

THE BEST SCHOOL, SPORTING and ADVENTURE YARNS *inside!*

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# The POPULAR

ALL HANDS GO UP  
FOR THE RIO KID!

### TROUBLE FOR A SIXTH-FORMER!

Mark Carthew cannot understand why it is that fellows are crowding forward offering ten shillings for the bike he has advertised for sale at ten pounds!

# ROOKWOOD'S RECORD RAG!



A STIRRING LONG COMPLETE TALE OF JIMMY SILVER & CO., THE MERRY CHUMS OF ROOKWOOD.

By

Owen Conquest.

#### THE FIRST CHAPTER. Too Funny.

"O W!"

"Feeling bad, old chap?" Jimmy Silver asked that sympathetic question.

Arthur Edward Lovell, who was about to groan again, paused, to fix a glare on his sympathetic chum.

"You ass!"

"Eh?"

"Do you think I should be kicking up this row if I wasn't feeling bad?" demanded Lovell.

Jimmy Silver smiled.

There was no doubt that Lovell of the Fourth was feeling bad, and equally no doubt that it had a deteriorating effect on his temper.

The Fistical Four, of the Fourth, were in the end study, and for some time Arthur Edward Lovell had been yawning.

He was hurt.

A fellow could not be whacked emphatically by a prefect's ashplant and kicked more emphatically by a prefect's boot without being hurt. And such had been Lovell's painful experience at the hands of Carthew of the Sixth.

Jimmy Silver picked up the "Coombe Times" from the study table, and looked down the advertisement columns. Once more he read over the advertisement which had caused so much and such unexpected trouble, to Arthur Edward Lovell in particular.

The advertisement was plain enough; there did not seem any room for mistake or misapprehension in it. It ran—the juniors really knew it by heart by this time:

"FOR SALE.—Enfield bicycle, in excellent condition. 10s. or nearest offer. Call personally only to M. Carthew, School House, Rookwood."

Naturally, Jimmy Silver & Co. had been surprised to find that Carthew was offering his handsome jigger for sale for ten shillings. But there it was, in black and white; and Lovell, in good faith, had gone to Carthew's study to offer him the ten shillings and take over the bike.

Then the trouble had started, and Lovell, whacked and kicked out of the study, had fled, as it were, for his life.

Carthew's conduct was absolutely inexplicable.

There was a tap at the half-open door of the end study, and a cheery junior came in. It was Teddy Grace, otherwise known as Putty of the Fourth. Putty's cheery face wore a bright smile.

"You fellows seen the local paper?" he asked.

"Yes—we've got it here," said Jimmy. "Good! I want to look at it," said Putty. "I've been over to Rookham, and got back only just in time for lock-up—too late to get the paper, and I want to see it particularly."

He glanced down the advertisement columns, and chuckled.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Is that Carthew's advertisement you're looking at?" asked Raby.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ha, ha! Yes." Putty of the Fourth carefully closed the door of the end study. "I can tell you fellows—you'll keep it dark. Of course, it will have to be kept dark; it's rather risky pulling a prefect's leg—especially Carthew's."

"What the thump—"

"I'll tell you. You remember Carthew sent you to the printer's with an advertisement about selling his bike last Wednesday, Jimmy. I took it off your hands, as you were going to Bunbury."

"I remember," said Jimmy Silver.

"I'd been having some trouble with Carthew, and I got a bright idea for making him sit up," continued Putty brightly. "I altered the advertisement before I took it in."

"What?"

"You see, Carthew was offering his bike for ten pounds—"

"Ten pounds!" repeated Jimmy.

"Yes, and put in 'communications by letter only.' Of course, he didn't want people calling here about his old bike—perhaps during classes, too. His idea was to fix up appointments to show it to a buyer."

The Fistical Four stared at Putty.

The expression on Arthur Edward Lovell's face was really startling. He was beginning to understand.

"Catch on?" continued Putty, still merry and bright, and quite failing to note Lovell's expression. "I altered the ten pounds to ten shillings, and put in

'call personally only.' Here it is, in the paper."

"You—you—" gasped Lovell.

Jimmy Silver and Raby and Newcome stared open-mouthed at the practical joker of Rookwood.

They comprehended now.

That surprising advertisement was quite explained—and so was Carthew's amazing conduct. Having—as he supposed—advertised his bike for sale at ten pounds, no wonder he was enraged when a junior dropped in to offer him ten shillings for it. No wonder Carthew had supposed that it was a "rag" on the part of the juniors, and had rewarded Lovell and Smythe of the Sheil with the ashplant.

"So—so—so that's it!" stuttered Raby.

"That's it!" grinned Putty of the Fourth, beaming with glee. "No end of a catch on Carthew—what?"

"You silly ass!" roared Lovell.

"Eh?"

"You howling dummy—"

"Hallo! What's biting you, Lovell?" asked Putty, in astonishment. "Don't you think it no end of a jest on Carthew? Think of people coming here to see him in class, and Carthew not being able to make head or tail of it when they offer him ten bob—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Raby. "You silly ass, I suppose it never occurred to you that some Rookwood chaps would take it as genuine?"

Putty started.

"You don't mean—"

"You silly ass!" howled Lovell, jumping up. "You funny chump! I've been to Carthew, through that fatheaded jape of yours, and offered him ten bob for his bicycle."

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Putty. "What did Carthew do?"

"He thought it was a rag—I can see now why he thought so. He pitched into me—"

"Pitched into you?"

"Yes; whacked me right and left, and—"

"Oh, my hat!"

"And booted me out of his study!" roared Lovell.

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Putty.

"You think it's a laughing matter?" bawled Lovell.

Apparently Putty did. He simply yelled with merriment.

Arthur Edward Lovell made a jump for Putty of the Fourth, catching up a bulky cushion as he jumped.

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"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Putty. "You must have been surprised! Ha, ha—Yah—oh! Yoop! Wharrer you at? Oh, my hat!"

Swipe, swipe, swipe! Putty's merriment came to a sudden end, as Arthur Edward Lovell swiped him right and left with the cushion.

Putty spun downward—still yelling, but not with laughter. His yells now were yells of anguish.

"You silly ass! Yoop! Keep off! Gerrooogh! Oh, my hat! Why, I'll punch you— Yarooooooh—"

Crash! A hefty swipe with the cushion sent Putty to the Fourth spinning into the passage. He collapsed there in a breathless heap, still yelling—and still not with merriment.

## THE SECOND CHAPTER.

### The Third Form Syndicate!

**A**LGY SILVER of the Third Form at Rookwood came into the Third Form room with a crumpled paper under his arm and a cheery grin on his face.

Prep in the Third Form room was over; Mr. Bohun, the master of the Third, had finished with his Form for that evening.

After prep the fags had the room to themselves until nine o'clock; they preferred it to the junior Common-room, where they were in awe of the Fourth and the Shell. Generally after prep there was plenty of noise going on in the fags' quarters—the Rookwood Third had no idea at all of the repose that stamps the caste of Vere de Vere. The present evening was not an exception—there was plenty of noise going on when Jimmy Silver's fag cousin strolled in.

Algy Silver looked round the noisy Form-room, and signed to Lovell minor and Grant. His look and gesture indicated that something was "on," and the two fags ceased an argument and joined him in a corner.

"What's up?" asked Lovell minor. "A chance for us!" said Algy impressively. "Either of you fellows got ten shillings?"

"I've got sixpence," said Lovell minor.

"I've got half-a-crown," said Grant. "And I'm keeping it," he added, as an afterthought.

Algy frowned. "Look here, young Grant—"

"What's the game?" asked Teddy Lovell. "Give it a name, Algy! If it's a sweep you can leave me out."

"And me!" said Grant.

"It's not a sweep. Look here!" Algy held up the crumpled paper. "You know I went to see my Cousin Jimmy in the Fourth to see whether I could raise a few bobs from him. Well, Jimmy's gone over to Manders' House to jaw about the football with Tommy Dodd—so Rawson told me. His pals have gone with him, and there was nobody in the end study."

"What about it?"

"I'm coming to that. It was no good waiting for Jimmy—you know what he is when he gets going on football jaw. He won't be back till dorm, most likely. But this paper was lying on the study table, and I had a look at it while I was waiting, before I asked Rawson where the silly chumps were."

"The 'Coombe Times,'" said Lovell minor. "I believe that's my major's paper—I saw him with it."

"There's an advertisement here from Rookwood," said Algy. "Carthew of

the Sixth is advertising his bike for sale for ten shillings."

"Phew! Must be an ass! It's worth pounds!"

"Anyhow, there it is," went on Silver II. "Now, you've seen that bike—a ripping Enfield, with three-speed gear, and a back-pedal brake, and in jolly good condition, just as Carthew says in the advert. He's a howling ass to sell it for ten bob; but that's his own business. Of course, we couldn't ride Carthew's size in bikes; but if we wheeled it over to Rookham a dealer would easily give four or five pounds for it."

"Why doesn't Carthew, then?" asked Grant.

"Blessed if I know—silly ass, I suppose. Anyhow, look at the advert, and you'll see it's offered for ten bob."

Grant and Lovell minor looked and were convinced. There was no doubting plain print.

"I've told you," resumed Algy Silver, "that this is a chance for us. I'm letting you fellows into it because you're pals of mine. And—and I haven't ten bob just now, as it happens. Of course, Carthew will expect cash."

The three fags looked at one another. Their faces were growing eager. A chance of bagging a handsome bicycle for ten shillings, to be sold the next half-holiday for four or five pounds, perhaps six or seven, was the chance of a lifetime. It appealed to the business instincts of the comrades of the Third. It was a more extensive and more profitable operation than "swopping" postage-stamps and white rabbits.

"I say, that looks all right," said Grant. "If we can make up ten bob among us—"

"You've got half-a-crown," said Algy. "I've got two shillings."

"I've got sixpence," said Lovell minor. "That makes up five bob."

"Five bob isn't enough. We can't raise the money by ourselves. We shall have to fix up a syndicate."

"A—a—a what?"

Lovell minor and Grant looked at Algy Silver with something like awe. The word syndicate was impressive—all the more because the fags did not quite know what it meant.

Algy smiled the smile of superior knowledge. He knew all about financial syndicates. He had once read a novel in which a financial syndicate figured, and he fancied that there was not much left for him to learn on that subject.

"A syndicate!" he said. "They have them in the City, you know—lot of fellows get together and pool their spondulics, and they whack out the profits according to the amount of rhino they put up. See?"

"I see. Then we're a syndicate," said Lovell minor.

"We are!" assented Silver II. "But we've got to let some more into it. We've got to raise capital."

Algy Silver glanced over the fags in the Form-room, debating in his mind which should be the lucky fellows to be admitted into the syndicate.

Finally, he selected Pipkin, Wylie, and Wegg, who, between them, were able to make up the capital of the syndicate to the required ten shillings.

That important matter settled, after considerable chatter, Algy jumped up.

"Come on!" he said. "We'll see Carthew at once before anybody else can butt in."

"Good!"

And the members of the syndicate hurried out of the Form-room in search of Carthew of the Sixth.

## THE THIRD CHAPTER.

### Declined Without Thanks!

**M**ARK CARTHEW of the Sixth Form was in the prefects' room.

He was chatting with Frampton of the Sixth, a Modern senior. Frampton had come over to see Carthew on a matter very important to the two of them. Most of the Classical prefects were in the room, including Bulkeley, the captain of Rookwood—for which reason Carthew and Frampton were talking in low tones in a quiet alcove. Their subject of discussion was not one that they could let Bulkeley hear about.

"Monday will be in time!" Frampton now," said Frampton. "Hook thinks he will put the money on for us on Monday. It looks like a good thing, Carthew."

"The very best," agreed Carthew. "From what I've been able to get hold of, Sweet Lavender is bound to win!"

"We can get three to one against now," said Frampton. "Hook thinks we shall get the same odds on Monday. I'm goin' in to the tune of three pounds."

Carthew smiled. "I'm hopin' to put up a tenner," he said.

"Well, you're a plunger, old man," said Frampton admiringly.

Carthew looked complacent. The black sheep of the Classical Sixth liked to fancy himself as a plunger.

Bulkeley's voice was heard just then. "Hallo! What do you fags want here?"

Carthew and Frampton glanced round. Six fags of the Third Form were looking in at the door of the prefects' room rather nervously. Fags were not supposed to enter that important apartment unless on messages for prefects or masters.

"We—we hear that Carthew's here," said Algy Silver. "We want to speak to Carthew, Bulkeley, if you don't mind."

"Speak to him, then," said Bulkeley, with a smile. "There he is over in the corner."

Thus encouraged, Algy Silver & Co. entered the prefects' room.

Carthew stared at them. He wondered what the fags wanted. Certainly he had no suspicion that this was a financial syndicate.

Frampton rose from his chair with a grin.

"Well, I've got to get back to my House," he said. "I'll leave you with your friends, Carthew."

"Oh, don't be an ass!" said Carthew.

Frampton walked out of the prefects' room; and Carthew sat and eyed the half-dozen fags as they came across to him. His look was not pleasant. He was still feeling the annoyance of the supposed "rag" on the subject of his bicycle.

Algy Silver and his comrades came over to where Carthew was sitting in the alcove. They noticed that he was scowling; but there was nothing unusual in that. The bully of the Sixth scowled much oftener than he smiled.

"Well," snapped Carthew, "what do you want?"

"It's all right, Carthew," Algy Silver hastened to assure him. "We have heard that you're selling your bike."

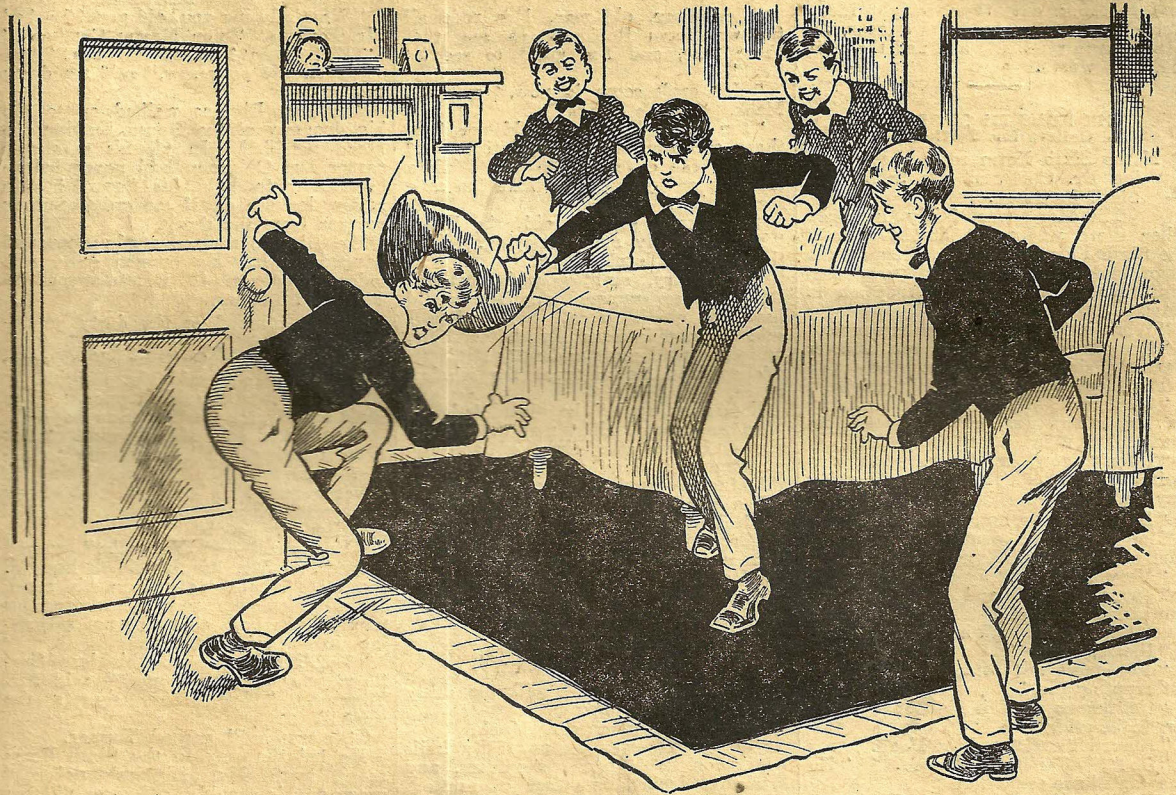
Carthew's teeth came hard together. "We've seen the advertisement in the 'Coombe Times,' you know," said Lovell minor.

"So you're in it, are you?" said Carthew unpleasantly. "I suppose your major put you up to this, young Lovell?"

"Oh, no!" said Lovell minor. "It was Algy's idea."  
 "Your idea, what?" said Carthew, fixing his eyes upon Silver II.  
 "Yes," said Algy Silver brightly. "We want the bike, Carthew. I couldn't raise the money personally, so we've formed a syndicate."  
 "A what?" ejaculated Carthew.  
 "A syndicate. We're going Co. to buy your bike, if you'll sell it to us," explained Algy.  
 Carthew had half-risen, to put into force the drastic measures he had ready. But he sat down again now. If six fags had combined their resources to purchase the bike, it was possible that this was not, after all, a

us a receipt, of course," said Algy Silver. "Here you are, Carthew!"  
 A grubby fist, crammed with coins—mostly of small denominations—was held out. Carthew received the money in his palm.  
 He stared at it.  
 The brief good-humour faded from his face. It was a "rag," after all—so it seemed to Carthew, at least.  
 "What's this?" he asked, in a grinding voice.  
 "Ten shillings!" said Algy Silver innocently.  
 "Ten shillings!"  
 "Yes."  
 "Now the bike's ours!" said Lovell minor.

Yells and howls arose as he boxed their ears right and left.  
 Whack! Crack! Smack! Thump!  
 "Oh crumbs—"  
 "Oh corks—"  
 "Whoooooop!"  
 The Third Form syndicate scattered, and scampered for the door. Even Grant did not think of lingering to pick up the money.  
 In amazement and terror, Algy Silver & Co. bolted through the doorway into the passage.  
 Algy was last to go; and as he went he received Carthew's boot, planted behind him with terrific energy. Algy Silver fairly flew into the passage, and



LOVELL LANDS OUT! Arthur Edward Lovell made a jump for Putty Grace, catching up a bulky cushion as he jumped. "Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Putty. "You must have been surprised—ha, ha—yah—oh—yarooooop!" Swipe, swipe, swipe! Putty's merriment came to a sudden end as Lovell swiped him right and left with the cushion. (See Chapter 1.)

rag—possible that they were going to offer him the advertised price. He decided to give them a chance, at least.  
 "Oh, you're a syndicate, are you?" he said, with a grin. "Well, you can have the bike if you can pay for it. I don't care who buys it!"  
 "What's the good of a Sixth-Former's bike to you little asses?" asked Neville of the Sixth, who was looking on.  
 "Well, we want it," said Algy Silver. "We're ready to pay for it, Carthew, and we've got the money here."  
 "Shell out, then!" said Carthew laconically.  
 Algy Silver proceeded to shell out. "Here you are!"  
 Carthew was quite good-humoured now. There was a rattle and clink of coins as Algy sorted the funds of the syndicate out of his trousers' pocket.  
 "We shall want a receipt, you know," said Grant cautiously.  
 "That's all right. Carthew will give

Carthew looked at the fags for one expressive moment. Then he quite surprised them. He lifted his hand and hurled the handful of small silver and coppers at the syndicate.  
 "You young sweeps—" he roared.  
 "Oh, my hat!"  
 "Ow!"  
 "What—"  
 Carthew jumped up. Algy Silver and Lovell minor were nearest to him, and he seized those two hapless youths by the collars.  
 Crack!  
 Two fiendish yells rang through the prefects' room, as Algy's and Lovell minor's heads came together with a resounding concussion.  
 "Oh! Ow!"  
 "Yarooooh!"  
 "What—" gasped Pipkin.  
 "Look here—"  
 "Pick up the money!" gasped Grant.  
 But there was no time to pick up the scattered money. Carthew was on the Third Form syndicate like a whirlwind.

sprawled over the rest of the syndicate.  
 "Carthew!" called out Bulkeley. "What—look here, chuck it—"  
 "Do you think I'm going to be checked by the Third!" bawled Carthew. "This is a rag—they're all in it—Third and Fourth and Shell! I'll jolly well show them they can't rag me!"  
 "Yarooo! Oh, my hat! Run for it!"  
 "Hook it!"  
 Carthew rushed into the passage after the Third Form syndicate. They bolted in terror.  
 Scattered and breathless, the hapless syndicate found refuge at last in obscure corners, and Carthew tramped back, scowling, to the prefects' room. And later on, when the unfortunate syndicate forgathered again in the Third Form room, there was weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth.  
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It was not till the next morning when Lovell minor told his tale of woe to his elder brother, Arthur Edward, that the Third Form syndicate understood the cause of Carthew's amazing conduct. Then they looked for Putty of the Fourth.

It was no use looking for Carthew—they could not handle a Sixth Form prefect. But they could handle a Fourth Form practical joker.

And they did.

They ran the humorous Putty to earth in Little Quad, in a nice quiet spot; and after telling him what they thought of him, they proceeded from words to deeds. After they had finished with him Putty of the Fourth was left in a state of wreckage—and he dizzily wondered whether it paid, after all, to be the brightest humorist at Rookwood, and to think out these bright ideas. Certainly, judging by Putty's looks, the Third Form syndicate had had their ten shillings' worth.

#### THE FOURTH CHAPTER. Callers for Carthew!

**I**N the Sixth Form room next morning Dr. Chisholm was taking the Sixth in Greek.

The Head was fairly launched when there was a tap at the door of the Sixth Form room, and Tupper, the page, looked in. The Head frowned at him. He detested any interruption in class.

"What is it, Tupper?" he snapped.

"Gentleman called to see Master Carthew, sir," said Tupper.

The Head stared, as well he might.

"Carthew! What do you mean by having callers during class?" he demanded. "What does this mean?"

"I don't know, sir," answered the surprised prefect. "I wasn't expecting any caller, sir."

"I should hope not," said the Head. "Kindly tell this gentleman, Tupper, that he cannot see Master Carthew."

"Very good, sir."

Tupper retired, and the Sixth resumed the entrancing study of Sophocles. But Tupper came back in a few minutes.

"Please, sir—"

"You must not come here, Tupper, interrupting me."

"Gentleman says it's about a bike, sir, to be sold."

"Absurd!" exclaimed the Head.

"Oh!" Carthew started. "He shouldn't have come here."

"Explain what this means, Carthew," said the Head tartly. "What is this about a bicycle?"

"I'm advertising my bicycle for sale in the local paper, sir. But I specially said correspondence only," said Carthew. "I should make an appointment to show the machine, of course. The silly fellow seems not to have understood."

"It is very annoying!" said the Head. "Tupper, tell the man he must write to Master Carthew, and certainly cannot see him. Go to the porter's lodge and tell him to admit no one again to see Master Carthew."

"Yessir."

Timothy Tupper retired, and the Sixth Form room door closed. From a distance the Sixth Form heard the sound of an excited voice—apparently the gentleman who had called was displeased at being turned empty away. But the voice died away—apparently the gentleman had gone. The Sixth settled down again to Sophocles.

It was a mild and sunny autumn morning, and the big windows of the Sixth Form room were open. A little later through those big open windows

there floated sounds from the direction of the school gates. The Sixth-Formers looked at one another, and the Head's brow was observed to grow grimmer. At last the Head stepped to a window and looked across towards the gates, which were in view in the distance.

Old Mack, the porter, was standing there, in argument with a man whose voice was loud and whose gestures were excited. Apparently the man wanted to come in, and Mack was refusing him admittance. A dusty bike leaned against the buttress of the old stone gateway; and the gentleman, who was rather dusty himself, looked as if he had made a long journey. Undoubtedly he was in a state of excitement. His powerful voice was borne on the breeze to the open windows of the Sixth Form room.

"Look 'ere, old man, I've rode all the way from Rookham to see that there bike, and I'm goin' to see it! See?"

"You can't come in now," said old Mack. "Ead's orders!"

"I'm come 'ere to see Master Carthew, according to the advertisement," shouted the caller. "Do you think a bloke is going to push a bike ten mile for nothing?"

"Bless my soul!" said the Head. "This is really most annoying. Carthew, this is intolerable!"

"I'm sorry, sir!" gasped Carthew. "I—I never supposed anybody would have the cheek to call here, when I said communications by letter only, quite plain. I can't understand it."

The Head looked from the window again.

"Bless my soul!" he ejaculated. An unexpected sight met the Head's view. It was the sight of a dusty gentleman climbing over the gate that old Mack refused to open.

The Head stared on blankly from the Sixth Form room window. He almost wondered whether he was dreaming. But it was no dream—the climbing gentleman came right over the gate, and dropped down beside the astonished Mack.

#### THE FIFTH CHAPTER. A Shindy in the Sixth!

**"E**RE we are!" said the dusty gentleman.

He grinned at Mack.

He was a powerfully built gentleman, with broad shoulders, and fists that looked like legs of mutton. Old Mack had spoken to him quite sharply through the bars of the gate. At closer quarters, however, old Mack backed away, eyeing him warily and uneasily. One hefty drive from those leg-of-mutton fists, and Rookwood would have been in need of a new porter. Old Mack had no desire whatever to reduce unemployment on those lines.

And the dusty gentleman looked quite ready to use his big fists. He was quite a rough-looking gentleman, and his complexion looked as if he had stopped at the Red Cow and the Bird-in-Hand to refresh himself on his long and dusty ride.

"'Ere we are!" he repeated. "No offence, mate, but I'm 'ere on business. A bloke don't ride ten mile to be told he can't see the cove what he's come to see."

"You can't see Master Carthew now," gasped old Mack. "He's in class with the 'Ead."

"Then wot does he mean by telling a bloke to apply personal?"

"I don't know; but—"

"Where's this 'ere Carthew?" demanded the dusty gentleman. "I

shan't keep 'im long—only long enough to 'and him ten bob and take over the bike—if in good condition as stated. You go and tell 'im that Bill Biggins 'as called about the bike."

"I tell you I can't—I tell you—"

"Oh, stow it!"

The dusty gentleman looked round him, and started for the House, old Mack blinking after him helplessly.

The scandalised Head leaned from the Sixth Form window.

"Fellow!" he called out, as Mr. Biggins drew nearer the House.

The dusty gentleman stared round.

"Hallo, old gent!" he said.

"Leave these premises at once!"

"Eh?"

"How dare you force your way in here?" thundered the Head. "Go at once, or the police will be called in."

"What's biting you, old gent?" asked Mr. Biggins. "You Master Carthew?"

"Eh! What? Certainly not!"

"Then 'old your row," said the dusty gentleman.

And Mr. Biggins walked on to the big doorway of the House, leaving the Head petrified. In all his scholastic career Dr. Chisholm had never before been told to hold his "row"! He really looked as if he might never recover from the shock.

Mr. Biggins arrived at the door and banged on it. He banged once, and twice, and thrice, till it was opened by a startled Tupper.

Tupper blinked at the dusty gentleman.

"Tell Master Carthew I've come about the bike!" said Mr. Biggins.

"Oh, my eye!" said Tupper. "You can't see Master Carthew now be—"

"Can't I?" said Mr. Biggins. "Not arter pushing a bike ten mile to see him personal, like he asked in his advertisement! I don't think! Look 'ere, you blooming menial, you tell him I'm 'ere—see?"

"You can't— Yaroooh!" roared Tupper, as Mr. Biggins shook him till the teeth almost rattled in his head. Mr. Biggins appeared to be losing his temper. Perhaps that was not surprising, in the circumstances.

"You'll take me to this 'ere Carthew, you blinking menial," said Mr. Biggins. "Now, then, sharp's the word!"

"Oh crumbs!" gasped Tupper.

He led the way to the Sixth Form room, with Mr. Biggins' powerful grasp on his shoulder. Tupper did not want another shake—the first hefty shake had left him with a semi-detached feeling, and he most decidedly did not want any more.

He knocked at the Sixth Form room door. It was opened by the Head in person. Dr. Chisholm's face was crimson.

"Fellow!" he gasped.

"Feller yourself!" retorted Mr. Biggins independently. "I ain't 'ere to see you. I'm 'ere to see Master Carthew. Think I'm frightened of an old donkey dressed up in an old woman's gown?"

"Bless my soul!" said the Head faintly.

Mr. Biggins shoved into the Form-room. Tupper, only too glad to be released from his iron grasp, disappeared promptly.

The Sixth were all on their feet now, in great astonishment. The dusty gentleman surveyed them.

"Which of you bokes is Master Carthew?" he asked. "That's the cove I'm 'ere to do business with."

"Carthew," gasped the Head. "I—I shall call you to account for this. Tell this man to go!"

"What the thump do you mean by coming here, my man?" exclaimed Carthew indignantly.

"You Carthew—"

"Yes. I—"

"Then you're the blooming advertiser. Where's the bike?"

"You can't see it now, you fool!" shouted Carthew. "Haven't you any sense? Go away at once—"

"I've rode ten mile to see that bike. If it's in excellent condition, as stated, it's a blinking bargain, and I'm havin' it," said Mr. Biggins. "I don't understand this treatment of a man calling on business, fair and square. I don't that! 'Ere's the ten shillings."

"The—the what?"

Mr. Biggins flourished a currency note.

"'Ere's the money! Now where's the bike?"

Carthew stared at him like a fellow in a dream. The repeated offers of ten shillings for his bike from Rookwood fellows he had taken as a "rag." But he could not suppose that a rough character from Rookham was concerned in a schoolboy rag. He simply could not comprehend.

"Man!" gasped the Head. "Do—do—do you wish me to telephone for the police, and give you in charge?"

"Oh, 'old your row, old gent!" said Mr. Biggins contemptuously. "I was asked to call personal, and I've called personal. And 'ere I am, ready to do business. Where's the bike?"

"Shall we deal with this man, sir?" asked Bulkeley of the Sixth.

The captain of the Sixth measured Mr. Biggins with his eye, and received a glare of defiance in return.

"The—the man must be drunk, sir," gasped Carthew. "I never offered my bike for ten shillings, and I never asked this—"

"Wot's that?" roared Mr. Biggins angrily. "Trying to back out of it after a bloke's rode ten miles to see the jigger? Going back on your own advertisement, are you?"

"I never—"

"Carthew!" gasped the Head. "You are to blame for this. You—you had better hand over the machine to the man and let him go."

"'Ere's the ten bob as soon as I've seen the jigger, and seed that it's in good condition, as stated," said Mr. Biggins.

Carthew spluttered.

"I'm selling that bike for ten pounds, and—"

"Ten shillings, you mean—"

"Ten pounds!" roared Carthew.

"Oh, dorr it mild!" said Mr. Biggins. "Think I'd 'ave rode ten mile to buy a bike for ten pounds? I can get 'em cheaper where I live. Ten shillings is what you said, and 'ere's the blinking advertisement to prove my blinking words."

And Mr. Biggins jerked a much soiled copy of the "Coombe Times" from his pocket, and pointed with a grubby thumb to the advertisement.

"It's ten pounds, and communications by post only—read it for yourself," hooted Carthew.

"It's ten shillings, and call personal to—"

"It isn't—" yelled Carthew.

"Ain't you got any eyes?" roared Mr. Biggins, thrusting the paper fairly into Carthew's face. "Look!"

Carthew looked—he couldn't help it. He stared blankly at Putty of the Fourth's second edition of his advertisement.

"Oh crums! It—it—it's a misprint,"

he gasped. "The silly fool of a printer has made a mistake—"

"Oh, come off!" said Bill Biggins surlily. "That's too thin. You've changed your mind about selling that bike for ten bob, wot—and do you think a man's going to ride ten miles for nothing? Well, he ain't!"

"Give me the paper!" said the Head, in a grinding voice.

Dr. Chisholm looked at the advertisement. Then he fixed a baleful glance on Carthew.

"The matter is precisely as this—this man states, Carthew. You are responsible for this disgraceful interruption of lessons—for this disgraceful scene in a Rookwood Form-room."

"I—I—I—" stuttered Carthew helplessly. "It—it—it's a misprint."

"Nonsense! Either you will hand over the bicycle to this man for the sum stated in the advertisement or you will compensate him for his waste of time."

"Now you're talking, old gent!" said Mr. Biggins, more amicably. "I ain't the man to drive a 'ard bargain. If the young gent's changed his mind, let him call it off; but a man ain't riding ten miles to be told that a young gent has changed his mind—not for nothing. Make it 'arf-a-sovereign."

"You cheeky rotter!" exclaimed Carthew. "I'm not giving you any money. I—I— Yaroooooh!"

Carthew roared as the enraged, dusty gentleman grasped him by the collar. Shake! Shake! Shake!

"Ow! Ow! Help! Yooop!"

"Good heavens!" exclaimed the Head. "Man, control yourself. Bulkeley—Neville—Lonsdale—control him!"

Three stalwart Rookwood prefects collared the angry Mr. Biggins. He was dragged off Carthew by main force.

For some minutes there was a terrific scene in the usually quiet and scholastic precincts of the Sixth Form room. Then Mr. Biggins went whirling through the doorway, and crashed in the passage.

"See him off the premises!" gasped the Head.

Mr. Biggins struggled up—still in a fighting humour. He charged into the Sixth Form room like a bull, and half the Sixth were needed to get him out again.

Then the dusty gentleman was escorted down to the gates, and he went struggling and shouting. Form-room windows were packed with faces, watching the amazing scene. Fighting-man as he evidently was, Mr. Biggins was tired by the time he reached the school gates. Old Mack swung open the gates, and the dusty gentleman was hurled forth in a heap. Then the gates clanged on him.

For fully ten minutes Mr. Biggins stated, at the top of his voice, what he thought of Rookwood and the dwellers therein. Then, at last, he mounted his dusty bike and disappeared down the road.

That morning, and that afternoon, there were many callers at Rookwood, to see Carthew and the ten-shilling bike. Every caller was turned away, old Mack so far departing from the straight line of veracity as to inform them that the coveted bike had been already sold—as the easiest method of getting rid of them.

It was with the greatest difficulty that Carthew succeeded in convincing the Head that his advertisement must have been somehow misprinted. The Head allowed himself to be convinced at last—after Carthew had been reduced to a state of almost tearful apprehension.

In the Lower School there were howls of laughter—Putty's jape was admitted to be the jape of the term. The jester of Rookwood came quite into the limelight and bore his blushing honours thick upon him, but—

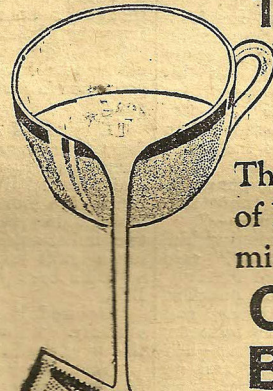
There was unfortunately a "but." For Carthew of the Sixth was keenly investigating the extraordinary misprint—with such success that Putty of the fourth in the midst of his cheery satisfaction, found himself called upon the carpet; and in the next scene the Head's birch figured prominently.

After which, it was several days before Putty of the Fourth was in a mood again for jesting.

THE END.

"LOOK OUT IN GOAL!" is the title of next week's rollicking long story of Jimmy Silver & Co., of Rookwood. Clarence Cuffy takes the limelight, so look out for plenty of fun.)

# ATHLETES TRAIN ON IT



There is half a cup  
of English full cream  
milk in every

**CADBURY  
BIG MILK  
BAR 2<sup>D</sup>**

