

EXPULSION OF JIMMY SILVER!

By expelling Jimmy Silver, the temporary Head of Rookwood hopes to solve his difficulties. But he reckons without Jimmy Silver!

Turned Out Of Rookwood!



THE FIRST CHAPTER. To Go or Not to Go?

"SILVER!"

"Yes, Bulkeley?"

Bulkeley of the Sixth was at the master's desk in the Fourth Form room when Jimmy Silver & Co. came into class on Monday morning.

He seemed a little surprised to see Jimmy Silver in with the rest of the Classical Fourth.

Jimmy was going to his place with a quiet and sedate air when Bulkeley called to him, and he turned round.

"I understand that you are going home this morning, Silver?" said the prefect.

Jimmy smiled genially.

"Do you really, Bulkeley?" he asked.

Raby and Newcome grinned. Arthur Edward Lovell even chuckled. The Fistical Four of the Fourth seemed to look upon George Bulkeley's remark as a good joke.

"Yes, certainly," said Bulkeley.

"Did not Mr. Manders order you to be ready to go at nine o'clock?"

"Yes."

"Knuckles of the Sixth is to take you home, I understand."

"So Mr. Manders says!" assented Jimmy Silver.

"Well, then——" said Bulkeley.

"You see, I'm not going!" explained Jimmy Silver. "Mr. Manders, being a Modern master, we don't take any notice of him on the Classical side."

"No fear!" said Lovell.

"Mr. Manders is headmaster while

"And we're sticking to Jimmy!" said Arthur Edward Lovell. "Manders has bitten off more than he can chew this time, Bulkeley."

"I believe Knuckles is waiting in the hall for you now," said Bulkeley.

"I don't mind. Let him wait!"

"Mr. Manders will probably come here for you, if you do not go."

"Let him come!"

"We're ready for him!" said Lovell.

"We'll be glad of the chance to scrag him!" remarked Valentine Mornington.

Jimmy Silver went to his place and sat down. Bulkeley looked puzzled.

Whether Mr. Manders, while he filled the place of the Head, had the power to "sack" a junior from Rookwood was rather a moot point. But Mr. Manders had decided upon it, and that morning Jimmy was to leave Rookwood, in charge of a prefect, who was to take him home and deliver him to his parents with an explanatory letter from Mr. Manders.

And as Jimmy Silver was determined not to go, and as nearly all the Classical Fourth backed him up, there was a prospect of trouble at Rookwood that Monday morning.

There had been trouble already between Roger Manders and the Classical Fourth, and Mr. Manders had not had the best of it.

Bulkeley was very far from being in favour of Mr. Manders' drastic decision with regard to Jimmy Silver. He had gone to the length of remonstrating on the subject, and had been severely snubbed. But certainly he had not ex-

pected Jimmy to take the law into his own hands.

What he ought to do in the peculiar circumstances was rather a mystery to Bulkeley. He decided to begin lessons.

So lessons began in the Fourth Form room. They had not been going on ten minutes, however, when the Form-room door opened, and Cecil Knowles of the Modern Sixth looked in.

"Silver!" he called out.

Jimmy glanced at him, but did not reply.

"Have you packed your box, Silver?"

"Not at all."

"Then it will be left," said Knowles.

"The train goes in twenty minutes now. Come with me!"

Jimmy shook his head.

"Thanks, Knowles, I don't care for your company," he answered. "Your manners are not good; besides, you're a bore. Go away!"

Knowles turned to the captain of Rookwood.

"Bulkeley, you're in charge of this class. Will you order that young rascal to leave the Form-room?"

"No!" said Bulkeley. "The matter is in Mr. Manders' hands, and he knows that I don't approve. I shall not give him any assistance!"

"Then I shall take the young scoundrel out by force!" said Knowles.

"Come and do it, old bean," said Jimmy Silver. "I warn you that you'll go out of the Form-room on your neck, if you do."

A dozen juniors were ready to collar him if he laid a hand on Jimmy Silver, and the Sixth-Former realised that it was not good enough.

Knowles strode out of the Form-room. A hiss from the Classical Fourth followed him.

"Silence!" said Bulkeley.

The juniors were quiet at once. It was agreed on all hands that they were not to give any trouble to "old Bulkeley," especially as that popular prefect was known to be against Mr. Manders and his tyrannic rule.

But lessons had scarcely been resumed when the door opened again. This time it was Mr. Manders himself who whisked in.

"Now for the merry circus!" murmured Lovell.

A Grand Long Complete Story of Jimmy Silver & Co., and the Great Rookwood Rebellion.
By OWEN CONQUEST.
(Author of the well-known stories of Rookwood appearing in the "Boys' Friend" every week.)

"Silver!" thundered Mr. Manders.
 "Yes, sir?"
 "Knowles is waiting to take you home. Go out to him at once!"
 "Rats!"

Mr. Manders came across the Form-room with long strides, reaching out at Jimmy Silver. Jimmy picked up a ruler, and stood on the defensive. His chums gathered up inkpots. Mr. Manders came to a sudden halt, just as Knowles had done.

"Silver, I command you to leave the Form-room at once!"

"More rats!"
 "Bulkeley," gasped Mr. Manders, "seize that rebellious boy and eject him from the Form-room!"

Bulkeley shook his head
 "That is not my duty, Mr. Manders," he answered. "I decline to interfere in the matter at all!"

"Be careful, Bulkeley. A little more of this insolence, and I shall expel you from the school!"

Bulkeley shrugged his shoulders scornfully.

"I should refuse to leave," he answered. "That is a matter for Dr. Chisholm to decide."

Mr. Manders appeared to be on the point of choking. He turned to Jimmy Silver again.

"Once more, Silver, I order you to leave the Form-room!" he exclaimed.

"Declined with thanks!" answered Jimmy.

"You are no longer a member of this class. You do not belong to Rookwood. I have expelled you!"

And with that Mr. Manders rustled out of the Form-room, obviously at a complete loss, and quite defeated—for the present, at least.

Lessons in the Fourth Form that morning proceeded and terminated without any further interruption from Mr. Manders

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Caught Napping!

TUBBY MUFFIN came rolling along the Fourth Form passage at tea-time, and looked into the end study.

The Fistical Four sat round the tea-table in a cheery circle.

They did not seem in the least dismayed by the fact that they were at open war with Mr. Manders. As a matter of fact, they were not dismayed. Mr. Manders had proved his weakness too plainly for the juniors to feel uneasy.

Indeed, they were feeling jubilant. The defeat of the Modern master they regarded more or less as a triumph of Classics over Moderns, which was welcome and comforting.

"Jimmy"—Tubby Muffin put a fat visage into the end study—"you're wanted!"

Jimmy chuckled.

"If it's Manders, go and tell him to chop chips!" he answered.

"It's the telephone," said Tubby, grinning. "Your pater's rung you up, and you're wanted."

"Oh!" said Jimmy, becoming rather grave.

"My hat!" ejaculated Lovell. "Has Manders phoned your pater and put him on your track, Jimmy?"

"Looks like it!" growled the captain of the Fourth. "But if Manders thinks my pater will back him up in his rot, he's mistaken. I'll have a jaw to the pater, and tell him how it stands."

"It's the telephone in Mr. Dalton's study," said Tubby. "Carthew heard the bell, and called me. Your pater

doesn't know that Mr. Dalton has gone. I suppose?"

Jimmy nodded, and quitted the end study with a thoughtful shade on his brow. Tubby Muffin dropped into his seat at the tea-table. Now he was there. Tubby decided to stay to tea.

Jimmy Silver hurried downstairs, and trotted to Mr. Dalton's study. If his father had rung him up from home it was a trunk call, and there was no time to be lost in getting to the telephone.

Mr. Dalton's study was in darkness as Jimmy pushed open the door. Since the Fourth Form master had left Rookwood, after his disagreement with Mr. Manders, the study had been unoccupied; but it was natural, of course, that Mr. Silver should ring up the Fourth Form master if he wanted to speak to his son in the Fourth. It was lucky that somebody had heard the telephone-bell, Jimmy considered.

He entered the study, rather surprised to find it in the dark. If Carthew of the Sixth had answered the telephone, he might have been expected to put the light on and to leave it on.

But Jimmy knew the interior well enough. He crossed to the table, and struck a match to light the gas over it.

As he did so, the study door suddenly closed.

Jimmy started round.

He comprehended at once that somebody else was in the unlighted study. His match scratched alight.

It its flickering light he noted three things. Knowles of the Modern Sixth stood with his back to the door, evidently having been behind it when Jimmy entered.

Mr. Manders stood by the window, and the receiver was on the telephone. If a "trunk call" was waiting for an answer, the receiver would have been off. Jimmy Silver understood all of a sudden.

"You may light the gas, Silver," said Mr. Manders in a grinding voice.

Jimmy obeyed quietly.

The study was illuminated; and Jimmy Silver stood back from his enemies, watching them intently.

Knowles grinned, and there was a sour smile of satisfaction on Roger Manders' lean face.

The captain of the Fourth knew now that he had been tricked. There had been no telephone call from his home!

Carthew, the bully of the Classical Sixth, was one of the few prefects who supported Mr. Manders. He had given the false message to Tubby Muffin, so that Knowles or Mr. Manders should not appear in the affair, which might have excited suspicion.

And Jimmy had walked directly into the trap.

He could hardly blame himself. Low as his opinion of Roger Manders was, he could never have dreamed that even Mr. Manders could have descended to this petty artifice.

He had been tricked away from his friends. There was no member of the Fourth even within sound of his voice if he shouted.

Jimmy Silver breathed hard, and his eyes glinted at the master and the prefect. He was trapped, with the odds heavily against him. But he was not beaten yet. He noted now that his cap and overcoat lay on the study table, evidently brought there for a purpose. Knowles turned the key in the lock. There was not to be even a remote chance of rescue.

"Landed at last, my boy!" said the Modern prefect, with a disagreeable laugh.

"So there was no telephone call?" said Jimmy.

"Not that I am aware of."

"Carthew told Muffin a lie, then?" said Jimmy Silver, with a curl of the lip. "Which of you liars put him up to it?"

Mr. Manders turned red.

"Silence, boy! How dare you!" he said, between his teeth. "Silver, I have—have sent for you—"

"You have tricked me here with a dirty lie!" said Jimmy Silver fearlessly. "I shouldn't have come if you'd sent for me."

"Knowles is ready to take you home," said Mr. Manders, snapping his teeth.

"I shall not go!"

"I think you will!" grinned Knowles.

"If you give trouble, Silver, Knowles will use force," said Mr. Manders. "I have—have sent for you in order to avoid a disgraceful disturbance. I am well aware that you were prepared to cause a riot in the school. You will not be allowed the opportunity. Put on your coat!"

"Rats!"

Knowles advanced towards the junior, his ashplant in his hand. Jimmy Silver eyed him.

Sturdy as the captain of the Fourth was, he was no match, of course, for a Sixth Form senior. And Knowles had his ashplant, which he was quite ready to use without mercy. And there was Mr. Manders to help him; and probably Carthew was within call.

Jimmy Silver realised that it was an occasion when discretion was the better part of valour.

"Will you put on your coat, Silver?" smiled Knowles.

Jimmy drew a hard breath.

"Yes," he said.

"I thought you would!" said Knowles agreeably. "Quick! And your cap."

Jimmy Silver donned his cap and his overcoat. There was no help for it.

"Now, Silver," said Mr. Manders, "you will leave Rookwood at once with Knowles. I shall accompany you as far as the gates, and if you make any attempt to call to your rebellious associates, you will be dealt with, with the utmost severity. Knowles, you are empowered to use any methods whatsoever to take Silver away from the school."

"Very good, sir," said Knowles.

He dropped his left hand on Jimmy's shoulder; the ashplant was in his right. Mr. Manders, with a sour smile of triumph, unlocked the study door. Carthew of the Sixth was in the corridor, and he grinned as Jimmy was marched out with Knowles' grasp on his shoulder, Mr. Manders bringing up the rear.

Jimmy Silver's face was set, as he was marched to the door of the School House.

He gave a desperate glance round; but his chums, unsuspecting, were at tea in their studies. Mr. Manders had chosen his time well.

And Knowles was rapid; in less than a minute Jimmy was out of the house, in the dusky quadrangle.

There was no escape for him—at present.

Still with the prefect's grip on his shoulder, Jimmy was marched down to the gates, Mr. Manders walking behind. It was time for lock-up; but the gates were still open, and old Mack was standing by them, key in hand. The porter had evidently received his instructions. He gave the junior a rather commiserating glance.

"Come on!" snapped Knowles.

Jimmy hesitated one moment; but the grasp on his shoulder was like a vice—and Mr. Manders was there, and he saw Carthew hovering in the background. The game was up—for the present. He went quietly out at the gates with Knowles, who handed his ashplant to

Mr. Manders, and started down the road to Coombe with his prisoner.

There was a heavy clang as the gates closed behind them!

THE THIRD CHAPTER. No Surrender!

JIMMY SILVER walked on quietly beside Knowles down the dusky lane. His heart was beating, his teeth set. So far Mr. Manders had won—Jimmy Silver was outside Rookwood, in charge of a prefect, on his way home. But it was a long way home, and there is many a slip 'twixt cup and lip. Jimmy Silver was not beaten yet.

Knowles glanced down at the junior by his side as the lights of Coombe appeared in the distance, and grinned.

"I don't want to go on marching you about with a hand on your shoulder, Silver, like a policeman with a pick-pocket," he said. "If you give me your word not to dodge away, I'll let you walk alone. I think I can trust your word."

"You know you can!" said Jimmy Silver coolly.

"Well, will you promise?" snapped Knowles.

"No."

"Mind, I'm not going to be given a lot of trouble with you, Silver!" said the Modern prefect menacingly. "I'm glad enough to see you kicked out of Rookwood, but I'm not keen on a long railway journey at night, and I'm not going to have it made worse than it need be. Give me any trouble, and I'll make you sorry for it!"

"I intend to get away the first chance I get," answered Jimmy Silver.

"And go back to Rookwood?"

"Yes!" said Jimmy instantly.

"You've got plenty of nerve, for a fag in the Fourth," said Knowles contemptuously. "I don't think you'll get away from me, though. If you prefer to be marched about like a captured pick-pocket, you may—your own fault!"

And Knowles' grip was on Jimmy's collar as they entered the old High Street of Coombe.

Needless to say, the sight of a Rookwood junior marched along the street by his collar attracted a good many glances. Heedless of them, Knowles marched his prisoner to the railway-station, where he took two tickets—single for Jimmy, return for himself. He had some difficulty in sorting out his cash to pay for them, as he had only one hand free, and Jimmy evidently intended to "cut" if he were released. But Knowles managed it, and walked his prisoner on to the platform.

There were ten minutes to wait for the train to Latcham Junction. During that wait Knowles did not release the junior for a second.

The train came in, and he entered a first-class carriage, propelling Jimmy before him.

They had the carriage to themselves. The train started, and Knowles released the Fourth-Former at last.

"Safe now, I think," said Knowles, with a shrug of the shoulders. And he sat down, lighted a cigarette, and drew a pink paper from his pocket, to entertain himself with a study of the form of "gee-gees" during the half-hour's run to Latcham.

Jimmy Silver sat at the opposite end of the carriage, silent, and in deep thought.

He was beginning to feel a little desperate.

A struggle with Knowles was futile; but Jimmy was quite determined not

to complete the journey home. What view his father would have taken of the affair he did not know. But once home, it was very probable that he would not have been allowed to return to Rookwood until the Head was back, at least. Mr. Silver was quite certain not to take his expulsion quietly; but so long as Mr. Manders was in charge of Rookwood there was no step that Jimmy's father could take.

A week or two at home, under other circumstances, would have been welcome enough to Jimmy. But not now. Now that he was off the scene, Mr. Manders intended to deal with his chums—and, without being unduly conceited, Jimmy knew that his leadership was needed to enable the Classical Fourth to keep their end up against the tyrant.

The news that the Form captain had been actually expelled, after all, whether permanently or not, would certainly have a scaring effect on the Fourth. It was only too probable that there would be surrender all along the line; and Mr. Manders, and his cane, would reign supreme. That was not going to happen if Jimmy Silver could prevent it.

It was probable that there would be a crowd at Latcham Junction, especially as the Latcham steeplechases were now on; and Jimmy hoped that he might find an opportunity of slipping away in the crowd.

Once landed in the express for home, there would be little chance left. Somehow, anyhow, he was going to keep clear of that express. Station after station glided by; and at each halt Knowles had to lay down his paper and take Jimmy Silver by the collar to prevent him from jumping out.

Each time he did so he gave the junior a savage shake to solace himself for the trouble he had to take.

Latcham Junction at last!

Knowles tucked away his paper and stepped from the carriage. He took Jimmy's collar and jerked him out.

There was a big crowd on the platform, most of them noisy, and some of them uproarious. Two or three parties of bookmakers and crowds of backers had come off the racecourse, which was on the outskirts of Latcham. They thronged the platform, talking and shouting, some of them refreshing themselves from flasks that did not contain ginger-beer. In such a throng it was not easy for Knowles to push his way accompanied by an unwilling junior.

Three or four raucous voices asked Knowles where he was shoving; and a stout gentleman in a silk hat and a red waistcoat offered to give him "one in the eye."

Knowles set his teeth and tightened his grip on Jimmy Silver's collar. He had to cross the wide platform to the other side, where the express was to come in.

The express was not due to start for eight minutes; and those eight minutes were Jimmy's to make the most of.

His thoughts worked rapidly. In that racy crowd a prefect of Rookwood was nobody and nothing; but a big fellow jerking a smaller fellow along by the collar attracted many disapproving glances. Knowles' task was, in fact, much more difficult than either he or Mr. Manders had anticipated. Jimmy Silver, in an attempt to wrench himself away, had collided with the stout gentleman in the red waistcoat, who had been looking upon the wine when it was red—or, at least, upon the whisky when it was strong. But the stout gentleman's wrath turned on Knowles.

"Where are you wedgin'?" he demanded. "Who are you a-shovin' of?"

That's what I want to know, young feller-me-lad! Who are you a-shovin' of?"

"I did not shove you!" muttered Knowles. "It was this—this young rascal—"

The stout gentleman snorted. "Whatter you draggin' your young brother about by his bloomin' neck for?" he inquired. "What's he done?"

Jimmy saw a chance of help. "He's not my brother, sir," he piped. "He's taken me away from school, and he won't let me go. Make him let me go, sir!"

"My hey!" said the stout gentleman, in surprised indignation. "Taking a young cove away from school!"

Knowles, pale with rage, hurried on, fairly dragging Jimmy after him. But it was Jimmy's last chance, and he was desperate.

He clutched at the gentleman in the red waistcoat and caught hold of his sleeve.

"Help!" he panted.

"Oh, jiminy!" ejaculated the racy gentleman, as he staggered under the sudden clutch, and his silk hat went toppling. "Ere, leggo! Look out there, you bokes! Mind my 'at! Pick up that 'at, Art!"

"Ere you are, 'Enry!"

Art handed the silk hat to the stout gentleman, who replaced it on his rather oily head. Jimmy was holding on to him, and Knowles was holding on to Jimmy, and dragging.

"Come along, you young villain!" panted Knowles.

"Help!" roared Jimmy.

"Let the boy alone!" shouted Art.

"That's it! You let 'im be!" said 'Enry warmly. "Oughter be ashamed of yourself, you ought, dragging a boy about like that there! And he says you ain't his brother!"

Henry and Arthur and several of their rowdy friends gathered round Knowles and Jimmy Silver. The angry prefect had to stop. The express was not in yet. There were five minutes still to pass. Knowles would have given five pounds to see the train at that moment. But the train was not in the station, and the altercation was drawing a crowd. The merry racegoers were glad of a little distraction while they waited for the express. They wedged round Knowles and Jimmy in a thick crowd, some of them grinning and somewhat indignant. And it seemed to "Uncle James of Rookwood" that the chances were that he would not, after all, be taken home that evening!

THE FOURTH CHAPTER. A Hot Chase!

JIMMY SILVER was still holding to the stout gentleman's arm. Possibly it pleased the hero of the red waistcoat to be regarded as a protector of innocent youth. At all events, his sympathy was plainly with Jimmy. He gave him a reassuring grin, and breathed benevolence and whisky over him.

"You stick to me, my lad!" he said. "I'll see you righted! Now, let's 'ear the rights of this 'ere!"

"Mind your own business!" snapped Knowles savagely.

"Wot's that?"

"It's no business of yours!"

The stout gentleman thrust a square, stubby chin almost into Knowles' face with a threatening glare. So close did he thrust his square chin and his pug nose that Knowles started back, with an involuntary expression of disgust at the

aroma of whisky and rum that emanated from the stout gentleman.

That finished it! That expression on Knowles' face made him a deadly enemy on the spot!

"You tork to me?" inquired the stout gentleman.

"Give him one in the heye, 'Enry!" suggested Art.

"For two pins," said 'Enry, "I'd mop up this 'ere platform with the cheeky young 'ound! You let that boy alone! You 'ear me! Let him alone!"

"I'm taking him home," said Knowles, as civilly as he could. "His schoolmaster has placed him in my charge."

"Likely tale!" sneered 'Enry.

"It's not true!" bawled Jimmy Silver. "My schoolmaster is down with the flu, and he's away."

Knowles was referring to Mr. Manders, Jimmy Silver to Dr. Chisholm. But the racegoers naturally had never heard of either party, and certainly did not care.

"You 'ear what the boy says," said 'Enry. "Looks to me as if this 'ere is a matter for the perlice. Has he stole anything from you, young 'un?"

Jimmy Silver almost grinned at the idea of Knowles of the Sixth stealing anything from him.

"No; he's taking mo away from school!" said Jimmy plaintively. "Please don't let him take me away!" At that moment the scamp of Rookwood looked as if butter would not melt in his mouth. "Oh, sir, don't let him take me away! I want to go back to my school."

"Takin' a young cove away from his school!" said 'Enry, with deep indignation. "Jevver 'ear of such a thing! See if you can see a peeler, Art! I'm going to give that bloke in charge."

"You silly fool!" roared Knowles, almost beside himself.

"Ho! Silly fool am I, you young rascal?" said 'Enry. "Take that to begin with!" He knocked Knowles' hat off. "Now, let that boy alone!"

Two or three of the stout gentleman's uproarious friend seized hold of Jimmy Silver, to help him away.

Knowles clung desperately to his collar.

"Let the boy go!" roared the stout gentleman.

"I won't! I—" spluttered Knowles. "Oh, crickey!" The stout gentleman's fat and heavy fist landed on Knowles' nose.

The Rookwood prefect staggered back. Another gentleman tripped him behind, and he sat down, dragging Jimmy with him.

But he could not keep his hold now. Jimmy was struggling hard for freedom, and three or four pairs of hands were helping him. Knowles was rolled over. Somebody smacked his face, and somebody else kicked him in the ribs. His collar and tie were jerked off, his hat disappeared under trampling feet, and in a few seconds Knowles was in a dishevelled and dazed state, feeling as if the universe were coming to pieces about his ears. And Jimmy Silver was free!

Jimmy backed away into the friendly crowd, panting.

"'Ook it, young 'un!" roared the gentleman in the red waistcoat.

Jimmy did not need to be told twice. He backed through the crowd that opened for him to pass, and closed again round Knowles.

The stationmaster and three or four porters and a policeman were hurrying to the spot to quell the disturbance. Before they arrived Jimmy Silver was off the scene. Knowles, mixed with a noisy, shouting crowd, frantically endeavoured to explain matters to the

policeman, what time Jimmy Silver reached the station exit. Knowles had his ticket, but Jimmy paid the fare from Coombe in cash, and passed out of the station.

He chuckled gleefully as he ran into the street of Latham.

Mr. Manders had succeeded but he had not counted on the race crowd at Latham Junction, and his success had been short-lived. The astuteness of Uncle James of Rookwood had won the day.

But it was certain that Knowles would be after him as soon as he could escape from the crowd, and Jimmy did not waste time.

He knew Latham well, and he ran along the street to a cycle shop, where machines could be hired.

As he reached it, he dropped into an easy saunter, and he strolled into the shop with an air of carelessness. He was known at the shop—he had had punctures mended there—and the Rookwood cap was a guarantee.

In three minutes Jimmy had hired a bicycle, with the undertaking to return it on the following day, and wheeled it out into the street.

The cycle shop was in sight of the station. And as Jimmy prepared to mount, a hatless and untidy figure came scuttling out of the station, and glared up and down the street.

Jimmy waved his hand.

"Good-bye, Knowles!" he shouted.

Knowles started running towards him. Jimmy waved his hand again and put his leg over the machine.

"You young villain, stop!"

Knowles put on a desperate spurt. But the bicycle, with Jimmy driving hard at the pedals, fairly flew.

The prefect rushed after it a few yards, and then stopped. Pursuit on foot was hopeless, and Knowles rushed back to the cycle shop to hire a machine in his turn.

Knowles of the Sixth was a sticker, and he dreaded the interview with Mr. Manders if he had to return and report that his prisoner had escaped.

Jimmy was long out of sight when Knowles wheeled out a bicycle. But the prefect knew that he would head for Rookwood, and he took that direction, riding hard.

But Jimmy Silver was riding hard, too. He knew what to expect if Knowles overtook him—a most terrific hiding and an an ignominious journey home.

Jimmy Silver drove his bike along at a reckless speed, and the miles flew under the wheels.

It was not till he was speeding through the High Street of Coombe that Knowles came in sight of him.

He yelled to the junior to stop. But his yell was only a warning to Jimmy Silver to put on more speed.

But there was nearly a mile to go to reach Rookwood, and when he arrived there the gates would be shut. Knowles would run him down under the mile, he knew. But Jimmy was by no means at the end of his resources. As he came past the village tuckshop Jimmy jammed



JIMMY SILVER IS RESCUED! "Let the boy go!" roared the stout gentleman, and his heavy fist landed on Knowles' nose. The Rookwood prefect staggered back, and he was rolled over by the crowd of roughs. Jimmy struggled free and backed away. "'Ook it, young 'un!" roared the friendly gentleman. (See Chapter 4.)

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(Continued from previous page.)

on the brakes, jumped down, and rushed the machine into the shop. Mrs. Wicks stared at him blankly over her little counter.

"Oh, Master Silver—"

"Leave the bike here. Call for it tomorrow. You don't mind?" panted Jimmy Silver.

Without waiting for a reply he dashed out of the shop, turned into the narrow alley beside it, and vanished. Knowles sighted him, and yelled to him, and jumped off his machine. Jimmy did not heed. He ran down the alley, which led to the towing-path by the river Roke. He knew the way in the darkness, and as he ran he heard Knowles' heavy footsteps crashing behind.

In the darkness Jimmy swung himself over the fence of Mrs. Wicks' little garden, dropped among the cabbages, and lay "doggo." A minute later Knowles' heavy footsteps went thundering past.

Jimmy, with thumping heart, lay silent till Knowles' footsteps died away in the direction of the towing-path. Then he emerged from the garden and scudded away, taking short cuts across the dark fields to Rookwood.

He was safe enough from Knowles now. But he kept on the run, and arrived breathless at the school gates.

He did not ring the bell. It was very doubtful if old Mack would have admitted him. He scuttled breathlessly along the wall to a familiar spot—well known to him of old—where a buttress and a hanging branch made it possible to climb. Jimmy was astride of the school wall when he heard a loud, jangling peal on the porter's bell.

Knowles had arrived. The pursuer was

not far behind. Jimmy, sitting on top of the wall in the darkness, panted for breath, and rested a minute or two. He heard the gates open, farther along the wall, and Knowles' excited voice:

"Has Silver come back?"

"Master Silver?" It was old Mack's voice. "Ain't seed 'im."

Knowles tramped in.

Jimmy Silver tramped on the inner side of the school wall and sprinted across the quadrangle. He did not approach the School House door, but circled round the building. He did not intend to run any risks of being recaptured at the last moment. There was a sudden surprise for a cook and a housemaid, who were enjoying a little chat in the kitchen, when a rather dusty and breathless junior burst in upon them.

"Lor'!" ejaculated the cook.

"Lawks!" said the housemaid.

"Sorry to startle you, cook," said Jimmy Silver, politely. "You don't mind my coming in this way, do you, for once?"

"I thought you was sent home, Master Silver!" said the astonished cook.

"So did Mr. Manders!" smiled Jimmy. "But I've turned up again, like the bad penny, you know."

"Lor'!" said the cook.

Jimmy Silver passed through the kitchen, and by the back staircase reached the dormitory passage. Thence it was easy to descend to the Fourth Form passage. Knowles was probably at that moment making his report to Mr. Manders in that gentleman's house. Jimmy Silver walked along the Fourth Form passage cheerily towards the end study. There were several juniors in the passage, and an excited yell greeted the captain of the Fourth.

"He's come back!" howled Tubby Muffin.

"Silver," shouted Mornington, "Manders said you had been sent home and—"

Jimmy chuckled.

"That was only Manders' little joke,"

he said. "Here I am—large as life, and twice as natural!"

"Oh gad!"

Jimmy threw open the door of the end study. Three very gloomy-looking youths were there, but at the sight of Jimmy Silver the gloom left the faces of Lovell, and Raby, and Newcome.

"Jimmy!" they yelled in chorus.

"Little me!" smiled Jimmy.

"We thought—"

"All serene!" said Jimmy cheerily. "Keep smiling. I've been for a little jaunt with Knowles; but the good fellow bored me, and I chucked him at Latcham. I've come back to finish my tea."

There was a roar of laughter in the study and in the passage. All the Fourth were crowded there—in great spirits. There was a howl from Tubby Muffin along the passage.

"Here comes Manders!"

"Kick him out!" roared Lovell.

"Come on!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver.

"Order of the boot for Manders!" Mr. Manders had received Knowles' hapless report. He had remained only a few minutes to "nag" the prefect, and then he had come over to the Classical side, came in hand, in a towering rage. He found the Classical Fourth ready for him.

Mr. Manders had come up the staircase two steps at a time. He went down it four at a time—with wonderful activity. A roar of hoots and cat-calls followed him as he fled. On the Modern side that evening Mr. Manders almost raved with wrath; while in the end study on the Classical side a crowd of hilarious Fourth-Formers celebrated the happy outcome of Jimmy Silver's journey.

THE END.

(What happens when Jimmy Silver & Co. call the Fourth Form to arms against the temporary headmaster of Rookwood? See next week's thrilling long complete story of the Rookwood chums, entitled: "The First Round!" by Owen Conquest.)

A WORD WITH YOUR EDITOR!

Address your letters to The Editor, THE POPULAR, The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

DO THEY NOT ?

DO the authors who write for the POPULAR make notes? This cheery little query reaches me from an out-and-out enthusiast of the Pop. They do. I doubt if any author can dispense with the aid of memory fresheners of this sort. Bright ideas occur to the man who writes at the most inconvenient moments. He may be hopping on to an omnibus, or just squeezing in to see a footer match, when some spanking notion for the yarn he is writing occurs to him. Mr. Frank Richards and his colleagues are all note-takers. That's where shorthand comes in so usefully. Good ideas are not things to lose. They may never bob up again.

ALL CUT AND DRIED.

A chum of mine, who has been reading the POPULAR for years, sends me a question about his future. He has left school, and for a year past has been helping his uncle in the old bookshop which his relative owns. My correspondent says that the work fascinates him hugely. He is keen on getting to know more and more about books. But, though his uncle would like to have his assistance, there is a doubt in the mind of the old man. He says that my chum might do better for THE POPULAR.—No. 366.

himself in some brisker calling. Considering all the circumstances, it seems to me it is up to this staunch Populairite to convince his uncle that the job suits him down to the ground. There is far more life in an old bookshop than many people imagine. What's to prevent my pal becoming a real expert? Just nothing! He has the way all clear ahead.

NEXT WEEK'S STORIES.

"THE SCHOOLBOY MILL OWNERS."

By David Goodwin.

The second instalment of our grand school and mill serial.

"SOLVING THE MYSTERY!"

By Martin Clifford.

Another grand tale of Tom Merry & Co. of St. Jim's.

"THE FIRST ROUND!"

By Owen Conquest.

A stirring tale of the great Rookwood rebellion.

"ROBIN HOOD'S BETRAYAL!"

A thrilling romance of the olden times.

"A BLOW FOR THE BOUNDER!"

By Frank Richards.

A splendid long story of the Greyfriars chums.

SPECIAL HOBBIES SUPPLEMENT.

THE NORTH POLE.

You would not think the Arctic was the kind of place to feel warm towards, at any rate, just now. But a friend tells me he wants a good yarn of exploration in the land of the polar bear.

I have often felt, myself, that stories of the snowy North get monotonous. There is too little to see up there, and the heroes who venture into the nippy latitudes have to struggle to keep the pot boiling and to prevent their marrows freezing.

But, of course, a stirring tale of the Frozen Seas might be popular. What do my readers think?

JOHN PEEL.

Thanks to a friend in Cumberland, a Londoner born, who has sent me a truly delightful letter about his part of the country, and other things, including something about the old legend of John Peel, and his coat so gay, the hero of the grand song.

My correspondent touches on subjects of great splendour, and he says things about the Companion Papers which are pleasing in the extreme.