I can't believe it's as you say; but if he's here, he shall have your message."

"Thanks! Tell him to hurry. There's a fire—"

"Right-ho!"

Mornington rang off, on Mr. Dalton's telephone, and walked out of the study with a cheery smile on his face.

He whipped out of the School House, and started at a run for the football-ground. Glancing back over his shoulder, he saw Bulkeley of the Sixth come out of the house, and start for Little Side with great strides.

But Morny was first. He came on the football-ground at a run, while the Sixth-Former was still at a distance.

Jimmy Silver greeted him rather sharply.

"You're late, Morny; it's turned the

half-past! What the thump have you been hanging about for?"

"Well, I'm here now," said Mornington amicably. "All ready?"

"Yes, of course."

"Oh, yaas!" yawned Smythe of the Shell. "We've tossed for ends already, dear boy; only waitin' for you."

"Who's the giddy slacker now?" jeered Peele.

"Get on to the field," said Jimmy Silver.

Mornington threw off his coat and muffler; he had already changed for footie.

The two teams went into the field. A good many Rookwooders had already gathered round to watch the match. Most of them were smiling. The general expectation was that Smythe & Co. would "crock up" in a very short time, and that Jimmy Silver & Co. would pile up a truly ridiculous score. Smythe & Co., in fact, were to be held up to derision as the slackers and fumblerers that they were. The only surprising thing was that Adolphus Smythe should have exposed himself deliberately to such a showing up.

Yet the knuts seemed confident enough.

They lined up with cheery faces, with Teddy Leech, alias "Jorrocks," at inside-right.

Teddy Leech was looking rather grave. He did not know much about Smythe's scheme; but he had a vague feeling that, somehow, things were not quite on the square. But he was there to play football, and he was there to play it to the best of his ability.

Brown of the Fifth was referee. He was about to blow the whistle when Bulkeley came hurrying on the field.

"Hold on!" exclaimed the captain of Rookwood.

All the players looked round.

"Anything wrong, Bulkeley?" asked Jimmy Silver.

"No. But Leech—Teddy Leech—is wanted at home; there's a fire! Is he here?"

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Simply Awful!

"TEDDY LEECH!"

The name was repeated all through the ranks of the Rookwood footballers, and caught up and repeated by the crowd round the ropes.

Everybody there had heard of Teddy Leech, the "Little Wonder," the Lanbury winger, whose fame was spreading.

"Teddy Leech here!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver blandly.

"Yes."

"Not likely! He may have dropped in to watch the game, but it's not jolly likely!" said Jimmy, in great astonishment.

Smythe's face was a study.

Teddy Leech, alias Jorrocks, was staring. He was about to move out of the ranks towards Bulkeley, when Smythe caught him by the arm.

"Hold on!" whispered Smythe fiercely.

"But he says—"

"Hold on, I tell you!"

"I've had a telephone-call from Lanbury," said Bulkeley. He, naturally, supposed that the call had come from Lanbury. "They rang up Rookwood, and were put on to the prefects' room number. The message says that Teddy Leech is playing in a junior match here this afternoon—"

"What?"

"And there's a fire in his house, and

he's wanted home at once!" said Bulkeley. "If it's a hoax—" "Must be a hoax!" said Lovell. "Nobody here but Rookwood fellows and Smythe's friend Jorrock's." Mornington grinned.

"Look at merry old Jorrock's!" he murmured.

Teddy Leech had thrown off Smythe's detaining hand, and started towards Bulkeley.

His face was very startled. The news that there was a fire in his house at Lanbury was, naturally, much more important, in his mind, than a junior football match on the Rookwood ground.

"When did the call come?" he asked breathlessly.

"A few minutes ago," Bulkeley answered. "I came straight here. Are you Teddy Leech, by any chance?"

"Yes, yes. I must get off at once to—"

"Teddy Leech!" roared Lovell. "Why, his name's Jorrock's—he's Smythe's friend Jorrock's, from a school at Oxford—"

"Oh, gad!" groaned Adolphus Smythe.

"Dished!" murmured Tracy. The slackers of Rookwood looked at one another hopelessly. Up to that point everything had gone swimmingly.

Now, all of a sudden their house of cards had tumbled into ruins.

The trick was exposed before all Rookwood, and their champion player was lost. Teddy Leech, utterly regardless of Smythe & Co., was hurrying off the field, putting on his coat as he hurried away. Evidently Adolphus Smythe was not to have the benefit of his services that afternoon.

Jimmy Silver looked at Smythe. Slowly the truth was dawning upon the brain of Uncle James of Rookwood.

"What does this mean, Smythe?" he asked sternly.

Bulkeley chimed in:

"That wants explaining, Smythe!"

He glanced after the disappearing form of the "Little Wonder," of Lanbury, and then fixed his eyes grimly on Smythe of the Shell. "Now then, what does it mean? You were palming off a professional footballer as a schoolboy on these fellows?"

"I—I—it was a—a joke!" gasped Adolphus. "He—he's not exactly a professional, either. Silver agreed to my playing a friend—"

"You said his name was Jorrock's!" exclaimed Jimmy.

"What does his name matter?" said Adolphus feebly.

"Why, Teddy Leech is nineteen or twenty, though he looks sixteen!" exclaimed Lovell. "And you were springing him on us, you—you swindler!"

"I—I—"

"That's why they thought they were going to win!" exclaimed Conroy. "Of all the rotten spoofers—"

"You—you see, I—" Smythe's voice failed him.

Never had a trickster been so completely and hopelessly shown up.

There was a yell of contempt and derision from the Rookwood crowd.

"This is pretty sharp practice, Smythe!" said Bulkeley, eyeing the miserable Adolphus scornfully. "Do you call it playing the game?"

"I—I—"

"You deserve to be kicked off any decent football-field!" said Bulkeley contemptuously. And he turned and strode away, leaving the hapless Adolphus crimson and stuttering.

"And we'll jolly well kick him off!" exclaimed Lovell wrathfully. "The swindling spoofer! That's why he challenged us—that's why he's been swanking, because he had a giddy professional to spring on us—and a pack of lies along with him!"

"Scrag him!"

"Here, I—I say—" gasped Adolphus, in great alarm.

"You awful rotter!" said Jimmy Silver, eyeing Adolphus with savage scorn. "But for the accident of that telephone-call coming just now, you'd have carried off the match by a dirty, lying trick!"

"Not so much of a giddy accident!" drawled Mornington. "You see, I timed the telephone call."

"You did!" exclaimed half a dozen voices.

Morny nodded coolly.

"You see, I recognised the merry Leech!" he explained. "Bulkeley thought he got that telephone call from Lanbury. As a matter of fact, he got it from Mr. Dalton's study."

"What?" gasped Jimmy Silver.

"You see, I thought it was a handy way of showin' up that plottin' cad, and clearin' Leech off the grass," explained Morny.

"But—but how could you know there was a fire in his house, then?" ejaculated Lovell.

Mornington shrugged his shoulders.

"Somethin' had to be said to make him own up and clear," he answered.

"Dash it all, Morny, that was rather thick!" said Jimmy Silver, with a frown.

"You've made the chap believe there's a fire in his house—"

"I stated the exact facts," yawned Mornington.

"Then there is a fire—"

"Quite."

"How did you know then?"

"By the use of my natural intelligence, dear boy. There's bound to be a fire in his house this time of the year!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Jimmy Silver grinned! He could not help it.

"He'll find the fire all right when he gets home," said Mornington. "In the kitchen grate in all probability. Sorry to have alarmed him for nothin', of course; but he shouldn't have lent himself to a trick like this. He asked for it."

"Well, that's so," admitted Jimmy Silver.

"And now what about Smythe?" demanded Lovell. "We're not going to play footer with the cad."

"My dear chap, that's just what we're going to do!" answered Jimmy Silver quietly. "Smythe's challenged us to a match, and now he's going to play it. He won't have the Lanbury winger to see him through. But he's going to play footer for the full time, and we're going to keep him busy. By the time the match is over, I fancy he will be sorry for having played his little trick."

Lovell chuckled.

"Right-ho! On the ball!"

"Ready, Smythe?" asked Jimmy Silver grimly.

Smythe breathed hard. Without the champion player who was to have seen him through, the prospect of the match was a horrifying one to Adolphus. To stand up on his own to such hefty players as Jimmy Silver & Co. was a great deal like a nightmare to Adolphus, and it was pretty certain that the footballers wouldn't be gentle with the slackers after what had happened. Adolphus cleared his throat.

"The—the fact is, I—I'm willin' to withdraw!" he stammered.



THE PLOT DISCOVERED! Bulkeley looked grimly at Adolphus Smythe as Leech disappeared from the football field. "What is the meaning of this?" he asked. "Do you mean to say that you intended to palm off a professional footballer as a schoolboy on these fellows?" (See Chapter 4.)

"We're not!" said Jimmy Silver curtly.

"We call it off!" stammered Tracy.

"Oh, yaas, we—we call it off! We—"

"You do nothing of the kind!" said Jimmy Silver. "We're waiting for you, and you're going to play, and you'll play all the time—hard! We're going to see that you do."

"Play up, slackers!" came in a roar from the crowd round the ropes.

Smythe gave a hopeless look round.

He was in for it, and he realised it. That fearful match had to be gone through.

"Mob 'em if they don't play up!" roared Higgs of the Fourth.

"Yes, rather!"

"We—we're ready!" gasped Smythe, as there came a threatening movement from the crowd.

The whistle blew.

Brown, of the Fifth, grinned as he blew. Never had a football team looked so sick as the knuts of Rookwood looked at the kick-off.

They looked sicker as the game proceeded.

It was not much like football. Smythe & Co.'s chief object seemed to be to keep out of the way of the opposing players. They did not worry about goals.

Neither did Jimmy Silver & Co. They had come there to play footer, but if there was no footer, they were ready to play Smythe & Co., and they played them.

It was a long-drawn-out horror to the Rookwood slackers. The ball lay neglected. The slackers dodged and twisted, and ran and rolled over. But there was no escape for them.

A dozen times a panting member of Smythe's team tried to dodge off the field, but the crowd turned him back. There was no escape from the field, and no escape from the footballers.

In vain Smythe & Co. rolled on the ground even. The enemy rolled on them and bumped on them till they scrambled up again. In vain they scattered and dodged. They were pursued and charged and shouldered without mercy.

If Teddy Leech had been there, Jimmy Silver & Co. would not have had much time to waste on the slackers. But he was not there, and that made all the difference.

When the interval came, Smythe & Co. lay about and gasped spasmodically. Five minutes flashed by like five seconds to the miserable knuts.

Then they had to get going again.

If the first half had seemed like a nightmare to the wretched slackers, the second half was like the horrors of opium.

How they lived through it they never quite knew.

An outburst of heavenly harmony could not have sounded so sweet to the ears of Adolphus & Co. as did the "pneep!" of the whistle when Brown blew it at last for the finish.

The awful ordeal was over! Smythe & Co., perspiring, panting, groaning, limped off the field, doubled up with fatigue and anguish. Loud yells of laughter, jeers, and cat-calls, followed them.

Jimmy Silver chuckled as he strolled off with his chums.

"I fancy," remarked Uncle James of Rookwood—"I fancy that it will be rather a long time before Smythe challenges us to another game of footer."

THE END.

(There will be another splendid long complete story of Jimmy Silver & Co., the chums of Rookwood School, entitled: "Raby the 'Sport'!" next week. You simply must not miss reading this grand yarn of many thrills and surprises.)

"RED GOLD!"

(Continued from page 5.)

done; and what he could not do. Not till his name was cleared at Cedar Creek.

Until they turned in for the night, Bronze Bill made frequent allusions to the "bender" he was planning, and chuckled with anticipation of the happy prospect. They turned in at last, and slept under the summer stars.

At sunrise the next morning the partners took the trail down the mountain.

It was late afternoon when they "struck" Hard Pan.

Frank Richards tramped into the mining-camp with his partner, tired, but cheerful. Only a few weeks before he had struck Hard Pan footsore and almost on his "uppers," looking for a job. Now he was re-entering the camp with gold-dust and nuggets in his possession to the tune of five hundred dollars or more. It was a change in fortune for the wandering schoolboy, and Frank felt considerably elated.

At the lumber hotel, where they put up for rest and refreshment, the gold taken from the claim in the locked gulch was disposed of, and the partners divided the sum of one thousand and fifty dollars in Canadian bankbills. Frank Richards retired to his room to sew up the greater part of his money in his belt, for security, keeping only a few bills in his pocket for immediate use.

Bronze Bill did not follow his example.

After long hardship and privation in the mountains, the bronzed miner was bent upon indemnifying himself by "going on a bender," as he expressed it; and his "bender" started the same evening. With the result that after a particularly glorious evening, Bronze Bill spent the remainder of the night in the camp calaboose.

In the morning a wagon was leaving Hard Pan on the southern trail, and Frank Richards decided to take a seat in it. He had had enough of the diggings, and with his little capital safe in his belt, he hoped to make a successful start in a more settled region. Bronze Bill was out of the calaboose in time to bid his schoolboy partner good-bye.

The wagon rolled away with Frank Richards, Bronze Bill waving a horny hand after him in farewell. Probably his bender was resumed that day—how long to last, Frank did not know; but probably till the proceeds of his successful gold-seeking had disappeared, when Bill would shoulder spade and pick, and "hit the trail" for the mountains, gold-seeking again.

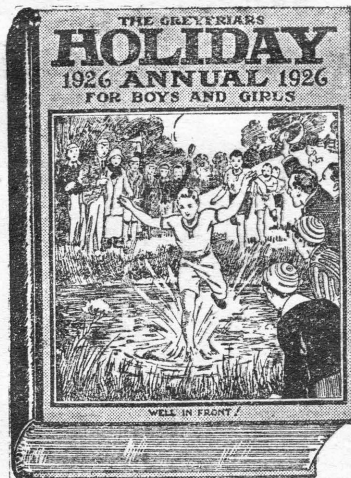
Frank Richards had had luck at the diggings, but he was not sorry to turn his back on the foothills. In the creaking wagon, under a sunny sky, with five hundred dollars sewn up in his belt, he rolled away southward, and he was glad to see the green ranchlands fresh and bright before his eyes at last.

THE END.

(Look out for the further adventures of Frank Richards, the Homeless Schoolboy of the Backwoods, in "On The Southern Trail!" next week. With the gold in his belt, Frank sets out to try his luck on the ranches of British Columbia.)

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