

AN AMAZING STORY OF ROOKWOOD SCHOOL!

Good fortune affects people differently. In the case of Timothy Tupper, the school page, it turns his head completely, with the result that when he does "come down to earth" again he comes down with a crash!

The Transformation of Timothy Tupper!



A ROLLICKING LONG COMPLETE STORY
OF JIMMY SILVER & CO., THE CHUMS OF
ROOKWOOD.

BY
OWEN CONQUEST

THE FIRST CHAPTER. Uncle Bill's Legacy!

"MASTER SILVER!"
"Yes, kid," said Jimmy Silver cheerily and politely. Jimmy Silver & Co. were taking a saunter in the quadrangle at Rookwood after second lesson, having an interval of a quarter of an hour at their disposal. They were discussing football prospects when Timothy Tupper came up.

Jimmy stopped at once. Lovell and Raby and Newcome followed his example. Tupper, page, bootboy, and general factotum below stairs, had a letter in his hand, and a rather excited expression on his face.

"What is it—a message?" asked Lovell.

"No, Master Lovell. I've got this 'ere letter," said Tupper. "It's from my father."

"Yes," said Jimmy, rather puzzled.

"I'd like you to read it, sir, if you'll be so kind, and tell me what you think," said Tupper.

"Not bad news, I hope?" said Jimmy.

"Oh, no!" said Tupper. "It's a surprise to me. P'raps I shan't be staying at Rookwood no longer. Looks like it."

"Oh, that's too bad!" said Raby sympathetically.

It was well known that the "sack" often impended over Tupper's head, like the sword of Damocles. Tupper had a great gift for not hearing a bell ring, and the number of knives he broke in the knife machine was supposed to constitute a record. When called to account for these little failings, Tupper had a way of being what Mrs. Maloney called "saucy." So Raby supposed that the chopper had come down at last.

But Tupper did not look despondent. He looked unusually bright.

"Not the sack, kid?" asked Raby. Tupper sniffed.

"No fear! You read the letter."

Jimmy Silver, in considerable perplexity, took the letter, and began to read it. Tupper stood and watched him, with an excited grin on his chubby, scrubby face.

It was quite an interesting document. It ran:

"Deer Tim,—Your Uncle Bill ave pegged out quite sudden and the Peal of Bells comes to me. Ime going down to see about it. According to wot Bill used to say, it's worth thousands; no more work for me nor for you neither. Fancy me behind my own bar and you woshing up the glasses. Bit of all right. Not arf.

"Yore father,

"ERBERT TUPPER."

"Well, my hat!" ejaculated Jimmy Silver.

"Sounds all right—what?" said Tupper.

"Topping!" said Jimmy. As Tupper did not seem to be in any way overcome by grief for the sudden demise of his Uncle William, Jimmy made no remark on that subject. "The Peal of Bells is an inn, I suppose?"

"Pub," said Tupper.

"Oh! Yes, I see."

"I ain't seed much of Uncle Bill," said Tupper, "but from wot I've 'eard, he was his own best customer. Thirsty bloke, you know. I say, Master Silver, this is a bit of all right, ain't it?"

"Looks like it," said Jimmy. "If the place is worth thousands, you're in for a good thing, Tupper!"

"Yes, rather!" grinned Lovell. "I wish I'd been your Uncle Bill's favourite nephew, Tupper!"

"Only you mustn't count your chickens too early," said Jimmy. "It may not turn out quite so well as your father supposes. Still, it certainly looks like a good thing for you!"

"Thousands!" said Tupper brightly. "P'raps more! Uncle Bill always used to spend his money very free. He used to drop fivers and tenners on the races."

"Must have been pretty well off to do that," said Lovell.

"I don't know," said Jimmy thoughtfully. "Dropping money on races isn't the road to riches. The more you lose the less you have left, I should think. I shouldn't count on too much, Tupper!"

"Stick to your job here till you're sure!" said Raby.

Tupper gave another sniff.

"No more answering bells and grinding knives for me!" he said derisively. "This 'ere was rather a surprise. It only came this morning, and Mrs. Maloney had the cheek to interrupt me when I was a-reading of it. You think it's all right, Master Silver?"

"Looks all right," said Jimmy. "I congratulate you, Tupper!"

"Thanks!" said Tupper, in a rather off-hand way.

He took his letter back, and blinked at it. His good fortune had come as a surprise to him, and evidently he had felt the need of a friendly opinion on the subject.

"This is orl right," he said. "Father hasn't said anything about me going 'ome, and he ain't sent any money. I s'pose that means he thinks I'd better finish out the week 'ere. I don't see it myself. Any'ow, I shan't stand any nonsense!"

"Eh?"

"No nonsense!" said Tupper firmly. "I'm independent now, same as you, Silver!"

"What!"

"No more blessed 'Yes, sir!' and 'No, sir!' for me!" said Tupper, "Timothy 'ere and Timothy there, and all that! I'll give it to 'em plain!" "Tupper, old man," said Jimmy Silver mildly, "better go slow! It's not a sure thing yet, you know."

"Rot!" said Tupper.

"Wha-a-at!"

"Yah!" replied Tupper loftily and defiantly

And with that he walked away, leaving the Fistical Four of the Fourth staring.

THE SECOND CHAPTER. A Surprise For Smythe.

TUPPER!

Adolphus Smythe of the Shell made a slight gesture with an elegant hand. He was chatting with Tracy and Howard, after classes, when Timothy Tupper appeared in the ofing. Apparently Adolphus required some slight service from Tupper, hence his lofty but elegant gesture summoning that scrubby youth.

Generally, that beckoning finger was promptly obeyed when it beckoned to Tupper. For Adolphus, who had been rather neglected by Nature in the matter of brains, had in compensation been well provided with that useful article, cash. Adolphus was good for "tips"—indeed, he quite liked tossing a half-crown in a lofty, careless way to an obliging servant. Tupper's opinion of Adolphus was that he was a "hass"—but tips were tips, and so Tupper had always been extremely obliging to Adolphus.

That made his conduct on the present occasion all the more surprising.

That he observed the beckoning finger was certain. But he did not heed it.

Instead of heeding it, and approaching Adolphus with respectful meekness, Tupper walked on, only acknowledging Smythe's gesture with a slight sniff.

Adolphus raised his eyebrows.

He was astonished.

Knowing nothing whatever of Tupper's great news from home, and the scrubby youth's glorious prospects of independence, Smythe was simply perplexed. That Tupper intended to

"check" him was really inconceivable. Smythe was not a fellow to be cheeked; when Smythe was cheeked it was time for the skies to fall.

"Tupper!" repeated Adolphus, slightly raising his voice.

Tupper still progressed on his way.

Jimmy Silver & Co., who were coming down the staircase, grinned as they noted what was going on. They were aware of the cause of Tupper's peculiar manners, and they were interested and entertained. They paused and looked over the banisters.

"Tupper! Come here!" snapped Adolphus, raising his voice a little more.

Tupper turned round at that.

"You speaking to me, Smythe?" he asked.

"Wha-at?" ejaculated Adolphus.

"What do you want, young Smythe?"

"Are—are—are you callin' me 'young Smythe,' Tupper?" asked Adolphus, in a dazed way.

"Can't you 'ear me a-doing of it?" retorted Tupper derisively. "You call me 'Tupper,' don't you? Well, I calls you 'Smythe,' 'I See?"

"Is he mad?" asked Adolphus, appealing to space.

"Must be, I think," said Howard, staring at the page. "Mad as a hatter, I should think! Or else he's askin' to be kicked!"

Tupper laughed derisively.

"You try it on!" he said.

"Oh gad!" said Howard.

"The kid can't have been drinkin'," said Smythe blankly. "What's the matter with the young ass? Tupper, take this letter to the post for me."

"Take it yourself!" said Tupper.

"Tut-tut-take it myself!" repeated Adolphus.

"Jest that, Smythe!" said Tupper.

There was a chuckle from the Fistical Four on the staircase. They found this new and surprising Tupper quite entertaining.

Tupper came back towards Smythe. After having pocketed so many shillings and half-crowns from the great Adolphus, Tupper might really have been a little more considerate. But his new prosperity had gone to Timothy Tupper's head like wine. Shillings and half-crowns were no longer important considerations to Tupper. He was now

dominated by a keen desire to show the universe generally that he was quite as good as anybody else, if not a little better. He was quite pleased by this opportunity to do so.

"Who do you think you are?" asked Tupper, standing in front of Adolphus Smythe with his arms akimbo.

"Wha-a-at?" murmured Smythe helplessly.

"Think you're somebody, eh?" asked Tupper crushingly.

"You cheeky young ruffian!" exclaimed Smythe indignantly. "I've a jolly good mind to kick you!"

"Yah!" retorted Tupper.

"By gad!" exclaimed Adolphus angrily. "I'm not standin' your cheek. Take that, you scrubby young hooligan!"

Smythe of the Shell strode at Tupper and smote him. A hefty box on the ear was what Tupper wanted, in Smythe's opinion, to bring him to his senses.

But Tupper's opinion of his own wants was quite a different one. It was, indeed, a point upon which agreement was unlikely.

Tupper gave a yelp as Smythe smote; and, to the utter amazement and consternation of Adolphus, he smote in return.

Crash!

It was rather the surprise than the force of the blow that overturned Adolphus Smythe. But overturned he was.

He sat down with a heavy concussion. "Take that, you!" gasped Tupper.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh gad!" gasped Smythe as he sat breathless. "Oh crumbs! I'm dreamin' this! Oh crumbs!"

Tupper stared round defiantly at the grinning juniors.

"I don't give twopence for the lot of you!" he announced.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Tupper stalked away. At the corner of the corridor he turned and snapped his fingers.

"Not twopence!" he said emphatically.

Then Tupper disappeared, leaving the juniors howling with laughter—excepting Smythe. Smythe rubbed his nose in a dazed way; for quite a long time afterwards Smythe looked dazed. A menial had smitten him on the nose—it was incredible, but indubitable—menial knuckles had smitten the lofty nose of Adolphus Smythe. And the skies did not fall! Although the grubby knuckles of a menial had landed on Smythe's aristocratic nose, the universe rolled regardless on its way, as if nothing particular had happened! Such an incident should really have portended the end of all things! But apparently it hadn't!

THE THIRD CHAPTER. Muffin The Democrat!

TUBBY MUFFIN put a fat face into the doorway of the end study after tea. Jimmy Silver & Co. were sitting down to prep; but Reginald Muffin, as usual, was not in a hurry to begin prep. Reginald was always in a hurry to finish prep, but never in a hurry to begin. Jimmy waved a dismissing hand at him, but Tubby rolled into the study.

"What's this about Tupper?" he asked.

"Nothing about Tupper," said Jimmy Silver. "Roll away, old fatty! Prep, you know."

"Yes, but I want to know," said Tubby. "All the fellows are cackling over Tupper. He punched Smythe's nose!"

Jimmy Silver laughed.



TELL FATHER!

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"He would get the sack if Smythe reported him," said Tubby.

"Oh, I don't know! Smythe punched him," said the captain of the Fourth. "Anyhow, Tupper's going, so he doesn't mind."

"That's what I want to know," said Tubby eagerly. "Is it true that he's come into a fortune?"

"I don't know about a fortune. He's come into a legacy—at least, his father has. He thinks it's worth thousands of pounds. I hope it is."

"You fellows know it for a fact?" inquired Tubby.

"We've seen the letter about it—Tupper showed it to us," said Jimmy.

"What on earth does it matter, fatty?" Tubby Muffin looked thoughtful.

"Well, I just wanted to know if it was a fact," he said. "I've spoken to Tupper, and he says he's rich now. But, of course, a fellow couldn't take his word. But if you fellows know it for a fact, that's different."

"Well, he acts as if he's got some other resources, beside his job in the school," said Lovell, with a chuckle.

"He does," agreed Tubby. "He's been cheeking a lot of the fellows today."

"The young ass!" said Jimmy Silver, frowning. "But the poor kid hasn't much brains—not much more than you, Tubby. I suppose his silly head is a bit turned! No need to take any notice of his rot!"

"After all, if he's rich," said Tubby thoughtfully. "I never was a snob, you know. I don't see being down on a chap because he happens to be a servant. Anybody might be. Morny says that Smythe's father was a butler. He says he knows it by Smythe's aristocratic manners."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, I don't believe in snobbery," said Tubby. "I don't see why a gentleman shouldn't take notice of him, though he's only a boot-boy. After all, we live in a democratic age, don't we? I'm going to take some notice of Tupper. I think he deserves it."

"You horrid fat toad!" roared Lovell. "Are you going to borrow money from the boot-boy?"

"I disdain to answer that question!" said Reginald Muffin, with dignity. "I'm a democrat! A fellow of really good family, bearing an historic name, can afford to be a democrat."

"Oh, my hat!"

"An historic name!" ejaculated Raby. "Certainly. There were Muffins in this country before the Normans came over," said Tubby.

"And crumpets, too," said Lovell.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, don't be an ass!" said Tubby. "I'm really shocked at you fellows, you know! I never thought you'd be snobbish in this study!"

"Snobbish!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver.

"Yes. Tupper's all right—right as rain. I'm going to make a friend of him," said the fat Classical. "Not because he's come into money, of course. I'm indifferent to such things. But because I'm not a snob, and I think Tupper is one of Nature's gentlemen."

"Phew!"

"You fellows can be snobs if you like," said Tubby. "I hope I've got a mind above that."

Lovell picked up the Latin dictionary; and Tubby Muffin beat a rather hurried retreat into the passage. He rolled along to his own study, No. 2 in the Fourth. His studymates, Higgs and Putty Grace, were working there. But Tubby Muffin was not thinking of work. More important matters than prep filled

his fat mind. Now that the news of Tupper's good fortune was official Tubby was resolved that no snobbish considerations should prevent him from making a friend of one of Nature's gentlemen.

"Putty, old man——" said Tubby.

"Don't interrupt, fathead!"

"Will you lend me five bob, old fellow?"

"No!" answered Putty, without looking up.

"It's awfully important, old chap."

"It always is!" agreed Putty.

"I want to ask a chap to supper in the study," said Tubby Muffin. "A friend of mine, you know. I happen to be stony."

"Did you ever happen to be anything else?"

"Hem! I could do it on five bob, and I'll ask you fellows to meet my friend."

"We can ask ourselves, if we stand the supper," answered Putty. "Shut up, and get on with your prep, or Dicky Dalton will scalp you in the morning!"

"What!" shouted the two juniors together.

"Young Tupper, you know," said Tubby. "He—he's a good sort, and—and I'm not a snob, you know."

"The boot-boy!" said Higgs blankly.

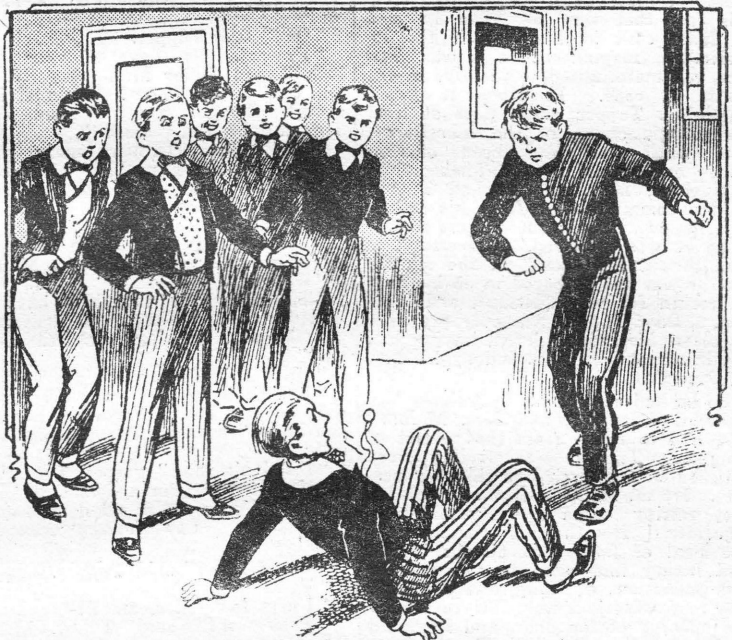
"He—he's a fine fellow really——" stammered Muffin, "and—and I'm not a snob——"

"I'm not a snob, either," said Higgs, "but I draw the line at boot-boys to supper in the study. Have you gone off your rocker, you fat dummy? What do you mean?"

There was a chuckle from Putty of the Fourth.

"Haven't you heard that Tupper's come into a fortune?" he said. "The young ass has been cheeking fellows right and left all day. Tubby's after the lucre!"

"Nothing of the kind!" exclaimed Tubby warmly. "I don't know anything about it, and I never asked Jimmy Silver if he knew it for a fact. I—I want to make friends with old Tupper!" Higgs jumped.



TUPPER ON THE WARPATH! To the utter amazement and consternation of Adolphus Smythe, Tupper, the school page, struck him a blow full upon the chin which sent him crashing to the floor. (See Chapter 2.)

"It's really urgent, old chap," said Tubby Muffin earnestly. "My pal may be leaving Rookwood soon. I want to stand him a supper. You fellows can have your whack. Look here, lend me two bob each——"

"Shut up!"

Higgs looked up. Higgs was rather an overbearing fellow, but he was sometimes good-natured. And he happened to be flush of money just then.

"If it's like that——" he said.

"Just like that, Higgs, old man," said Tubby eagerly. "Lend me five bob, old chap, so that I can stand my pal a supper in the study, before he leaves Rookwood, you know."

"I haven't heard of any chap leaving," said Putty Grace.

"Hem! You—you see——"

"Dash it, I'll do it!" said Higgs in a burst of generosity, and he fumbled in his pocket. "But who's your pal, Tubby?"

"Hem! It—it's——"

"Well, who?"

"Tupper."

"So you're sucking up to the boot-boy because you think he's got some oof, you fat boulder!" he exclaimed. "Well, if you're chummy with Tupper, you can go and chum with him in the boot-room! Out of this!"

"I—I say—yaroooooh!"

The burly Higgs took Tubby Muffin by the collar and spun him round in the doorway. Then a heavy boot smote Tubby's tight trousers.

"Whoop!"

Tubby Muffin shot through the doorway like an arrow from a bow. He landed in the passage on his hands and knees.

Slam!

The door closed on him.

"Ow! Wow! Ow! Yow!"

Tubby Muffin picked himself up ruefully. Evidently there was going to be no supper for his new pal in Study No. 2. Tubby Muffin's new career as a democrat, with no snobbishness about him, was beset with difficulties.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER. Not Pally!

TIMOTHY TUPPER sat in the boot-room. Timothy was in high feather. His work that day had been particularly light.

It had been light because it had mostly remained undone. Mrs. Maloney, the housekeeper, had had difficulties with Tupper that day.

Often and often had Tupper been "saucy." But the possibility of the "sack" had hitherto kept his sauciness within bounds.

Now that possibility did not worry Tupper in the least. Mrs. Maloney had told him that he was to go, expecting thereby, to reduce him to repentance and subordination. And Tupper had only laughed. He could afford to laugh!

The inheritance of the Peal of Bells, which had so suddenly and unexpectedly fallen to the Tupper family made all the difference.

Tupper had resources now.

Indeed, he would have shaken the dust of Rookwood scornfully from his feet that very day had he had a little cash in hand. But the inheritance, magnificent as it was, had not yet materialised, evidently, in the form of cash. Doubtless it would take Mr. Tupper some days at least to get possession of the inheritance, and until that had been effected ready cash would not be forthcoming.

Anyhow, none had reached Tupper in the communication from his father, and his own cash resources were small.

So he was prepared, if necessary, to "finish out his week" at the school; but he was not prepared to do his duty in return for wages, board, and lodging. Poor Tupper was only prepared to assert his independence, having had his head completely turned by his new prospects.

So he had carried his "sauciness" to unheard-of lengths, and Mrs. Maloney had had to retire from the contest of tongues. Tupper was feeling very satisfied with himself and things generally. He sat in the boot-room, with his feet resting on a chair, smoking a cigarette. His thoughts wandered to the Peal of Bells, and all the wealth and luxury that were to accrue from the possession of that establishment. His rosy reflections were interrupted by the opening of the door, and Reginald Muffin of the Classical Fourth presented himself.

Tupper did not rise to his feet. He only stared at Reginald Muffin coolly. He had no great opinion of Reginald; and he was quite unaware that Reginald had suddenly discovered great qualities in him, and was prepared to banish all snobbish considerations and make a friend of him.

"Ho!" said Tupper, by way of greeting.

"I've just looked in—" began Muffin.

"Look out again!"

"Eh?"

"Don't I speak plain Henglish?" asked Tupper derisively. "Ain't you got any hears? Look out again!"

"I—I say—"

"This 'ere," said Tupper loftily, "is my apartment! Pr'aps it ain't a harrystocratic one. That's as it may be. Sich as it is, it's my apartment. I don't choose to 'ave visitors in my apartment, unless I asks them personal!"

Tubby Muffin blinked at him. Tubby had expected, of course, to be greeted with open arms. His lofty condescension should have produced its proper effect on Tupper. But Tupper did not.

even give him time to explain that he intended to be loftily condescending.

"I—I say, you know—" stammered Tubby.

Tupper raised a hand and pointed to the door.

"Houtside!" he said.

"B-b-but—"

"Next time you come to a gentleman's apartment," said Tupper, "you knock at the door. See?"

"Oh! I—I say, sorry!" gasped Tubby.

"Your apology is accepted!" said Tupper, in the same lofty strain. "All the same, I don't remember asking you to visit me in my apartment, Master Muffin—I mean, young Muffin!"

"I—I just looked in!" gasped the bewildered Tubby. "The—the fact is, Tupper—"

"Do you mean Mister Tupper?"

"Eh? Oh, yes!"

"If you mean Mister Tupper, you can say Mister Tupper, I s'pose?"

"Oh! Ah! Yes, Mister Tupper!" gasped Tubby. "I—I looked in to—to offer you my congratters, Tupper—Mister Tupper!"

"Oh!" said Tupper.

"I'm glad to hear of your good luck!" said Tubby Muffin eagerly. "I am, really, you know! The fact is, I always thought you a good chap, Tupper, and I'm pleased!"

"Ho!" said Tupper again suspiciously. Knowing nothing of Tubby's democratic proclivities, he suspected the fat and fatuous youth of seeking to pull his leg.

"I was going to ask you to supper in my study," went on Tubby Muffin.

"Was you?"

"The other fellows wouldn't have it," said Tubby. "They're rather snobs, you know. Nothing snobbish about me!"

"Ho!" said Tupper again.

"I don't believe in being down on a chap because he's rather a low blighter, you know," went on Tubby Muffin tactfully.

"D-d-don't you?" gasped Tupper.

"Not at all! I'm a democrat," said Tubby. "Why, we're all democrats in these days. Low fellows even like you."

"Low fellers?" said Tupper.

"Yes."

"I'm a low feller, am I?"

"That's it!" said Tubby Muffin.

"But I'm not down on you because you're low and common and coarse, and all that. I'm not a snob!"

Tupper gazed at the fat junior speechlessly. Tubby's way of putting it was not, perhaps, diplomatic.

"I've just dropped in, in a friendly way, to congratulate you, you know," went on Tubby Muffin breezily. "I dare say it surprises you. Naturally, you wouldn't think that a gentleman like me would touch a common fellow like you—not with a barge-pole. But—"

Wharrer you at?" yelled Tubby Muffin suddenly, in great alarm.

The question was really superfluous. What Timothy Tupper was "at" was quite evident. He was jumping out of his chair, and jumping at Tubby Muffin!

"Here, I say—stop it—you rotter! You silly ass— Yaroo!" Tubby Muffin went whirling through the boot-room door in the angry grasp of the object of his kind condescension.

"Tupper, you grubby cad— Yaroo! Leggo! Oh, my hat! Why, you ruffian— Yoooop!"

Crash!

Tupper stood glaring at the sprawling, breathless Tubby.

"Now, do you want any more?" he roared.

"Ow! Wow! You checky rotter—ow!" gasped Tubby Muffin.

"Are you going, or do you want some more?" roared the indignant Tupper. "I'll give you low feller! Get hout!"

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Tubby Muffin, as the indignant Tupper started operations with a boot.

The fat junior picked himself up and fled. Tupper sniffed, and went back sniffing into the boot-room.

Five minutes later, Tubby Muffin limped painfully into the Fourth Form passage. He limped into his study, and sank, gasping, into a chair.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER. Tupper Goes It Strong!

DR. CHISHOLM was annoyed. Thrice he had touched the bell; and, unless that bell was seriously out of order, there should have been a corresponding ring in the regions below. In response to that ring Timothy Tupper should have presented himself in the Head's study. But thrice had Dr. Chisholm touched the bell in vain. Tupper had not appeared.

The Head, naturally, was annoyed. Rookwood fellows were supposed to tremble at his frown. Masters' Common-room was always thrown into a flutter if he knit his brows. So a person in his employment—especially so very insignificant a person as a house page—should have been prepared to go through fire and water rather than keep the Head waiting a minute or less. To hear should have been to obey.

It should have been, but it wasn't! Tupper ought to have appeared when the Head touched the bell, just as the genie appeared when Aladdin rubbed the lamp. But he did not appear.

For the fourth time the Head touched the bell—hard! Had it been a bell of the ancient kind, doubtless he would have jerked at it and almost jerked the bell-cord away. He looked like that. But it was an electric bell, and he could only jab at it with an angry and emphatic thumb. He jabbed.

And still Tupper did not appear. But the bell had been heard, and a housemaid appeared in lieu of Tupper. Dr. Chisholm stared at her over his glasses.

"Where is Tupper, Sarah?" he asked.

"A-walking in the quadrangle, sir," said Sarah.

"Bless my soul!" said the Head.

"You can see him from the winder, sir," said Sarah, with a suppressed smile.

"Bless my soul!"

The Head made a gesture of dismissal and walked to the window. Then Tupper came into view.

It was nearly a week since Tupper had shown that wonderful letter to Jimmy Silver & Co. In that week Tupper had developed.

He was under notice to "go," but that did not trouble him. In fact, he was less troubled than if he had been under notice to remain.

"Thousands of pounds," ran in Tupper's mind, to the exclusion of less attractive matters. He repined at the necessity of remaining at the school for the rest of the week. But as no further communication had yet been received from home, he had no choice about it. He could only resolve to be of as little use as possible.

That resolve he lived up to manfully. Boots, supposed to be cleaned by Tupper, showed little sign of improvement after passing through his hands. Bells rang, and rang again, and Tupper turned a deaf ear. Tup-

per no longer touched his cap to anybody. Who was anybody, that Tupper should touch his cap to him?

He had gone to the length of addressing Mr. Greely, the master of the Fifth, as "old Greely."

The master of the Fifth was a portly and important gentleman. To be called "old Greely" by a chubby, scrubby, tubby youth in buttons was quite unnerving to Mr. Greely. He could not believe his purple ears. But when Tupper repeated the expression, Mr. Greely had been driven to believe them. And Tupper's astounding impertinence had naturally been reported to the Head.

From several sources, in late days, the Head had learned that Tupper was giving trouble. He had learned it from some of the prefects, and from some of the masters, and from Mrs. Maloney, the housekeeper. Mrs. Maloney was especially eloquent. For not only was Tupper cheeky to his superiors, but he was growing intolerably contemptuous to his inferiors. Being now a rich bloke, as he expressed it, Tupper was filled with a lofty disdain for the boot-room, the kitchen, and the adjoining territories. He had called old Mack, the porter, a "menial." He had alluded to Sarah as a "blooming skivvy." Sarah, undoubtedly, was blooming, being a very plump and fresh-coloured young person. But she did not like the term "skivvy." Tupper had even alluded to the cook as a "blinking cook." He declined to speak to any of them civilly, on the ground that he did not care to associate with servants. As he had been the humblest member of the community below stairs, this new attitude was naturally exasperating.

So the Head had resolved to speak to Tupper. Speaking to Tupper, of course, would reduce him to instant submission. At all events, the Head supposed so.

That was why he had rung for Tupper. Now he stood at his study window and looked at that fatuous youth, and the frown on his brow deepened and intensified.

Tupper was walking in the quad, where he had no right to walk unless duty called him there. That slight infraction of the fitness of things might have been overlooked. But Tupper was not merely walking to take the air. He was swanking—what Sarah would have termed "showing orf."

Tupper was not in buttons. He had discarded those symbols of servitude. He was in his best clothes, which, unfortunately, were of an ill cut and a striking pattern. He wore a bowler-hat cocked rakishly on his bullet head. He carried his hands in his trousers-pockets, and whistled.

A number of fellows had noticed him with smiles. One or two frowned at him. But, so far, he had been left to himself.

"Bless my soul!" said the Head.

And he raised his voice and called out: "Tupper!"

Timothy looked round coolly.

"Come here, Tupper," said the Head mildly.

Tupper approached the open window. He did not remove his hat, or even touch it. He stared up at the Head.

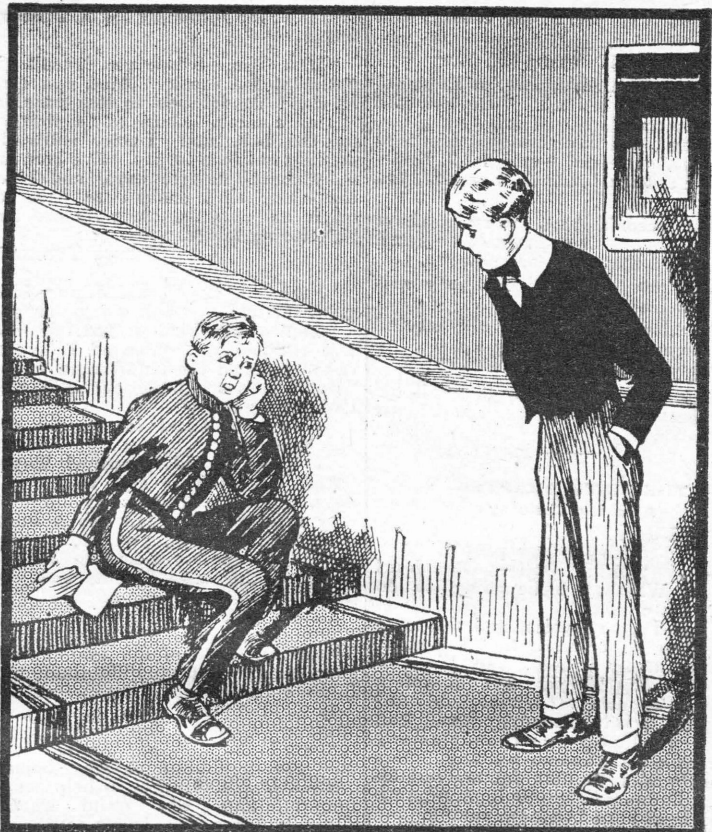
"What does this mean, Tupper?" asked Dr. Chisholm, fixing his eyes upon the heir of the Peal of Bells.

"What does what mean?" retorted Tupper.

"I rang for you, Tupper."

"Ho!" said Tupper.

"Why are you not attending to your duties, Tupper?"



DOWN AND OUT! Jimmy Silver found Tupper sitting on the stairs with a letter in his hand, and an expression of misery on his face. "Hallo, kid!" said Jimmy, kindly. "Up against it—what?" Tupper groaned. "Oh, Master Silver! Oh, sir! I'm done for. I've got to leave Rookwood to-day!" (See Chapter 6.)

"Can't a bloke take the hair if he likes?" asked Tupper.

"The—the what? Oh, the air!" ejaculated the Head. "Certainly not, Tupper at this time, or in this manner. Is it your intention to be insolent, Tupper?"

"Is it yours?" asked Tupper.

"What?"

"You asks me one question, and I asks you another," said Tupper independently. "Don't you cheek me, and I won't cheek you, see?"

"Bless my soul!"

"You be civil, old Chisholm, and I'll be civil!"

"Old Chisholm!" murmured the Head dizzily.

"That's your name, ain't it?" said Tupper.

"Boy! How dare you!"

"Oh, come orf!" said Tupper. "No good doing the high-faluting stunt with me. I'm one bloke, and you're another. I've got as much money now as you 'ave. I've stood as much lip from you as I'm a-going to stand, old Chisholm, so you put that in your pipe and smoke it!"

The Head gazed at Tupper from the window. If the bust of Socrates in his study had opened its marble lips, and addressed him in that fashion, the Head could scarcely have been more dumb-founded.

"So that's that!" said Tupper. "You tork to me, and I'll tork to you. As for the boots, blow the boots! I'm above boots now, Chisholm, and the sooner you know it the better. As for the knives, I know I've broke 'em, and I'd break 'em again, if I was going to touch the blinking machine, which I ain't!"

"Bless my soul! Tupper, you will

leave this place immediately—you are discharged!" gasped the Head.

"That's nothing noo!" said Tupper, with derision. "I'm sacked already, and I'm going on Saturday. I only 'ope you'll get a bloke as good as me in my place. 'Tain't likely! But I wouldn't stay on if you was to go down on your bended knees, Chisholm."

"Upon my word! I—I—"

"Ow!" ejaculated Tupper suddenly. Bulkeley of the Sixth had walked up and taken him by the collar.

Shake, shake, shake!

"Ere! You leggo!" roared Tupper. "You've no right to touch me, young Bulkeley! Ow! Leggo! I'll 'ack your shins!"

"Keep a civil tongue, you young ass!" said Bulkeley, with a smile. "You mustn't cheek the Head, you know!"

Dr. Chisholm disappeared from the study window. Apparently he felt unequal to dealing with Tupper. Bulkeley released the heir of the Peal of Bells, and walked away smiling. Tupper rubbed his neck rather ruefully.

"Cheek!" he sniffed.

That evening, when the Fistical Four were at prep in the end study, Tubby Muffin rolled in, with a fat face crimson with wrath and indignation.

"What do you fellows think?" he spluttered.

"That you'd better get off to your prep, and leave us to ours," said Jimmy Silver.

"That cheeky cad Tupper—"

"Oh, bother, Tupper!"

"He's cuffed me!"

"What!"

"Cuffed me!" roared Tubby Muffin.

"Actually told me I was cheeky, and cuffed me!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the four. "It's not a laughing matter!" howled Tubby Muffin. "He has laid hands on me—him, you know—and me, you know! I'd have knocked him into little bits, only—only—I felt that I couldn't soil my hands on a mental, you know!"

"You needn't have worried about that, Tubby. They couldn't be much more soiled than they are now!"

"Look here, Jimmy! You jolly well ought to kick him!"

"I'll kick you instead, old scout!" said Jimmy Silver, getting up.

"Yah! Rotter!"

Tubby Muffin vanished, to retail his grievance in some more sympathetic study.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.
Alas for Timothy!

"Oh dear!" Jimmy Silver paused. "Oh! Oh! Oh dear! What's a bloke going to do now? Oh crumbs!"

It was Tupper's voice, and the tones of it were so dolorous that the good-natured Jimmy paused. In his now role, Timothy Tupper, had forgotten many little acts of kindness he had received from Jimmy, and had "checked" Jimmy as recklessly as any other fellow that came his way. But Jimmy was a tolerant fellow, and he made allowances for the hapless youth whose light head had been turned.

Now he couldn't help feeling sympathetic. Tupper had evidently had bad news. Jimmy found him sitting on the stairs, with a letter in his hand, and an expression of woe-begone misery on his chubby, scrubby face.

"Hallo, kid!" said Jimmy kindly. "Up against it, what?"

Tupper groaned.

"Oh, Master Silver!" Jimmy apparently was no longer "Young Silver."

"Oh, sir! I'm done for! Oh dear!"

"Not so bad as that, surely?"

"I've got to go to-day," groaned Tupper. "I've checked Mrs. Maloney, and I've checked the young gents, and I've checked the 'Ead. I—I've checked you, Master Silver!"

"Never mind that, old scout!" said Jimmy, with a smile. "But you want to go, don't you? You're well off now."

Tupper groaned again deeply.

"Read that blinking letter!" he mumbled.

Jimmy Silver glanced at the letter.

It was in the sprawling fist of Timothy's father.

"Dear Tim,—I 'ope you 'avent give notice at the skool. Mind you don't. It won't do for you to lose your job. It's all a catch. There was a mortgage on the pub, and Uncle Bill's left nothing but bills to pay. I've been into it, with the lawyer cove, and I 'ear that there ain't enough to pay yore uncle Bill's debts. So no more from yore-loving father."

"ERBERT TUPPER."

"Poor old chap!" said Jimmy Silver sympathetically. "I'm sorry, Tupper."

"That's very kind of you, sir, arter I've checked you, same as I 'ave the rest!" groaned the unfortunate Tupper. "But what's a bloke going to do now? I've got the sack!"

"Well, you asked for it, old man, didn't you?"

"I know I did!" groaned Tupper. "And jobs ain't so easy to get these days. They're 'ard up at 'ome, and they depend on the few bob a week I send 'ome to them, you know. Now, there'll be another mouth to feed instead of the bobs I sent 'ome. Oh dear!"

Jimmy Silver looked at him curiously. There were good qualities in poor Tupper, in spite of his late amazing proceedings. His qualities shone more in hard times than in prosperous times—as is the case with many beside Timothy Tupper. Tupper strutting in the quad and checking the Head was one person—Tupper, sending home a portion of his earnings to help support his relations was quite another. Jimmy's heart was deeply touched.

"Think it's too late now, Master Silver?" asked Timothy, looking hopefully at Jimmy.

"I—I hope not," said Jimmy. "Mrs. Maloney's a good sort. Tell her you're sorry for playing the giddy goat—"

"But the 'Ead!" groaned Tupper. "I checked the 'Ead! Oh dear!"

And Tupper fairly wept.

"Go and see him," said Jimmy. "He's in the study now."

"I—I daren't!" gasped Tupper. "Not arter the way I torked to im only yesterday. Oh dear! P'raps you'd come with me and put in a word for me, Master Silver?"

"I don't know if it would do any good," said Jimmy dubiously. "But I'll come if you like."

"Thank you kindly, Master Silver."

Jimmy Silver led the hapless Tupper to Dr. Chisholm's study. He tapped at the door, and the deep voice of the Head bade him enter.

Dr. Chisholm stared at Tupper over his glasses.

"Tupper! Are you not gone yet?"

"Oh dear! No, sir!"

"Then kindly go as quickly as possible."

"I—I don't want to go, sir!" mumbled Tupper. "It's 'ard on a cove, sir, to get the sack in these 'ere 'ard times, sir."

"Nonsense!" said the Head. "You are discharged, Tupper, for your own misdoings—and, as I understand, it was at your own desire."

Tupper's changed his mind, sir," ventured Jimmy Silver.

The Head gave him a cold look.

"It is too late for Tupper to change his mind!" he snapped. "Neither is that a matter for your intervention, Silver."

Tupper groaned.

"It's all up!" he said. "I'll go!"

"Hold on a minute, kid," said Jimmy. "If—if you'll let me speak a word, sir—"

"Nonsense!"

"Tupper's sorry, sir, and he means to do better in the future," said Jimmy.

"He—he supposed that he had come into a fortune, sir."

"Bless my soul!" said the Head, staring at Tupper blankly.

"And now he's been disappointed, sir," said Jimmy hastily, "and it will be hard on his people, sir, if he goes. Tupper helps them out of his wages, sir."

"Dear me!" said the Head. "That is very meritorious of Tupper! But such insolence—such extreme disrespect! However, if you are sure, Tupper, that such a thing will never occur again—"

"Oh, no, sir!" said Tupper. "Father ain't likely to 'ave another pub left 'im, and I shouldn't believe it if he did. It won't never occur again, sir, if you'll give me another chance, sir, like the good gentleman as you are, sir."

The Head coughed.

"Very well, Tupper. The matter rests with Mrs. Maloney, but I will speak to her and do my best for you."

"Thank you kindly, sir!" mumbled Tupper. And he breathed freely as Jimmy Silver led him out of the Head's study.

Tupper stayed.

For a week at least he was on excellent behaviour; never had boots been so brightly polished at Rookwood; never had bells been answered so promptly. Then Tupper began to slack again; but never, never was he likely to repeat the extraordinary proceedings which had marked the rise and fall of Timothy Tupper!

THE END.

(Don't miss: "Tubby Muffin's Golden Guinea!" next week's grand long story of the Chums of Rookwood!)

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