

IN
THIS
ISSUE



Skull Island!

An Amazing New Story
of Adventure in
The South Seas!

By
Duncan Storm.



The BOYS' FRIEND 1^{1d} 1¹/₂

No. 936. Vol. XIX. New Series.]

THREE HALFPENCE.

[Week Ending May 17th, 1919.]

Skull Island!

By Duncan Storm.



JUMPING THE SWING-BRIDGE!

Slowly the two halves of the bridge began to lift, showing the green water beneath. "Lift her Lift her!" yelled Dick Dorrington desperately. The boys made a last effort, and leaped in mid-air with the barrow!

The 1st Chapter. In the Nick of Time!

There was a rare buzz and excitement in the vicinity of No. 55 Shed of the Albert Docks, London.

Cabs were coming and going. Taxicabs were rolling up, crowded by excited boys who cheered the dock policemen, cheered the railway engines that were shunting along the docks, cheered the men who were working the cranes which were hoisting in the last of the stores of the famous school-ship *Bombay Castle*.

For the *Bombay Castle*, commanded by Captain James Handyman, R.N.R., was off on another voyage round the world. It was whispered that her destination was really the South Seas, and that she was going to cruise from New Guinea as far eastward as the Philippines, to give the young gentlemen who were travelling aboard her some insight into the great commercial resources of the Pacific Ocean.

Alongside the shed towered the huge bulk of the *Bombay Castle*, her red-and-black funnels flaring in the spring sunshine. Feathers of white steam were already showing about her escape-valves, and the *Blue Peter*, slightly dipped at her foremast-head, told that she was almost ready to haul out into the stream of the Thames and to start on her long voyage.

Her decks were already crowded with happy groups of chattering, laughing boys, who wore the dark blue blazer and

the striped blue riband of the school. These new scholars were gathered from all the public schools in England. They had no friends to see them off on their long voyage, for this was forbidden. They had already said their farewells and had got over the dumps.

Now these were strung along the rails, looking down from the upper-deck on to the busy scene on the wharf below.

"Very high-spirited lot o' young gentlemen!" said the policeman at the dock gate, as a squashed orange, hurled from an enormous distance, burst like a bomb on the crown of his helmet. "Wish I was goin' with 'em!" he added.

"Lot o' young varmints!" growled a less amiable policeman who stood beside him, and who had been splashed by the orange. "If I knew which one it was that throwed that orange, I'd go aboard and charge him. He wouldn't sail with the ship, I tell you! Look out! Here comes another load o' 'em, and a proper lot o' young rips they are!"

A cab drawn by an ancient horse, with its springs nearly doubling up under its load, staggered in at the dock gates.

A small, brown-faced boy, seated beside a terrified cabman, was driving the cab. This was Chip Prodders, an old *Bombay Castle* boy, who had made a previous trip on the celebrated ship. The fair, blue-eyed boy who was seated on the roof of the cab, holding down a sack, from which projected the head and horns of an exceedingly disreputable-looking goat, was

Dick Dorrington, another old-hand of the *Bombay Castle*. The fat boy and the boy whose legs hung over the back of the cab as he gave a spirited imitation of a sick monkey on a barrel organ, were Porkis and Pongo Walker, respectively. From the interior of the cab there peered out the face of an orang-outang. The orang was irreproachably dressed in Etons and a straw hat. He wore yellow kid gloves, and was nibbling anxiously at the silver head of a fine cane.

The name of the orang was Cecil. A former pet of the *Bombay Castle*, he had signed on for another voyage, and he was beginning to look as if he wished that he had not come as the cab lumbered across the railway-lines, just under the buffers of a shunting engine.

A fat black head in a turban was thrust out of the window of the cab, and Mr. Lal Tata, the Hindustani and Oriental languages master of the *Bombay Castle*, was heard yelling aloud as the frightened horse danced and curvetted all over the railway-lines that laced the wharf.

"Chips, my boy, be careful!" yelled Mr. Lal Tata. "Do not play foolsome tricks. Give the halters to cabman as proper authority, otherwise we shall get into great accidents!"

The horse had started kicking as the passing engine puffed a white cloud of steam into its face.

It danced and curvetted across the quay till the cab rolled to the very edge of the

granite sill just astern of the *Bombay Castle*.

There was a rush of boys along the liner's decks, and a yell went up as the wheel of the cab hit a great iron mooring-bollard and collapsed. The cab lurched gently over on its side, tipping the three boys on its roof, the goat and the cabman, into the dock.

Splash went the goat. Splash went Dick Dorrington. Splash went Chip and Pongo Walker and Porkis into the muddy water. The cabman saved himself by hanging to the reins, and from the window of the overturned cab were thrust up the heads of the frightened orang and Mr. Lal Tata.

"Helps!" roared Mr. Lal Tata. "We are suffering great catastrophes!"

Help was already forthcoming. He was dragged out of the window of the cab, whilst Cecil, the orang, thoroughly scared, leaped after him, and, seizing one of the great mooring-hawsers of the steamer, went running up it, hand over hand, till, leaping on the stern rail, he jumped on deck, scattering the startled boys right and left. Then he disappeared below, and was seen no more for a long time.

Lifelights and ropes were thrown to the boys who were struggling in the water, upholding the sack containing the goat.

But these did not seem at all alarmed by their mishap. They waved their hands to the cabman as he was hauled up to the wharf alongside his horse, which had,

luckily, stood still when the cab had overturned.

The cabman answered them by shaking his fist.

"Get your knife out, Dick!" spluttered Porkis. "Old Horace can't do the Monte Cristo sack-trick. He'll sink. Slash the sack to ribands; we'll get a new one for him."

Thus exhorted, Dick Dorrington rolled over in the muddy water and drew out his penknife. He ripped the sack which confined the goat from end to end, so that it hung round the animal's neck in streamers. Then all struck out towards a dock police-boat, which was rapidly approaching them.

The police gathered them in, and put them aboard the *Bombay Castle* by way of a barge which was just delivering the last few tons of coal to her starboard bunkers.

The cabman was squared and pacified with a tip that was sufficient to buy him a new cab, and in ten minutes the boys were on deck again, clothed in fresh clean flannels, curiously surveying their new schoolfellows.

"Look here, you chaps," said Dick Dorrington, "the old packet does not sail for another half-hour! We've just got time to slip ashore and out of the dock gates, to get a new sack for Horace and a few rolls of film for my camera!"

Mr. Lal Tata came fussing up as the

(Continued on next page.)

side in the river was on a level with the water of the docks, the outer gates began to open.

They would have lost the ship even then, for her companion-ladder was lashed up to the side, and the west wind had set her across the lock, so that there was a gap of ten feet between her side and the edge of the basin.

But Captain Handyman had seen their plight. A great derrick swung out from the ship, lowering a big basket at its end. In a second the boys had unlashed the sack from the barrow. Between them they lifted it bodily and hurried it into the basket.

It fell upside down, and Captain Bones was now standing on his head. Then, with a rush, they leaped into the basket, and were swung high up in the air, circling round like the car of a balloon as they clung to the wire rope and were swung inboard.

Fifty feet or so below they saw the wonder-stricken loafers looking up at them, foreshortened.

"What about the barrer, guv'nor?" shouted one. "Ain't you goin' to take it with yer?"

"Keep it!" shouted Dick magnificently, as the Bombay Castle began to slide majestically out of the lock on to the broad bosom of the Thames. "We are going where the bananas and oranges grow. We don't want the barrow. Keep it!"

There was a rush of eager dockers and a fight round the barrow as the basket was lowered down on deck from the der-

rick, and the great ship swung in the river, heading downstream.

It reminded them of a balloon descent as they were lowered amongst the crowd of laughing, shouting boys who had rushed to the after well-deck.

Mr. Lal Tata was there, with his turban over his eye, in a great fluster.

"What does all these tomfooleries mean?" demanded Mr. Lal Tata. "Do you know that you fellows have caused me the great discomposures? I have been hung on tenthooks! I have been suffering most painful agitations, thinking that you were going to lose ship. How did you get across that bridge which breaks in halves?"

"Goodness knows, sir!" replied Dick, who was still perched, puffing and blowing, on the edge of the basket, with his feet firmly pressed on the sack as a warning to Captain Bones to keep quiet. "Goodness knows, sir! I don't! We got to the middle just as she parted to let the ship through. We shot the barrow over the opening, and the next thing we knew about it was that the roadway lifted and shot us down on the right side like a hundred-weight of coals!"

"And what have you got in that sack?" demanded Mr. Lal Tata fustily.

"Junk, sir—just junk!" said Dick calmly.

But Chip Progers made Lal an imperceptible sign. It was the sign of silence. And Lal shut up like a sea anemone.

Umpty Ginsen, one of the crew, came pushing through the crowd of boys.

"Now then, young gents!" said he.

"Come out of that basket! We want to stow the derrick. What are ye going to do with that sack?"

Umpty Ginsen was an old friend of the boys. They had sailed with him before.

Dick Dorrington gave him a wink—the sort of wink that would have warned Umpty, half a mile away, that there was something on.

And Umpty took the hint.

He did not lift the sack containing Captain Bones from the basket, but left it there; and, calling his crew around him, they shifted it away into some dark recess of the stern of the Bombay Castle.

The boys were recovering their breath when a quartermaster presented himself.

"The captain would like to see you young gents up on the bridge. He's up there with the pilot and the gent what's sort o' first-mate on the school part o' the ship."

Dick groaned.

"Jimmy!" he exclaimed. "That's Scorchy Wilkinson!" said he. "He's spotted us. I was hoping he was down in his cabin unpacking."

He led his companions sorrowfully up on the hurricane-deck, and they marched along solemnly to the bridge-steps.

"It strikes me that we are in for a swishing!" said Dick, as they climbed the bridge-ladder.

Scorchy Wilkinson—the famous Scorchy—was standing there, dressed in a greasy flannel suit and wearing a soft billycock hat. He was a tremendously powerful-looking man, with a huge square chin, and a humorous twinkle in his grey eyes.

"Well, young gentlemen," said he, "I understand that you have nearly lost the ship. By rights I should report you to the Head for unpunctuality. But as Captain Handyman tells me that you are old shipmates of his, and as the Head is very busy with his microscope examining the nervous system of a barnacle, I am going to hand you over to the captain for reprimand."

The boys marched forward to the other end of the bridge, and came to a stand before Captain Handyman, who was leaning on a highly-polished engine-room telegraph.

Captain Handyman tugged at his pointed beard and grinned.

"Same old crowd!" exclaimed Captain Handyman. "Dick, Chip, Pongo, and Porkis! Might trust you lot to provide some excitement for a send-off. Where did you get to?"

"We went to buy a sack and some photo-film," said Dick, in a low voice, so that Mr. Wilkinson, standing at the other end of the bridge, should not hear.

"But you didn't buy a whole sack of photo-film!" exclaimed the little captain.

"What have you got in that sack?"

"A pirate!" said Dick, almost in a whisper.

Captain Handyman jumped.

"Wha-a-at!"

"A pirate, sir!" repeated Dick. "His name is Captain Bones, and he keeps the junk-shop where we went to buy our sack—at least, he kept it. He wanted to come with us. So he got in the sack, and he's got the charts of a Spanish treasure

which is in the Pacific. And there's half a skull there, and—"

Captain Handyman started again.

"Captain Bones! Half a skull!" he whispered exultantly. "Why, it's the Lima Treasure! It's—Where have you put him?"

"Umpty's got him hidden up in the steerage, sir!" replied Dick.

"Keep him there till we are outside the three-mile limit," replied the captain, in low tones. "Now, look here," he added. "This is our secret. I don't want Mr. Wilkinson to know about it—yet! I've to divert his mind. So I am going to order you all to be swished."

"Yes, sir!" replied Dick dutifully.

"Mr. Wilkinson!" called the captain aloud.

Mr. Wilkinson, who had been surveying the colloquy with curious eyes, walked along the bridge.

"Yes, Captain Handyman!" said he.

"Give these youngsters half a dozen of the best apiece, Mr. Wilkinson!" said Captain Handyman.

"On what grounds, sir?" said Mr. Wilkinson, who was always just.

Captain Handyman hesitated a moment.

"For looking for trouble and seeking adventures!" he replied curtly.

Scorchy Wilkinson's eyes twinkled, and he nodded. He had seen the barrow hopping along behind the engine.

"This way, young gentlemen, please!" said he.

(Another magnificent long instalment of this amazing new serial in next Monday's issue of the BOYS' FRIEND.)



THE HEATHEN OF CEDAR CREEK!

A Splendid Long, Complete Story of FRANK RICHARDS & CO., the Chums of the School in the Backwoods.

By MARTIN CLIFFORD.

The 1st Chapter.
Yen Chin in Trouble.

"Me velly miselable."

Yen Chin, of Cedar Creek School, made that announcement in dolorous tones to Frank Richards & Co.

The chums of Cedar Creek were splitting logs for Miss Meadows in the interval between dinner and afternoon lessons. They had rested from their labours, and were sitting on the logs, chatting, when the little Chinese came along.

"Very miserable, are you?" remarked Bob Lawless. "That's because you've been slacking, Yen Chin. Take an axe and help with these logs."

Yen Chin shook his head.

"Me velly, velly miselable," he replied. "No wantee livee."

"What's the matter?" inquired Vere Beauclere.

"Stoney bloker."

"Hard lines!" said Frank, laughing. "But we've all been there, kid. You'll get over it. Twenty-five cents any good?"

"No gooddee. Wantee many doller."

"Then you've come to the wrong shop!" grinned Bob Lawless. "There's not many dollars to be given away at this establishment. I've got a bad Mexican peso you can have, if you like."

"Pool lil' Chinese wishee deadee!" said Yen Chin pathetically. "No wantee livee any molee."

"Fathead!"

"Me speakee true. Poor lil' Chinese velly miselable, sittee downee and cly," said the Celestial. "Cly velly muchee, allee samee lil' babee."

And Yen Chin sobbed.

"But what's the row, kid?" asked Frank Richards. "What do you want money for so badly? If it's really serious we could squeeze out a dollar or two. But don't say you've been playing poker again. That's the way to get the end of a trail-rop."

"No playee poken. Plomise handsome Flanky no playee poken. Chinee good boy; keepee plomise allee samee Christian."

The chums of Cedar Creek regarded Yen Chin very doubtfully.

They liked the little heathen, in spite of the fact that he was much given to the "ways that are dark and tricks that are vain." He had a truly Oriental inability to distinguish between the truth and the reverse; but it was not easy for the heathen to learn the white man's ways. And certainly Yen Chin had not seemed to be such a little rascal since Frank Richards & Co. had taken him in hand.

Whether he was telling the truth now was a question, but he certainly looked in deep earnest.

"Well," said Frank, after a pause. "if you've kept your promise that's all to the good. But if you haven't been playing cards with Gunten or some other rotter, what's the trouble?"

"Pool ole poppee!"

"What on earth—"

"He means his poppa!" grinned Bob Lawless.

"Oh, your father!" said Frank. "Your father isn't stony broke, I suppose? He makes no end of money with his laundry at Thompson, doesn't he?"

Another shake of the head from Yen Chin.

"Pool ole poppee have baddee luck," he explained. "No money come in, and pool ole poppee sickee."

"I say, that's bad!" said Frank, quite sympathetic at once.

"No can callee Doc Jones, no cashee payer," said Yen Chin sadly. "No have cashee for medicine. Wantee ten doller. Me gettee no money. Poor lil' Chinese velly miselable. Me sittee downee and cly."

And Yen Chin, suiting the action to the word, sat down on a log and wept loudly.

Frank Richards & Co. exchanged glances.

The little Chinese, plunged in grief, did not look at them; he buried his face in his hands and sobbed.

"Poor little chap!" said Beauclere. "Dash it all, you fellows, if his father's ill, and there's no money about—"

Beauclere's hand went into his pocket.

The remittance-man's son was not blessed with abundant cash, by any means, but he was ready to stand his share in relieving a case of distress.

Bob Lawless nodded.

"Looks like a case this time," he said. "I reckoned at first that the young jay had been playing poker again. But—"

"It's jolly queer," said Frank. "John Chin, the laundryman, is supposed to be pretty well off. Yen Chin generally has plenty of pocket-money, excepting when he's been playing cards."

Sob from Yen Chin.

"Me velly bad, wicked lil' Chinese," he murmured. "No can savee money. Now pool ole poppee ill and sickee, no have cashee. Me velly wicked."

"Ten doller, did you say?" asked Frank.

"Ten doller—oh, yes!"

There was another pause.

Ten dollars was not a small sum for three schoolboys to raise. Vere Beauclere coloured a little. He had least cash of the three.

"I can stand two, you chaps," he said. "I'd stand more willingly, but—but it's all I have."

"That leaves four each for us, Bob," said Frank Richards. "But—but I've only got three."

Bob Lawless wrinkled his brows.

"It's a pretty big order, clearing ourselves out of every cent," he said. "But I suppose it's up to us. I've got two. But we can raise three more among the fellows. I'll ask Lawrence—"

"I'll ask Dawson," said Frank.

Frank Richards clapped the little Chinese on the shoulder.

"Buck up, Yen Chin!" he said. "We'll see you through. You shall have the ten doller."

Yen Chin looked up.

"Flanky good ole boy!" he said. "All velly good ole boys. Yen Chin velly grateful."

"That's all right!" said Bob.

The three chums left their task unfinished, and moved off towards the lumber school. Yen Chin looking after them with a curious expression upon his little yellow face.

Tom Lawrence and Dick Dawson willingly made the required loans, and the whole sum of ten dollars was handed to Yen Chin just as the bell was ringing for lessons.

It disappeared at once into some recess

of Yen Chin's loose attire, and he grinned a grateful grin.

"You'd better ask Miss Meadows to let you off lessons, and get off home," said Beauclere.

"No wantee. Allee light."

"But if your father wants the doctor or—"

"Allee light, Chinee good boy, no missee lesson!"

And Yen Chin went into the lumber school with the rest of Cedar Creek, the Co. following him in, rather perplexed. They could not help observing that now the little heathen had pocketed the ten dollars his anxiety for his father seemed to have disappeared all of a sudden.

But during class that afternoon they observed that Yen Chin kept his eye on the clock, and seemed anxious for dismissal to come. And a quarter of an hour before the usual time the little Chinese jumped up.

"Missy Meadee—" he began.

The Canadian schoolmistress looked at him.

"What is it, Yen Chin?"

"Lil' Chinese wantee go early. Pool ole poppee sickee."

"Indeed! I did not know that your father was ill," said Miss Meadows kindly. "You may certainly go at once, Yen Chin."

"Velly muchee tankee, missy."

And Yen Chin went.

The Cedar Creek fellows heard him ride away outside, and Frank Richards & Co. supposed that he was trotting away to the Chinese laundry in Thompson. They would have been surprised if they had known that Yen Chin turned off the Thompson trail into the path to Hillcrest School, arriving there just as the Hillcrest fellows came out after lessons.

The 2nd Chapter.
Sold!

Frank Richards & Co. came out of Cedar Creek School when the hour of dismissal struck at the lumber school. The three chums were thinking about Yen Chin and his sick father at the laundry.

In the neighbourly Canadian West it was usual enough for anyone down on his luck to find willing help in all quarters, and even a Chinese heathen was not outside the pale of Christian charity.

The case of John Chin, the laundryman, seemed an unusually hard one, too, for the Chinese laundry had always been a prosperous concern; indeed, Mr. Chin made more money by washing for the miners than many of them made by prospecting for gold. Such a calamity overtaking the prosperous laundryman naturally moved the sympathy of Yen Chin's schoolfellows.

"You galoots aren't in a hurry to get home, I guess," remarked Bob Lawless, as they came out of the lumber school. "I've been thinking we might ride round by way of Thompson, and look in on the poor old Chow. If he's in a bad way he's got to have some care, and ten doller won't go very far. We'll see how the matter stands, and I'll get my father to see about it."

"That's a good idea," agreed Frank.

"Let's go, by all means," said Beauclere. "We may be able to give some help about the place, too. Mrs. Chin most likely has plenty on her hands."

"Come on, then."

The three chums mounted their horses and started up the Thompson trail; and Chunky Todgers, whose homeward way lay in that direction, joined them.

"You galoots going to Thompson?" asked Chunky.

"I guess we're going to see John Chin," answered Bob. "Have you heard about his illness, Chunky? You come by Thompson every day."

"Is he ill?"

"Ill and on the rocks, Yen Chin told us."

"Never heard of it," said Chunky Todgers. "He looked well enough when I saw him yesterday."

"You saw him yesterday—well?" exclaimed Frank Richards.

"Yep. He was in Gunten's store, arguing with Old Man Gunten about a bill for laundering."

"My hat! Must be a jolly sudden illness, then."

Frank Richards & Co. felt very perplexed as they rode on to Thompson, and perhaps they were feeling a little doubtful now. They could not help remembering the extremely deceptive ways of the heathen Chinese of Cedar Creek. As they rode into Thompson they came on Dicky Bird and Blumpy, of Hillcrest School.

"Hallo, Cedar Creek jays!" called out Dicky Bird cheerily.

"Hallo, Hillcrest fatheads!" answered Frank Richards.

Dicky Bird smiled and joined them as they rode up Main Street. He seemed to have something to say.

"I guess I've been going to speak to you galoots," he remarked. "There's one of your chaps who's booked for trouble if he doesn't let up. That pesky heathen of yours—"

"Yen Chin?" exclaimed Frank.

"Yep. If you care whether he gets into trouble or not, you'd better keep him away from Hillcrest," said Dicky Bird. "It won't do him any good to come moseying along to see Kern Gunten. Gunten is a bad egg; but you know that well enough, as he used to be at Cedar Creek. That's all. So-long!"

And Dicky Bird rode after Blumpy, having delivered that good-natured warning.

"By gum!" said Bob Lawless. "It looks— Well, let's get on to the laundry, and see."

They trotted on to the Chinese laundry. Their summons at the door of John Chin's residence was answered by John himself.

The fat, smiling Chinese laundryman certainly did not look "sickee." He was, to all appearance, as fat and prosperous as ever.

"Velly glad see nicey young gentlemen," said John Chin, in his oily voice. "Likee somet'ing washy washy!"

"Well, my hat!" said Frank.

"Aren't you sick?" demanded Bob Lawless.

The Chinaman raised his eyebrows.

"No sickee," he answered, in mild surprise. "Allee light. Oh, yes."

"We were told—" began Beauclere. But he checked himself. It was plain enough by this time that the chums had been deceived by the heathen Chinese, but they did not want to give Yen Chin away to his father. They made up their minds, however, to deal with him drastically enough themselves.

"All right, John," said Bob Lawless abruptly. "We heard you were sick, so we looked in. Glad to find you're well."

"Muchee tankee," said the puzzled Chinaman.

Frank Richards & Co. rode away. They did not speak till they had turned from Main Street into the trail outside the town. Then Bob Lawless spoke in emphatic tones.

"I guess we've been done," he said. "That pesky little rascal has been playing cards with Gunten again and lost his money, and he was raising the wind from us to play again. By gum!"

"The horrid little rogue!" exclaimed Frank.

Bob compressed his lips.

"He never went home at all," he said. "That's why he left early, too; he wanted to catch Gunten coming away from school. They're playing poker somewhere in the timber now—with our ten doller."

"All we had, too!" said Beauclere, with a grimace.

"I guess we're going to chip in heavy!"

exclaimed Bob. "This is rather too strong. Yen Chin is going to have a lesson. But Gunten's worse; he knows better, and this pesky little heathen doesn't. He's only a heathen, anyway, and all these Chows would gamble the shirts off their backs. We'll mosey along and find them, if we can."

"You bet!"

And the chums rode on towards Hillcrest School.

Half-way from Thompson to Hillcrest a rider appeared in the trail, coming towards them. It was Kern Gunten, and he was alone. Bob Lawless drew rein and raised his riding-whip.

"Halt!" he rapped out.

The 3rd Chapter.
Gunten is in a Hurry!

"Halt!"

Kern Gunten looked quickly at the three Cedar Creek fellows. Instead of halting, he gave his horse a touch of the whip and came on at a gallop, to pass them.

The Swiss schoolboy evidently did not desire an interview with his former schoolfellows of Cedar Creek.

But Bob Lawless was not to be denied. He drew his horse into Gunten's path, and his comrades followed his example, blocking the trail. Gunten had to halt or risk a serious collision, and for that he had not the nerve. He drew in his steed, scowling.

"What do you want?" he snarled. "I've no time to waste. I'm late for home already."

"You're late, I guess," assented Bob. "It's taken you some time to get ten doller off Yen Chin at poker, I reckon!"

Gunten started.

"I don't understand—" he began.

Bob Lawless interrupted him.

"I guess I'll make you savvy fast enough," he answered. "You've been leading Yen Chin into gambling again."

"I guess he doesn't want much leading," sneered Gunten. "He'd rather gamble than eat, like all the Chows."

"I dare say he would; but that's no excuse for you, a white man. You ought to refuse to play with him."

Gunten shrugged his shoulders.

"I guess I can do as I like," he answered. "I see no harm in a game of draw poker."

"Your game seems to end with you pocketing the heathen's money every time," answered Bob. "I guess you don't even give him a square deal. But square deal or not, you're not going to play cards with him, Gunten."

"Have you been appointed inspector of morals for the Thompson Valley?" inquired Gunten, with a sneer.

"I guess I've appointed myself, so far as Yen Chin is concerned," answered Bob. "That young rogue has diddled us out of ten doller to-day, with a yarn about his father being ill and wanting the doctor."

"The young rascal!" grinned Gunten. "I wondered how he'd managed to raise the wind. Ha, ha, ha! You must be pretty soft."

"Soft or not, we're not going to allow it. You've met him since lessons to-day?"

"Perhaps."

"Well, we know you have; and I reckon you've won ten doller from him," said Bob Lawless savagely.

"That's my business!"

"Ours, too, as it's our money!" exclaimed Frank Richards angrily.

"I guess Yen Chin's money is his own," answered Gunten coolly. "If you lend him money, I suppose you do it of your own accord, and you take the risk. If you're asking me for money, you're wasting your breath. What's mine I'm keeping."

"But it isn't yours," said Vere Beauclere quietly. "I firmly believe that you cheat the Chinese. He's a clever little rascal with the cards, and if you gave him a square deal I don't think you'd always win his doller."

"That's your opinion," sneered Gunten. "The long and the short of it is, that you've got to stop it," said Bob Lawless, setting his teeth. "You've got to hand back to Yen Chin the money you've had from him to-day, Gunten, and we'll jolly well see that he hands it back to its owners. Savvy?"

"Oh, go and chop chips!" retorted Gunten.
 "You don't agree?"
 "Nope."
 "Then you'll be made!" announced Bob. "And to begin with I'm going to give you a hiding, as a lesson, you gambling poecat! Get down into the trail, and put up your hands!"
 "Three to one!" sneered Gunten.
 "Man to man, you rotter! These galoots will see fair play!" exclaimed the rancher's son hotly.

"Oh, I'm ready, if you like!"
 Gunten backed his horse, and Bob Lawless jumped down into the trail, his chums following his example.
 Gunten was apparently preparing to dismount, but he did not leave his saddle.
 The moment the chums of Cedar Creek were on the ground, the Swiss was upright in the saddle again, and he lashed his horse cruelly.
 The animal bounded forward.
 There was a sharp cry from Bob Lawless as Gunten's horse grazed him, shouldering him violently away.
 Bob went reeling into the trail, and fell heavily; and at the same moment Gunten went on at a gallop towards Thompson. His derisive laugh floated back to the enraged Cedar Creek fellows.
 Frank and Beaucere ran to Bob at once. Gunten, unheeded, galloped on, and vanished round a bend of the trail.
 "Bob, old chap!" panted Frank.
 "Oh!" gasped Bob Lawless. "Oh, gum!"
 His chums raised him up, Bob panting for breath. He had been bruised and shaken by the fall, but fortunately no worse damage was done.
 "The peaky poecat!" ejaculated Bob. "Jevver hear of such a rotten trick! I thought he was going to dismount."
 "It was a trick to get away," said Frank. "You're not hurt."
 "Only a bruise or two," panted Bob. "Get into the saddle; we may run him down yet."
 The three chums mounted and galloped on Gunten's track.

But the Swiss had too good a start. They caught a glimpse of him in the distance riding into Main Street, and then he vanished.
 Bob Lawless slackened rein.
 "I guess we won't follow him right home," he said. "We don't want a row at Gunten's store. We'll see him tomorrow; and I reckon I'll see Dicky Bird, too. Gunten has got to be stopped."
 The chums kept their eyes open for Yen Chin, as they rode away; but the little Chinese was not seen.
 They had no doubt that the ten dollars, raised with so much difficulty at Cedar Creek, had passed to the cunning Swiss over the cards; and if that proved to be the case, they did not intend to allow the money to remain in Gunten's possession. They discussed the matter as they rode homeward; and it was agreed that they should see Dicky Bird, of Hillcrest, on the morrow, and consult with him. There had been many "rows" between the Cedar Creek fellows and Dicky Bird & Co. of Hillcrest School, but in a matter of this kind they were likely to be in full agreement.
 Frank Richards & Co. were anxious for the morrow to dawn; and possibly Kern Gunten, at Thompson, was anticipating the morrow with some anxiety. More than once the rascal of Hillcrest had found that the way of the transgressor was hard, and once more he was destined to find it so.

The 4th Chapter.

The Ways of the Heathen.

"Flanky!"
 Yen Chin came sidling up to Frank Richards & Co., when the chums came out of the school-room the next day after morning lessons.
 The Co. gave him very grim looks. They had not had an opportunity of speaking to the heathen before lessons, but now they intended to make up for lost time.
 "Well," said Bob Lawless, "how's your father, Yen Chin?"
 Yen Chin assumed a sorrowful expression. He trotted on beside the chums into the playground, eyeing them with sidelong looks. They walked on out of view of the schoolhouse. There was business to be transacted at that interview which was better transacted out of sight of Miss Meadows.
 "Pool ole poppee velly bad!" murmured Yen Chin.
 Evidently John Chin had not mentioned the Co.'s visit to his hopeful son, and Yen Chin was not yet aware that they knew the facts.
 "Still sick?" asked Frank grimly.
 "Awful sick," said Yen Chin. "Kickee buckee if not gettee mole medicine. Nicey ole Flanky helpee pool lil' Chinese once mole, oh, yes! Me wantee ten dollee fol medicine."
 "Well, my hat!" said Beaucere.
 The chums of Cedar Creek had not expected this, even from the unscrupulous little heathen. Apparently Yen Chin was hopeful of making another "raise" from the trusting trio, to play poker again with Kern Gunten.
 "So your father's still sick, and you've spent the money, and you want some more?" asked Bob Lawless, with a deep breath.
 "All collect," assented Yen Chin. "Me so solly for pool ole poppee, me cly."
 And Yen Chin sobbed softly.
 "Doesn't he take the cake?" said Frank Richards, in wonder. "Blessed if I should have believed any chap, even a heathen, could roll out lies like that!"
 Yen Chin's almond eyes blinked at him quickly.
 "No tallee lie," he said. "No can, me tallee nonen fluth. Lil' Chinese good boy, allee samee Christian."
 Bob Lawless halted on the edge of the timber, and dropped his hand on Yen Chin's shoulder.
 "Look here, heathen!" he said. "We

called on your father after school yesterday, and found that he wasn't ill!"
 "Oh!"
 "And he's not hard up, either, to judge by the look of him."
 "Oh!"
 "And you got the money out of us to play cards with Gunten, at Hillcrest, and you've lost it to him."
 "Nicey ole Bob mistakee. No can play pokke."
 "We've seen Gunten, too."
 Yen Chin cast a longing glance towards the school gates. But Bob's grip on his shoulder was like that of a vice.
 "You're not going just yet," said Bob. "You've lied to us, Yen Chin."
 "No can."
 "And you've broken your promise, and gambled with Gunten again."
 "Bob deamee," said Yen Chin. "Me, Yen Chin, good boy. No playee pokke. Tinkee playee pokke velly wicked. You lendee me ten dollee?"
 "What?"
 "Pool ole uncle velly sick! Me make mistake—pool ole uncle velly sick. Yen Chin wantee buyee medicine for pool ole uncle!"
 "My word!" murmured Frank Richards. "You young idiot, do you think we are going to swallow that?"
 "Yen Chin tellee fluth. No tallee lie. No can."
 "Cut a switch for me, Franky," said Bob Lawless.
 "What-ho!"
 Yen Chin wriggled in the Canadian schoolboy's grasp.
 "No whackee pool lil' Chinese!" he wailed. "Pool lil' Chinese velly solly! Me cly!"
 "You can cry as much as you like," said Bob. "You're going to have a jolly good lambasting!"
 "Ugly ole Bob!"
 "Give me that stick, Frank!"
 Bob Lawless gripped the back of Yen Chin's neck with his left hand. With his right he grasped the thick switch Frank had cut in the wood.
 The chums of Cedar Creek felt that Yen

And Bob Lawless swallowed his wrath, and they went for their horses. And the interview with Dicky Bird, at Mr. Peckover's school, was unusually friendly on both sides, and the rival schoolboys found themselves in complete agreement for once—white meant trouble for Kern Gunten.

The 5th Chapter. Rough Justice!

Mr. Peckover, the headmaster of Hillcrest School, dismissed his class, and the Hillcrest crowd came out. Kern Gunten was heading for the gates with Keller, his chum, when Dicky Bird hurried after him. And with Dicky Bird came Blumpy, Fisher, and Watson.
 "Hold on a minute, Gunten, old scout!" said Dicky Bird.
 The Swiss gave him a sour look. He was not on good terms with the cheery leader of the Hillcrest School.
 "I've no time to stop!" he answered shortly.
 Dicky Bird smiled.
 "Can't you find time?" he asked.
 "Nope!"
 "I guess you'll manage it," said Dicky, taking his arm. "You're coming for a little pusey with me, my pippin!"
 "I'm not!" howled Gunten angrily, struggling to drag his arm away.
 "I guess you are. You can cut off, Keller, you're not wanted."
 Keller hesitated.
 "Help him off," said Dicky Bird.
 Fisher made a movement towards Keller, and the Swiss decided to go. Kern Gunten called to him, but Keller turned a deaf ear and disappeared.
 Gunten gave Dicky Bird & Co. a bitter look.
 "Where do you want me to go?" he asked, between his teeth.
 "Only a little pusey into the wood!" answered Bird blandly.
 "I won't come."
 "Help him with your boot, Blumpy!"
 "You bet!"

Gunten made no answer; but his feelings were not pleasant as he walked on into the wood with the Hillcrest fellows.
 He understood now that they must have made an appointment with Frank Richards & Co., and that he was being taken to it. After the incident of the previous evening, he was very anxious to avoid the chums of Cedar Creek; but there was no help for him now.
 On the bank of the creek, a quarter of a mile or so from Hillcrest School, the party halted.
 "First in the field!" remarked Dicky Bird, looking round.
 "Here they come!" said Fisher.
 Four schoolboys appeared under the trees, heading for the spot. They were Frank Richards and his chums—and Yen Chin.
 The little Chinese was evidently an unwilling comer. He came perforce, as Bob Lawless was holding his pigtail, and leading him. Yen Chin could not flee without leaving that adornment in Bob's hands.
 "Here we are again!" said Bob cheerily, as they joined the Hillcrest crowd on the bank of the creek. "I see you've brought your foreign trash!"
 "And you've brought your thieving heathen!" said Dicky Bird.
 "Yen Chin velly good boy!" wailed the Chinese. "Me wantee goey home. Pool ole poppee velly sick!"
 "Dry up, you lying heathen!" growled Bob. "I suppose you know why we're here, Gunten?"
 The Swiss scowled without replying.
 "You've been playing poker with Yen Chin," continued Bob. "You've won his money—or, rather, our money. Yen Chin squeezed it out of us with a set of thumping lies!"
 "No can tallee lie—"
 "Shut up!" roared Bob.
 Yen Chin shut up, but his little yellow face assumed a most woebegone and pathetic expression. But it was unavailing; the Co. were a little too well acquainted with his wiles now.
 "Now, then, to business," said Dicky Bird, in a businesslike manner. "Kern

guess I'll hand over the dust! Oh! Ow! Yow!"
 "Sure you've made up your mind?" asked Dicky Bird blandly. "You're free to do exactly as you please, you know—same as I am. Canada is a free country, and I wouldn't overrule you for anything. Nothing of the kind. I'm simply going to keep on licking you till you do the right thing. But you're your own master."
 "Ha, ha, ha!"
 "Stop it! I—I'll do it!"
 "Of your own accord?" asked Dicky Bird.
 "Ow! Yep! Ow! Oh, yes!"
 "Good!"
 Dicky Bird lowered the riding-whip, and Gunten was allowed to stand erect once more—still with a grip on his collar, however. His schoolfellows did not trust him, even as far as they could see him.
 "Ten dollars, I think, is what you owe Yen Chin," said Dicky Bird, with a sweet smile. "Count it out, if you've really made up your mind."
 Gunten muttered an oath under his breath.
 He dragged the money out of his pocket, and counted ten dollars into the yellow hand of the Chinese.
 Yen Chin was grinning as he received it.
 "That right?" asked Dicky Bird.
 "Allee light—ten dollee."
 "Good! Do you feel better for having acted honestly for once, Gunten?"
 "Hang you!" was Gunten's reply.
 "I guess we're finished here," remarked Dicky Bird. "You Cedar Creek galoots can settle your business with the heathen. Gunten, you can vamoose the ranch. We're going to give you ten seconds' start, and then we shall be after you. If we catch you up this side of Thompson we give you boot-leather all the way home. Start!"
 Gunten started at a run.
 Dicky Bird took out his big silver watch and timed him. He gave the running Swiss exactly ten seconds.
 "After him!" he shouted.
 "Ha, ha, ha!"
 The Hillcresters started in pursuit, with a whoop. Frank Richards & Co. shouted with laughter, and Gunten disappeared among the trees, running desperately, with Dicky Bird & Co. on his track.
 Loud yells from the distance hinted that the Swiss had not won the race, and that he was getting "boot-leather" on his way home.
 Frank Richards & Co. chortled as the yells of the hapless Swiss died away in the distance.
 Yen Chin waited, Bob Lawless still holding his pigtail. The chums of Cedar Creek turned to him.
 "You owe us ten dollars, my heathen pippin!" said Bob Lawless grimly. "The money had disappeared into Yen Chin's pockets."
 "Good lil' Chinese wantee dollee, buyee medicine fol pool ole sickie uncle," murmured Yen Chin. "Payee ole Bob another timee. What you tinkee? Oh, yes!"
 The chums of Cedar Creek stared at him. Evidently it was Yen Chin's intention to stick to the ten dollars which Gunten had been forced to refund, if he could. But the opinion of Frank Richards & Co. was that he couldn't.
 Bob Lawless took a tighter grip on the Celestial's pigtail and led him towards the creek.
 Yen Chin looked alarmed.
 "Whattce you do!" he exclaimed.
 "You'll see in a minute!"
 "No takee dollee from pool lil' Chinese!"
 "Certainly not!"
 "Allee light," said Yen Chin. "Me keeppee, Oh, yes!"
 "Keep the rocks as long as you like," answered Bob. "I'm only going to dip your head into the creek—"
 "Whattce?"
 "And keep it there—"
 "Yow-ow!"
 "Till you pony up. Take your own time."
 Yen Chin yelled dismally as his head was bent down to the flowing waters of the creek.
 "Yow-ow-ow! Nicey ole Bob jokee—oh, yes!" he gasped.
 "Correct! Only a little joke—like that!"
 "Splash!"
 "Yurrrrggh!"
 Yen Chin's head came up in a moment, streaming with water.
 "Going to pony up?" asked Bob cheerily.
 "Yow-ow! You stoppee?" yelled Yen Chin. "Me velly good boy; me pony up! Oh, yes!"
 And the little rascal promptly ponied up, and the ten dollars returned to their owners. Yen Chin's glance followed them mournfully. He had lost them once at poker already, but evidently he had been hoping to have another chance of losing them at that entertaining game.
 "Now you can cut off, you young rascal," said Bob Lawless, "and I reckon we'll take a tip from Dicky Bird. You can have ten seconds' start, and then it's a case of boot-leather if we catch you!"
 Yen Chin did not stay to reply; he started. But his luck was better than Gunten's, and he had vanished in the wood when the chums of Cedar Creek started in pursuit.
 But when the chums reached the trail where they had left their horses, and mounted, Yen Chin's voice was heard once more from the timber.
 "Yah! Ugly ole Bob! Ugly Flanky! Ugly Chelub!"
 "Ha, ha, ha!"
 "Ugly ole Bob! Flanky velly ugly—"
 Frank Richards & Co. chuckled as they rode homeward, and the wretched howl of the Cedar Creek heathen died away in the distance.

(Another splendid complete story of Frank Richards & Co. at Cedar Creek next week.)



STOPPED ON THE TRAIL! A rider appeared on the trail, coming towards the chums. It was Kern Gunten, and he was alone. Bob Lawless drew rein and raised his riding-whip. "Halt!" he rapped out.

Chin needed a lesson; words were wasted on him, and the lesson he was going to have was one that he could understand. Bob Lawless did not spare the rod.
 Whack, whack, whack!
 Yen Chin roared and howled and wriggled. But the switch lashed on with great vigour.
 The little Chinese burst into tears. At the sight of that Bob's heart failed him, and he ceased to whack.
 "I—I suppose he's had enough," he muttered. "He ought to have a jolly good hiding, but—"
 "That will do," said Frank.
 Bob released the little heathen, who was weeping bitterly. Yen Chin limped away, leaving the three chums looking, and feeling, very uncomfortable. But at a dozen paces' distance the Celestial ceased to limp and ceased to weep; he turned round and grinned at the three.
 "Yah! Silly ole Bob!" he called out cheerfully. "Silly ole ugly Bob! No hurtee Yen Chin! Me laughed! Oh, yes!"
 "What?" gasped Bob.
 Yen Chin put his extended fingers to his nose and chuckled. The chums of Cedar Creek gazed at him blankly.
 "Yah! Ugly ole Bob great fool!" called out Yen Chin. "Me no hurt! Me laughed!"
 "By gum! I—I—" stammered Bob.
 "Silly ole Bob! Silly ole Flanky! Silly ole Chelub!" chortled Yen Chin. "Me laughed! No hurt! Oh, yes! You great fool!"
 Bob Lawless made a furious rush at him, and the little Chinese, still chortling, skipped away and fled. He dodged in at the school-gates and disappeared.
 "The—the awful young rascal!" stammered Frank.
 Bob halted, drawing a deep breath.
 "I—I—I'll—" he gasped.
 He stopped. Words were quite inadequate to express his feelings at that moment.
 "We've got to ride over to Hillcrest and see Dicky Bird," said Beaucere, with a smile. "Come on!"

"Do you want me to shout for Mr. Peckover?" exclaimed Gunten fiercely.
 "Better not," said Dicky Bird. "I know you're Peckover's favourite, dear old scout, because he owes your poppa money; but even Peckover would have to draw a line at what you've been doing. If you want him to hear all about your poker games with the heathen Chinese, you can call him."
 Gunten bit his lip hard; and he did not speak again, as Dicky Bird & Co. walked him out of the gates.
 He certainly did not want the headmaster of Hillcrest to learn the particulars of his gaming transactions. Mr. Peckover was not an agreeable gentleman; but he had some sense of duty, and Gunten could not venture to let him hear the facts.
 The chums of Hillcrest turned from the trail outside the gates, and led their captive through the timber towards the creek.
 "Where are we going?" asked Gunten, at last, between his set teeth.
 "Into the wood."
 "What for?"
 "To meet some friends of yours!" grinned Blumpy.
 Gunten started.
 "If you mean those Cedar Creek cads—" he exclaimed savagely.
 "You're a thought-reader!" smiled Dicky Bird. "They're the very identical galoots you're going to see."
 "I won't!" howled Gunten.
 He halted, in spite of Dicky's firm grip upon his arm. But Blumpy's boot came into play behind, and Gunten yelled, and started again.
 "What game are you playing, you beasts?" he muttered thickly. "I'm not going to fight Bob Lawless, if that's what you want!"
 "You can please yourself about that," said Dicky, shrugging his shoulders. "But you're not going to disgrace Hillcrest, and that concerns us. You're going to stop gambling with Yen Chin, and you're going to hand back your loot—or you'll be thrashed till you do. Sorry?"

Gunten, you've got ten dollars from the heathen!"
 "I won it from him, at a square game," answered the Swiss sullenly. "You're not going to rob me!"
 "Not a bit of it. Nobody here is going to touch the money, whether you won it fairly or not," answered Dicky Bird. "You'll do exactly as you please about it."
 The Swiss started at him.
 "Then I don't see—," he began.
 "You'll see soon. You can do exactly as you please; but I hope you will please to hand the money back to Yen Chin."
 "I won't do anything of the sort."
 "Sure?"
 "Yes, you fool!"
 "Right-ho! It's exactly as you like," said Dicky Bird. "Please yourself. I'm going to please myself, so why shouldn't you? Give me that riding-whip, Fisher!"
 "Here you are!"
 "Now bend him down."
 "You bet!"
 Kern Gunten struggled in the grasp of Fisher and Blumpy. But he struggled in vain. He was bent down, and held in that position, panting.
 "Ready!" grinned Blumpy.
 Dicky Bird raised the riding-whip. It came down with a terrific whack on Kern Gunten, and the Swiss uttered a yell that woke every echo of the wood.
 "Yaroooooh!"
 "One!" counted Dicky Bird. "I'm going to count a hundred, Gunten. I think that will meet the case."
 Whack!
 "Two!"
 "Ha, ha, ha!"
 "Stop it!" shrieked Gunten, struggling furiously. "You rotter! Stop it! Oh—ow—yow!"
 Whack!
 "Three!"
 Kern Gunten yelled frantically. The three lashes had been very severe, and Gunten would not have taken the full hundred for ten dollars, or ten times ten dollars!
 "Stop it!" he shrieked. "I—I—I—I—"

Yen Chin yelled dismally as his head was bent down to the flowing waters of the creek.
 "Yow-ow-ow! Nicey ole Bob jokee—oh, yes!" he gasped.
 "Correct! Only a little joke—like that!"
 "Splash!"
 "Yurrrrggh!"
 Yen Chin's head came up in a moment, streaming with water.
 "Going to pony up?" asked Bob cheerily.
 "Yow-ow! You stoppee?" yelled Yen Chin. "Me velly good boy; me pony up! Oh, yes!"
 And the little rascal promptly ponied up, and the ten dollars returned to their owners. Yen Chin's glance followed them mournfully. He had lost them once at poker already, but evidently he had been hoping to have another chance of losing them at that entertaining game.
 "Now you can cut off, you young rascal," said Bob Lawless, "and I reckon we'll take a tip from Dicky Bird. You can have ten seconds' start, and then it's a case of boot-leather if we catch you!"
 Yen Chin did not stay to reply; he started. But his luck was better than Gunten's, and he had vanished in the wood when the chums of Cedar Creek started in pursuit.
 But when the chums reached the trail where they had left their horses, and mounted, Yen Chin's voice was heard once more from the timber.
 "Yah! Ugly ole Bob! Ugly Flanky! Ugly Chelub!"
 "Ha, ha, ha!"
 "Ugly ole Bob! Flanky velly ugly—"
 Frank Richards & Co. chuckled as they rode homeward, and the wretched howl of the Cedar Creek heathen died away in the distance.



The Strike of The Prefects!

A Splendid New, Complete School Story of JIMMY SILVER & CO. at Rookwood. By OWEN CONQUEST.

The 1st Chapter. Tubby Wants to Know.

"Neville!" Jimmy Silver of the Fourth tapped at Neville's door in the Sixth Form passage at Rookwood and looked in. Jimmy's usually sunny face was clouded.

From his expression it might have been supposed that the junior had come to Neville's study for a licking; but Jimmy was not, as it happened, worried about himself. He was thinking, like many of the Rookwood juniors, of the trouble that had fallen upon "old Bulkeley," the popular captain of the school—captain no longer.

All Rookwood School was in a buzz of excited discussion upon that topic just then.

"Neville, the Head's sent me to tell you—" began Jimmy Silver, as he put his head into the study.

Then he stopped, as he discovered that the study was untenanted. Neville of the Sixth was not in his quarters.

Jimmy Silver stepped back into the passage, looking more clouded than ever. He guessed that Neville was in Bulkeley's study, so he had to go there with his message from the Head, and he found his task repugnant.

Only an hour before he had pulled Tubby Muffin's fat ear for proposing to give Bulkeley a look in and see how he was taking it. Jimmy did not want to see how Bulkeley was taking it; he could guess, only too easily, that Bulkeley was feeling rotten enough, and did not want to be bothered by intrusive fags.

But there was no help for it; Jimmy had to deliver Dr. Chisholm's message. So he went slowly along to Bulkeley's door and tapped.

There was no cheery "Come in!" from within. Jimmy heard a chair move, and then the door was opened, and Neville of the Sixth glanced out to see who had tapped.

Neville's handsome, good-natured face was very grim now. He frowned at the junior.

"What do you want?" he snapped. "Bulkeley can't see you now."

Jimmy's glance passed Neville, and rested for a moment upon the athletic figure of George Bulkeley, standing by the mantelpiece. Bulkeley was staring at the hearthrug, and did not turn his head.

"I haven't come to see Bulkeley," said Jimmy Silver hastily. "I thought you were here, Neville. I've been to your study."

"Well, what do you want?"

"It's a message from the Head."

"Oh! Get it out, then!"

"The Head wants you in his study at once, Neville."

Neville gave a grunt.

"All right. You can clear off."

Jimmy Silver cleared off, glad to go. The door closed again with a snap, and there was a murmur of voices in the study.

Jimmy went quickly down the passage, and found a group of juniors waiting for him at the end.

"You've told Neville?" asked Lovell.

"Yes."

"I say, did you see Bulkeley?" asked Tubby Muffin eagerly.

"Yes," growled Jimmy Silver.

"Did he look awfully down?"

"Br-r-r!"

"I suppose he does," said Tubby. "It's an awful come-down for Bulkeley, you know, to be sacked from the captaincy. I saw Carthew of the Sixth grinning over the Head's notice on the board; he was jolly pleased."

"The rotter!" growled Lovell.

"There'll be a new captain," pursued Tubby Muffin. "I expect it will be Neville, as he's going to be made head prefect in Bulkeley's place. That will be all right for us."

"All wrong, you mean, you fat duffer!" said Raby.

"Well, Neville's jolly easy-going—in fact, soft," said Tubby sagely. "He won't jaw us like old Bulkeley. Bulkeley's a good sort, in his way; but he did jaw a chap. For instance, if a chap was too tired to turn up at cricket practice, Bulkeley never would take any notice. He took me down to Little Side by the ear the other day. Fancy that!"

"Serve you right, you fat slacker!" growled Newcome.

"Well, Neville wouldn't; Neville's jolly good-natured," said Tubby Muffin. "And Townsend says a fellow won't be afraid about putting on a smoke in the study now—Neville won't be on his track."

"Townsend's a smoky worm!"

"Well, my opinion is—" began Tubby loftily.

"Oh, bother your opinion, and you, too!" growled Jimmy Silver. "Dry up, for goodness' sake!"

"Hallo, here comes Neville!" murmured Raby.

The Fistical Four made a point of looking the other way as Neville came along, evidently on his way to the Head's study. But Tubby Muffin didn't. Inquisitiveness was Tubby's besetting sin.

Tubby was intensely curious to know how Bulkeley was taking it, as he expressed it; and only Jimmy Silver's dire threats had kept him from inventing some pretext to visit the fallen captain of Rookwood in his study.

As Neville came along, Tubby ventured to tap him on the sleeve. The prefect glanced down at him impatiently.

"I—I say, Neville—" began the fat Classical.

"What do you want, Muffin?"

"I—I say, how is Bulkeley taking it?" gasped Tubby, almost scared at his own temerity, but consumed by a desire to know.

Neville gave him a fixed look, for a moment too surprised by Tubby's cheek to answer him. Then he took the fat Classical by the collar and shook him vigorously.

Shake, shake, shake!

"Ow!" roared Tubby Muffin. "Yoop! Leggo! I—I say, Neville, you know, I only said—Yarooooh!"

Shake, shake!

Neville released the fat Classical and strode on without a word, leaving Tubby Muffin in a dazed state.

"Ow-ow-ow!" mumbled Tubby. "I—I say, Jimmy, what was Neville waxy about? Wha-a-at did he shake me for? Ow!"

Instead of answering, Jimmy Silver

"Pray come in, Neville," he said. "Doubtless you are aware why I have sent for you. You have seen my notice on the board?"

"Yes, sir," answered Neville quietly.

"As you know, Neville, I have decided to remove Bulkeley from the position of head prefect and captain of the school. I have reflected upon the matter, and decided that there is no other course open to me. I have no longer the necessary confidence in him."

"But, sir—"

Dr. Chisholm held up his hand to stop the interruption.

"As I have decided to appoint you in Bulkeley's place, Neville—"

"But—"

"Pray allow me to conclude," said the Head sharply. "I have decided to appoint you head prefect in Bulkeley's place, as you are next in rank. You will also act as captain of the school pro tem—that is, until a new election takes place."

"But, sir—"

"Really, Neville, you should be aware that you ought not to interrupt your headmaster in this manner. Bulkeley has, perhaps, acquainted you with the affair—"

"Yes, sir, and—"

"Allow me, please. I found Bulkeley inflicting a very severe punishment upon Raby, of the Fourth Form—a punishment far in excess of what he had, as a prefect, any right to inflict. It transpired that the fault for which he was punishing Raby so excessively was shared by another boy, Grace, of the Fourth. An unusually severe punishment, adminis-

And Neville, on his side, was not specially firm—he was good-natured and easy-going, and hated to say "no" to anybody. But he was George Bulkeley's loyal chum, and that consideration nerved him even to the extent of opposing the Head.

The gathering frown on Dr. Chisholm's brow was not encouraging; but Neville took his courage in both hands, so to speak, and made the plunge.

"I—I should like to point out, sir—"

"Well?"

"Bulkeley was to blame, sir—"

"Most seriously to blame," said the Head.

"He has admitted it to me, sir, and he is sorry for having lost his temper with Raby of the Fourth—"

"No doubt."

"And—and that being so, sir—"

"I cannot place sufficient reliance, Neville, upon a prefect who loses his temper and is sorry for it afterwards," said the Head. "Weakness of that kind is out of place in Bulkeley's former position."

"Ye-es, sir, I—I know—but—"

"Have you anything more to say, Neville?" asked the Head, as the unfortunate Sixth-Former stammered. His manner was icy, not to say Arctic. Opposition of any kind always had that effect upon the Head. His decisions were promulgated, as it were, from the heights of Olympus, and it was not for common mortals to criticise them, much less oppose them.

"Yes, sir, I have," said Neville, with some spirit. "Bulkeley was at fault, but it wasn't so very serious—"

he punished thinks the same as the others. The whole school has confidence in Bulkeley."

"I have said, Neville, that I no longer have confidence in him. That is the end of the matter. You may leave my study, Neville."

"Then, sir, I'm bound to say that I can't—"

"What!"

That sudden ejaculation from the Head was almost terrifying. So might Jove, on cloudy Olympus, have ejaculated, at the first breath of opposition to his lofty will and pleasure.

Neville faltered, but he went on:

"I can't, sir—"

"You cannot—what?"

"I can't consent to taking Bulkeley's place—"

"Neville!"

The Head, more Olympian than ever, rose to his feet. His glance was simply scathing.

"Is it possible, Neville, that you are thinking of declining the position I have decided to place you in?"

"Yes, sir," said Neville desperately. "I'm not going to supplant Bulkeley—I can't take his place."

There was a moment of silence—awful silence. Then the Head spoke, quietly—but with a rumble of distant thunder, as it were, behind his quiet tone.

"Very well. I did not expect this, Neville. I fear I have been mistaken in you."

"I—I—"

"You need say no more, Neville. You understand, of course, that you are no longer a prefect. Leave my study!"

"I—I hope, sir—"

"You may go!"

And Neville went.

The 3rd Chapter. Something Up!

Rookwood School was in something like a flutter on the following day. The school was, at present, without a captain; and the august body of prefects was without a head.

It was known far and wide that Lawrence Neville had refused to take Bulkeley's place; and fellows discussed his refusal with bated breath.

How he had found the nerve to do it was a mystery. But he had done it; there was no doubt about that.

So far no fresh appointment was made. Jimmy Silver remarked that it was a "facer" for the Head. Smythe, of the Shell, in his slangy way, declared that the downy old bird was no end bottled. Whether the Head was "bottled" or not, he had made no move so far.

There was quite an unusual atmosphere in the Form-rooms that day. A sort of unrest was perceptible all over Rookwood.

Everybody felt a sense of trouble to come.

That Bulkeley had been in fault in the affair with Raby of the Fourth was not to be denied. But Bulkeley was too good a fellow for his popularity to be shaken by one fault. Raby, who had been severely licked, was as loyal a supporter as ever of the old captain of Rookwood. Jimmy Silver & Co., in fact, were his most enthusiastic backers.

The Head, whose only intention was to be just, was cringing a little on the side of excessive firmness. If all Rookwood could forgive Bulkeley, there was no reason why the Head should not—no reason, excepting that when he had once decided, his decrees were as immutable as the laws of the Medes and Persians.

That was all very well, in its way; but Smythe of the Shell remarked that it wasn't a headmaster's bizney to set up as a giddy Tsar or Kaiser, and Jimmy Silver & Co., for once, agreed with Adolphus Smythe.

After morning lessons, which were a little thundery in the Sixth Form-room, there was a meeting of some of the Classical Sixth in Neville's study. The juniors noted it with keen interest, and wondered what would come of it. For there was no doubt that the Sixth were supporting Bulkeley, though the fallen captain of Rookwood was not asking for support.

Bulkeley did not attend the meeting. He came out into the quadrangle, and many eyes were fixed upon him there. His face was a little clouded, but he did not appear conscious of the general attention.

Jimmy Silver & Co. were chatting near the doorway, and Raby coloured a little as Bulkeley came up to the quartette. Poor Raby was feeling very downhearted. It was through him that this disaster had fallen on George Bulkeley, though he really was not to blame. He wondered for a moment, as Bulkeley came up, whether it meant more trouble.

"I've wanted to speak to you, Raby," said Bulkeley quietly, without any sign of anger.

"Yes, Bulkeley," murmured the junior.

"I'm afraid I lost my temper with you yesterday, kid. I gave you rather more of a licking than you deserved."

"Oh!"

"I'm sorry!" said Bulkeley.

Raby gasped.

The great man of the Sixth was actually apologising to him, a fag of the Fourth!

If Bulkeley's popularity had waned in the Lower School, nothing more than that would have been required to restore it to its zenith.

"Oh, Bulkeley," stuttered Raby. "I—I don't mind; it doesn't matter a bit! Besides, it was my fault—"

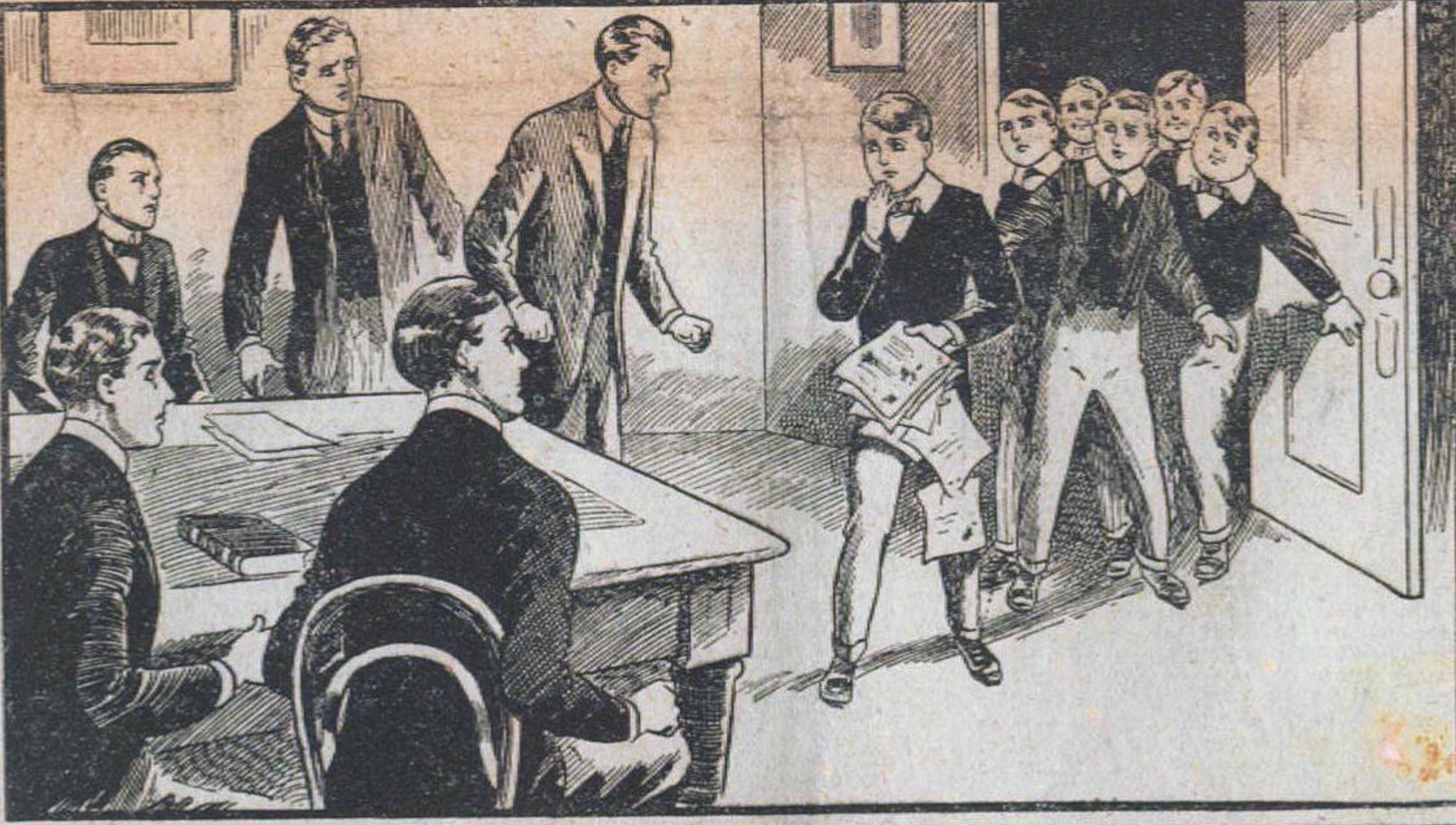
"All serene, kid," said Bulkeley.

And with a kind nod the captain of Rookwood walked on towards the cricket-ground.

The Fistical Four looked at one another.

"Isn't he a brick?" said Jimmy Silver, with a deep breath.

"Splendid old chap!" said Arthur Edward Lovell. "Fancy the Head sack-



A LOYAL ADDRESS! The deputation was eyed grimly by the prefects as it marched in. Jimmy Silver cleared his throat. "We, members of the Lower School of Rookwood—" "You thundering young idiots!" ejaculated Bulkeley.

grasped the fat junior by the collar, and proceeded to continue the shaking.

"You fat chump!" Shake! "Don't be an inquisitive little beast!" Shake!

"Don't ask questions!" Shake! "Go and eat coke!" Shake!

"Yarooooh!"

Tubby Muffin staggered against the wall, gasping, as Jimmy released him; and the Fistical Four walked away and left him there.

"Yow-ow-ow-ow!" howled Tubby.

"You awful rotter! Wow-wow!"

"Hallo! What's the matter with you?" asked Conroy of the Fourth, coming along a few minutes later, and finding Tubby Muffin still spluttering.

"Ow-ow!" I just asked Neville how Bulkeley was taking it, and that beast Silver shook me— Why, wharrer you at? Yaroooh!"

Shake, shake!

"Oh, my hat! Yoop! Leggo!"

Conroy walked on, leaving the fat Classical struggling for breath. The inquisitive Tubby had never been so shaken in all his fat career before, and it was quite a long time before he ceased to splutter.

tered without adequate inquiry into the facts—"

"But—"

"This is the first time that such dereliction of duty, on Bulkeley's part, has come to my knowledge. I fear, however, that there may be other instances, in which it has not come to my knowledge."

"Oh, no, sir! I can assure you—"

"I have therefore removed Bulkeley from the high position he held in the school," said Dr. Chisholm. "As next in rank of the prefects, Neville, I am appointing you in his place. You will take up the duties of head prefect at once."

"But, sir—"

"The date of a new election of captain of the school will be fixed very soon. Until the result is known you will act as captain of Rookwood."

"But, sir—"

"That is my decision, Neville. I trust," said the Head, in quite a grim manner—"I trust, Neville, that you have no objection to offer?"

Neville drew a deep breath. It required a good deal of nerve to oppose the Head, who was always a very awe-inspiring personage. Opposition, too, was not likely to be of much use; Dr. Chisholm was a man of very firm character—perhaps a little too firm. There had been whispers at Rookwood that the Head's firmness partook of the nature of obstinacy.

"I consider it serious, Neville."

"Ye-es, sir; but—but—for instance, the junior in question, Raby of the Fourth, makes no complaint. Raby, I am certain, will be as sorry as anybody to think that Bulkeley is degraded on his account. I have seen him, and he is looking quite miserable about it. He would rather have had twice the licking, than have caused Bulkeley trouble like this."

"That is simply another condemnation of Bulkeley," said the Head coldly. "It appears that he punished, with undue severity, a junior who is his loyal admirer."

"Well, ye-es, but—"

"I think there is nothing more to be said, Neville."

Dr. Chisholm took up a paper from his desk, as a hint that the interview was at an end.

But it was not quite at an end.

"What I mean, sir—" Neville recommenced.

"You have made your meaning clear, Neville, and I trust I have made mine clear. Nothing remains to be said."

"I—I mean, sir—"

"Neville!"

"I—I mean," pursued the Sixth-Former undauntedly, "that though Bulkeley did lose his temper, the fellows don't think any the worse of him—and they all look on it as a disaster for him to be turned out of the captaincy. Even the junior

grasped the fat junior by the collar, and proceeded to continue the shaking.

"You fat chump!" Shake! "Don't be an inquisitive little beast!" Shake!

"Don't ask questions!" Shake! "Go and eat coke!" Shake!

"Yarooooh!"

Tubby Muffin staggered against the wall, gasping, as Jimmy released him; and the Fistical Four walked away and left him there.

"Yow-ow-ow-ow!" howled Tubby.

"You awful rotter! Wow-wow!"

"Hallo! What's the matter with you?" asked Conroy of the Fourth, coming along a few minutes later, and finding Tubby Muffin still spluttering.

"Ow-ow!" I just asked Neville how Bulkeley was taking it, and that beast Silver shook me— Why, wharrer you at? Yaroooh!"

Shake, shake!

"Oh, my hat! Yoop! Leggo!"

Conroy walked on, leaving the fat Classical struggling for breath. The inquisitive Tubby had never been so shaken in all his fat career before, and it was quite a long time before he ceased to splutter.

The 2nd Chapter. Neville Says "No!"

Dr. Chisholm's face was very grave as Neville of the Sixth entered his study.



The Strike of The Prefects!

(Continued from previous page.)

ing a chap like that! The Head's a donkey!"

"It's a shame!" said Raby. "It's a rotten shame! I'd have been flogged a dozen times before I'd have had this happen to Bulkeley! Suppose he did lose his temper! Well, he got the booby-trap that I'd fixed up for Carthew. It was enough to make any fellow waxy."

"Of course it was!" said Newcome.

Jimmy Silver nodded.

"It's rotten!" he said. "The Head means well; he thinks he's seeing stern justice done. As a matter of fact, he's going too far. But he's jolly obstinate."

"Obstinate as a mule!" said Lovell.

"It was his dashed obstinacy caused the trouble with the masters a few weeks ago. Now there's going to be trouble with the prefects for the same reason. Nearly all the Sixth are backing up Bulkeley—all the Classical side, excepting Carthew, perhaps."

"They won't get a man to take Bulkeley's place in a hurry, unless they go to the Modern side for him," said Newcome sagely.

"Silver?"

Neville of the Sixth looked out from the doorway. Jimmy Silver hurried to him at once.

"Yes, Neville?"

"Take this note over to Knowles, in Mr. Manders' house, will you?"

"Yes, rather!"

Jimmy Silver took the note and trotted off to the Modern side with it. In Mr. Manders' house he found Tommy Dodd & Co. of the Modern Fourth in deep discussion upon the topic that was agitating all Rookwood just then. He went on to Knowles' study to deliver the note, and found the head-Modern prefect there, with Frampton and Catesby.

The three Modern prefects were, like the juniors in the passage, deep in discussion. Knowles gave Jimmy a sharp, frowning look.

"For you, Knowles!" said Jimmy; and he tossed the note on the table and retired.

He rejoined his chums on the School House steps, and in a few minutes Knowles & Co. came across. The note had evidently been to summon them to the meeting in Neville's study. Knowles, Catesby, Frampton, and Tresham passed into the House, and the juniors exchanged glances.

"Something's up!" remarked Arthur Edward Lovell oracularly.

The juniors could not help feeling keenly curious. Some step was contemplated by the Sixth, which was to be taken all together, it was clear. Tubby Muffin came out of the School House a little later, with his round, fat face full of excitement.

"Jimmy!" he gasped. "I—I say, they're going it!"

"Who's going it, fatty?"

"The Sixth!" gasped Tubby. "All the prefects—in Neville's study. They're going to remonstrate with the Head!"

"What?"

"And request him to reinstate Bulkeley!"

"Oh!"

"And they've agreed that no prefect will take Bulkeley's place, and if the Head asks them they're going to refuse!" gasped Tubby. "Even Knowles—that Modern cad, you know—is backing up! I don't believe he wants to back up Bulkeley, you know, but he daren't get the Sixth down on him—that's my belief—or he'd be jolly glad to jump into Bulkeley's place. Even Carthew has agreed. All the Sixth are in it. Fancy that!"

"And how the thump do you know all this?" demanded Arthur Edward Lovell gruffly.

"I—I happened to be near Neville's door!"

"And your ear happened to be at the keyhole, you listening beast!" exclaimed Lovell in disgust. "You've no business to know anything about it!"

"Well, I like that!" said Tubby indignantly. "You let me tell you, anyway!"

"Oh, bump him!" said Lovell.

Tubby Muffin fled.

In a very short time Tubby Muffin's exciting news was widely known. In Neville's study the important debate among the great men of the Sixth went on, the prefects of Rookwood little dreaming that it was the subject of another exciting debate among the small fry outside the sacred precincts of the Sixth.

The 4th Chapter.

Jimmy Silver Takes a Hand.

"We're going to back him up!"

Jimmy Silver made that announcement in the end study at tea-time.

The captain of the Fourth had been thinking. This, apparently, was the result.

"Bulkeley, do you mean?" asked Lovell, as he cracked his second egg.

"Naturally."

"Well back him up all right," said Arthur Newcome cheerfully. "But how are we going to do it, Jimmy?"

"I've got an idea."

Lovell granted.

"There's nothing doing, Jimmy. We can't argue with the Head, and it depends on the Head. And he's as obstinate as a mule."

"I'm not thinking of arguing with the Head. But look here," Jimmy Silver raised his hand holding the egg-spoon, and proceeded to lay down the law with

the egg-spoon, as it were. "The Head's pushed Bulkeley out of the captaincy, wishing to be just. We know he means well—these headmasters always do mean well. But he doesn't understand."

"He doesn't, for a fact."

"He thinks he's defending the rights of juniors, and all that—standing between chaps like us and an overbearing fellow in the Sixth."

"What rot!"

"Well, that's how the Head is looking at it. If it was Carthew or Knowles he would be right; but it's Bulkeley, and Bulkeley is the best chap at Rookwood."

"Hear, hear!"

"He pitched into Raby. Well, Raby can stand that and come up smiling—can't you, Raby?"

"Of course I can!" grunted Raby. "I'm not made of putty, I suppose?"

"Bulkeley lost his temper, but we can excuse that. Why, dash it all, I've lost my temper myself at times!" said Jimmy Silver. "These things happen, you know. It's a pity, but there you are! The Head isn't making enough allowance for human nature."

"Old scout, you talk like a picture-book!" said Lovell admiringly. "What a pity you can't pitch it like that to the Head!"

"He wouldn't listen," said Jimmy regretfully. "That's the worst of these headmasters—you can't make 'em listen to sense, and they can always stop an argument, when they're getting the worst of it, with the cane. But come to the point—"

"Oh, you're coming to the point?" asked Lovell in a tone of mild surprise.

"Yes, you ass!" roared Jimmy Silver.

"Well, come to it—pass the margarine first."

"Bother the margarine! Dry up! The Head hasn't confidence in Bulkeley any more because he walloped a junior a bit too—well, a bit too drastically. He really did pitch into Raby, you know."

"He did," said Raby reminiscently.

"But the point is this. A junior was the injured party, and the juniors still have confidence in Bulkeley—plenty of it."

"Lots!" agreed Lovell.

"The whole Lower School backs him up as one man—excepting a few cads, perhaps, like Lattrey, and Gower and Peele, and Leggett, and perhaps Towner and Topsy, and perhaps a few others. Those who don't back up Bulkeley don't count."

"Nobody counts who doesn't agree with us."

"Don't be a funny ass, Lovell! Practically the whole Lower School backs up Bulkeley," said Jimmy Silver warmly. "Well, if he wasn't all right for head prefect and captain, would they do it?"

"Of course not."

"Now, then, suppose the Head is made aware that the whole Lower School supports Bulkeley, won't that very likely make him change his mind?"

"Ahem!"

"His only reason for shifting Bulkeley is that he can't trust him to be just to the Lower School. Well, the opinion of the Lower School on that point is bound to influence him, as a reasonable man."

"Yes, if he is a reasonable man."

"Well, even a headmaster is bound to be more or less reasonable."

"H'm!"

"So my idea," pursued Jimmy, "is this—"

"H'm!"

"I'll tell you my idea, if Lovell isn't going to start difficulties at the very beginning—"

"Oh, pile in!" said Lovell.

"My idea is, a loyal address to Bulkeley—"

"Eh—a which?"

"Loyal address, signed by the whole of the Lower School!" said Jimmy Silver impressively. "We can get sheets and sheets of jimpot paper filled up with signatures. Every chap in the Third, the Fourth, and the Shell will sign it on both sides of Rookwood. The Second, too, for that matter."

"Oh!"

"Every chap signs freely, of his own accord, in hearty support of Bulkeley of the Sixth. See?"

"And suppose a chap won't?"

"Then we'll jolly well punch his head till he does!" said Jimmy Silver warmly.

"Oh, my hat! Punch his head till he signs of his own accord!"

"For goodness' sake, Lovell, don't keep on arguing! I never knew such a chap for starting difficulties!" exclaimed the captain of the Fourth, in great exasperation. "My idea is free and unanimous support of Bulkeley by the whole Lower School. We draw up the loyal address in a few well-chosen words—"

"Who's going to choose 'em?"

"I am. In a few well-chosen words, and get all the fellows to sign it. We present it to Bulkeley in a representative deputation—"

"Oh!"

"With a speech from the chairman of the deputation—"

"Who's chairman?"

"I am."

"And what's the speech going to be?"

"Oh, a few well-chosen words, you know."

"And you're going to choose 'em?"

"Look here, Lovell—"

"It jolly well looks to me as if this giddy loyal address will represent Jimmy Silver more than anybody or anything else. Why not drop in on the Head, and give him your advice straight away?" asked Arthur Edward Lovell, with a heavy touch of sarcasm.

"Look here—"

"Peace!" murmured Newcome. "I say, Jimmy, if we present the cheery address to Bulkeley, the Head mayn't even hear of it."

"He's bound to," said Jimmy. "After handing it to Bulkeley, we are going to stick it on the notice-board."

"Oh, my hat!"

"Bulkeley will read it, you see, and thank us—"

"In a few well-chosen words?" asked Lovell.

"And thank us!" roared Jimmy Silver. "And then we shall put it on the board, for all Rookwood to read. As a reasonable man, the Head is bound to be influenced by it."

"He might!" said Newcome.

"And he mightn't!" remarked Lovell. "Well, it wouldn't do any harm, anyway," said Raby pacifically. "Let's draw up the blessed address after tea, and then get the fellows to sign. Even if it doesn't make any difference with the Head it will please old Bulkeley."

"Yes, something in that!" agreed Lovell.

"I'm glad you can see something in it at last," observed Jimmy Silver sardonically.

"Keep your wool on, old chap. Let's get on with the giddy address, and we'll all help choose those few well-chosen words. Four heads are better than one."

"Thicker, at any rate!"

"Look here, Jimmy—"

"Agreed!" said Jimmy Silver. "We'll all put our heads together over it, and then take it round for the fellows to sign. And my belief is that it will make a lot of difference with the Head, and the trouble will blow over—all through the end study."

The idea of the end study causing the trouble to blow over was rather flattering to the Co. And the tea-things were shifted, pens and ink and paper produced, and the Fistical Four started to work upon the loyal address which, at the very least, was to assure Bulkeley of the Sixth that he still possessed the full confidence of the Lower School at Rookwood.

The 5th Chapter.

The Loyal Address.

"How do we begin it?"

"Dear Bulkeley, I should think," said Lovell thoughtfully.

Jimmy Silver shook his head.

"Too easy and familiar," he said. "Something a bit more—well, more stately and—official, you know."

"Which person is it to be?" asked Raby.

"Bulkeley, of course," answered Lovell.

"Fathead! I mean which person—"

"Well, Bulkeley's the person, isn't he?"

"I mean second or third person!" howled Raby.

"Oh, I see. You never make yourself clear, Raby. Third person sounds rather impressive," remarked Lovell. "Something like this—'Bulkeley of the Sixth is assured by members of the Lower School—'"

"That sounds a bit as if he were taking out a life assurance," remarked Newcome.

"Tot!" Assured by members of the Lower School that they have complete confidence in him, and are down on his being sacked."

"Better not rub in too much about the sack. That point ought to be passed over diplomatically," remarked Jimmy Silver.

"He is sacked from the captaincy, isn't he?"

"Well, yes; but—"

"Well, I believe in calling a spade a spade. You can call it a dashed agricultural implement if you like."

"Let's hear Jimmy's views!" murmured Raby.

Jimmy Silver smiled. He was waiting patiently for the Co. to come round to his views.

"Well, Jimmy gasses such a lot," said Lovell. "Still, let him go ahead. I don't believe he can improve upon 'assured by members of the Lower School.'"

"Something like this," said Jimmy Silver: "We, the undersigned members of the Lower School at Rookwood, hereby—"

"Well, 'hereby' sounds all right," admitted Lovell. "What about 'heretofore,' too? That's got quite a legal sound."

"It isn't necessary."

"Oh, if you're only going to put in what's necessary—"

"With the air of a fellow washing his hands of the job."

"Go it, Jimmy!"

Jimmy Silver went it, and his rough sketch of the loyal address was more or less approved by the other members of the end study. Lovell made some amendments, which were discussed, and some of them admitted—perhaps not with enthusiasm. Raby and Newcome also put in an improvement here and there—no doubt by way of drawing attention to the fact that the end study was a free republic and not an autocratic monarchy.

Many hands are said to make light work; but, as a matter of fact, four heads did not prove much better than one in this case. And by the time the loyal address was completed a considerable time had elapsed, and the paper it was written on was inky and blotty and smudgy, and so were the fingers of the four juniors.

But they were satisfied, upon the whole, with their joint production. It really was rather an eloquent document, and they agreed that Bulkeley was sure to be pleased, even if the Head did not come down off his perch.

The document, as completed, ran as follows:

"WE, the under-signed members of the Lower School of Rookwood, comprising all the Lower School of Rookwood excepting a few cads, hereby announce, declare, and affirm our complete and continue confidence in George Bulkeley of the Sixth Form, and in the name of the Lower School of Rookwood we hereby demand that the said George Bulkeley be reinstated as captain of the school without a stane on his character.

"We also declare that we, the Lower School of Rookwood, won't have any other captain, at any price, and if ordered so to do we shall regard it as our duty to look upon it with Contempt.

"Our motto is back up Bulkeley, who is a good Sort, though some Fatheads may think otherwise, for he's a jolly good fellow and so say all of us.

(Signed) J. SILVER,
A. E. LOVELL,
G. RABY,
A. NEWCOME."

"That only requires some more signatures, and it's all right," said Jimmy Silver.

"That bit about the fatheads is good!" said Lovell, with a grin. "Of course, it may be glaring at the Head, and it may not."

"It's rather deep," agreed Raby.

"I believe there ought to be an 'i' in 'stain,'" murmured Jimmy Silver. "In fact, I know there ought."

Lovell shook his head.

"It's a word of five letters, Jimmy—I know it," he answered. "Leave it to me, old chap. I'm pretty strong on spelling."

"Leave out the 'e,'" suggested Jimmy.

"What rot!"

"Lovell—"

A FEW HINTS ON BATTING.

A Special Article for Young Cricketers. By WILFRED RHODES.

I am always pleased to give whatever advice I can to youths who are trying to improve their cricket; but our great summer game is of such magnitude that I can only hope to write something worth knowing of one particular stroke. If I were to offer general advice in one small article I am absolutely certain the young reader would not derive the slightest benefit by reading it.

I remember listening one day to an old critic who sat in front of the pavilion, and he gave it as his opinion that the young player should first learn to hit properly before attempting to cultivate a sound defence.

If a youth is a born Jessop, with a wonderful eye and phenomenal strength, he may be able to score runs fairly consistently without much of a defence; but, on the other hand, if the ordinary individual who holds the bat cannot look after his own wicket, he'll very soon find that the bowler will.

I have often seen batsmen in county cricket take the most astonishing liberties with the best of bowling; but it must be remembered that the man who can do this has been probably playing the game every day in the summer for a number of years, and has become almost as familiar with the fight and pace of the ball as the juggler is, after years of practice, with the various objects that he manipulates in the air.

One can only do extraordinary—and sometimes only ordinary—things on the cricket-field as the result of careful practice, and unless one commences with the defence of the wicket—well, it isn't cricket at all. Many years ago a youngster asked me how I knew which ball to hit, which to play forward to, and which to play back to.

My answer wasn't elaborate, but it was as true as it was brief and simple, as the following will show: "If you can get to the pitch of the ball fairly easily, hit it; if you can get near the pitch of it only with difficulty, play forward; and if it is well-nigh impossible to get to the pitch, then play back. Of course, always presuming that the oncoming ball is straight."

It must be understood that the above advice was given to a young fellow who wanted to learn how to bat and had not the advantage which the average present-day schoolboy possesses, viz., a capable coach. As I said before, for a start the suggestion I made is good, but—and a big but—the chief thing is to know how to hit, how to play forward, and how to play back.

The last-named stroke is, until one is thoroughly experienced, only one of pure defence, while playing forward in the accepted sense is in a good many cases also a defensive shot; and it is my intention to devote the space I have at my command this week to the manner in which one should play back, simply because it is the only stroke to a straight ball wherein it is possible to watch the ball right on to the blade of the bat.

To those young batsmen who have not a very sound defence, I would urge some

serious net practice over this stroke. It is well worth the trouble, for, having once mastered it so that its execution is absolutely perfect, quite a lot of those balls that have been taking wickets, and so spoiling the chance of scoring a few badly needed runs, will appear quite simple.

Let me say at once, without carefully watching the ball from the time it leaves the bowler's hand until it strikes the bat, the back stroke is absolutely faulty. There is a time when it is possible to play forward with apparent ease, and when such a stroke is decidedly risky, and that time is when a pitch is drying after recent rain—the time which gladdens the hearts

WILFRED RHODES,



the famous All-England and Yorkshire Player, who has written this Article specially for the BOYS' FRIEND.

of the bowlers, for it is then that they are able to get more work upon the ball.

It therefore stands to reason that the batsman must keep his eye well skinned, and not lose sight of the ball for the millionth part of a second. It is not only a case of the ball breaking, for on this style of wicket it frequently gets up in such a manner that unless you play back you stand a very good chance of misjudging the break, and perhaps getting caught or bowled; or of striking the ball high up on the bat and giving an easy chance.

It goes without saying that every batsman thoroughly watches the bowler's hand when he is delivering the ball. It tells its own tale in the majority of cases,

and you are able to tell which way the ball will break before it pitches, besides getting a pretty good idea of length and alterations in pace.

We will take it, however, that the ball is coming at medium pace and slightly under what we call good length; or, in other words, is very difficult to reach with the bat immediately it pitches. Then the batsman should move his right foot back in the direction of his wicket—not toward the square-leg umpire—so that it is barely clear of the leg-stump, and as the bat meets the ball, without preliminary flourish, he should be almost facing the bowler.

In this manner it is nearly impossible to play with a crooked bat, because, in order to get the bat to meet the ball at all, the right arm must be close to the side of the body, with the elbow bent back, and the left forearm across the body, so that the left hand is exactly over the right.

It must be remembered that I have said the batsman is almost facing the bowler when playing this stroke. Almost, but not quite; for the left shoulder is bound to be a little forward. If it were not, a straight bat would be a matter of impossibility.

I don't mind confessing that I have made batting an almost lifelong study. Anyhow, since I was in my early teens I have given the art of batting a great amount of thought, going my utmost in both theory and practice to account for the making of certain shots, and to prove that the vast majority of people are wrong when they imagine that the good-length ball cannot be scored off unless forward strokes are used.

I remember when I first looked on at good-class cricket it was quite the general thing to see practically every ball that was bowled on a plumb wicket played forward to. The back stroke was used only as a means of defending the wicket when the pitch was sticky or of the treacherous variety.

For some reason or other those people who only see the advantages of forward play forget there is a moment when by following their own doctrine the ball is entirely lost sight of.

Back play means the ability to watch the ball from the moment it leaves the bowler's hand, and as the eye is intent upon it, no matter whether it comes straight-through or breaks inches, the bat is instinctively moved to meet it.

It is clearly the batsman's first object—for his own pleasure, to say nothing of the duty he owes to his side—to prevent the bowler from getting him out, and at the same time to make as many runs as possible. But as there are certain balls which, from their "length"—the distance at which they pitch from the batsman—are difficult to hit away, and as a defence is paramount, they should be dealt with from this point of view first. Runs will come.

W. Rhodes

"We don't want to make a bad impression on Bulkeley by showing him a lot of bad spelling," said Lovell. "A word misspelt might spoil the whole effect. Leave it as it is."
 "But I tell you—"
 "It's a jolly curious thing, you chaps, that Jimmy thinks he knows everything that's to be known in this study!" remarked Lovell. "What is it that puts the idea into his head?"
 "Oh, leave it as it is, then!" said Jimmy Silver resignedly.
 "I should jolly well think so—especially as you've left out my bit about assuring him. Besides, I think 'heretofore' would have been impressive; but I've agreed to leave it out."
 "Let's go and gather up signatures," said Raby. "We'll pin the sheets of impot paper together."
 "Good egg!"
 "And the Fistical Four sallied forth, document in hand, with an ample supply of impot paper for the signatures."
 They looked in first on the Colonial Co. Conroy, Van Ryn, and Pons grimed when they read the document, but they signed cheerfully. Oswald and Jones minor, and Flynn and Teddy Grace followed their example, and Tubby Muffin appended a signature that looked like something in Turkish.
 Mornington and Erroll were the next, and Mornington grinned and Erroll stared as the loyal address was presented to them for inspection.
 "What is it—a map?" asked Morny.
 "Map!" repeated Lovell. "What the thump do you mean?"
 "Blessed if I can tell whether it's a geographical map or a geological chart!" said Morny. "Which is it?"
 "It's an address to Bulkeley!" roared Lovell. "There may be a blot or two."
 "I—I say, will Bulkeley like that?" besetted Erroll. "Especially that bit about the fatheads. I suppose that means the Head."
 "That's where we're jolly deep," said Lovell complacently. "It's a sort of hint of what we think, you know, without saying anything right out. Of course, we couldn't very well call the Head a fat-head actually."
 "Bad form!" said Raby, with a shake of the head. "It's pretty well wrapped up there. That's all right."
 "I suppose you're going to sign, Erroll?"
 "Oh, certainly!"
 And Erroll signed, and Morny followed his example; and the Fistical Four marched on in search of fresh signatures.
 Up and down Rookwood they went with the loyal address, sheets of impot paper, and a fountain-pen, and signatures flowed in like the waves of the sea. Nearly every junior at Rookwood, Classical or Modern, was prepared to testify his readiness to back up Bulkeley.
 There were a few objectors—Lattrey & Co., for instance, who were rather black sheep, did not like Bulkeley, and said so. Jimmy Silver & Co. left them in their study after a short argument without taking their signatures—but they left them in a state of wreck and ruin that was simply deplorable. After the Fistical Four had gone Lattrey extracted his head painfully from the coucuscute, and Peelo sawed ashes out of his hair, and Gower gouged furiously at the ink on his face, and the observations they made sounded absolutely Hunnish.
 Smythe of the Shell also declined—but after his refusal Smythe of the Shell was scarcely recognisable by his nearest and dearest pal.
 Possibly owing to such considerations as this, fellows who were not very keen on the loyal address decided to append their signatures, lest a worse fate should befall them.
 By the time the Fistical Four had finished their round they had sheets of impot paper covered with signatures more or less decipherable, representing at least ninety per cent. of the Lower School of Rookwood.
 The sheets were pinned together carefully in the end study. It certainly was an

imposing document now, and the Fistical Four justly considered that a few blots and smudges did not detract from its imposing nature.
 "It's bound to impress Bulkeley," said Lovell. "And the Head, too. I really think that the Head can scarcely fail to take notice of this. It will show him what we jolly well think, anyhow."
 The Co. agreed that it would; and the loyal address being completed at last, and duly pinned together, Jimmy Silver & Co. fared forth in search of George Bulkeley, with the firm conviction that, upon presentation of that loyal address the one-time captain of Rookwood would be "no end bucked."

The 6th Chapter. Not Quite a Success!

Bulkeley of the Sixth was pacing to and fro in his study after tea with a deep line in his brow.
 He was in a troubled mood.
 That a meeting of the Sixth had been held, and that the decision had been to support him, he knew; and though the loyal friendship of the Sixth was agreeable enough, it troubled him. He foresaw trouble with the Head, which would certainly not be good for the school or good for the Sixth, and he would gladly have dropped quietly into the background and submitted without question to his severe sentence.
 But that his friends would by no means allow. Even Knowles of the Modern side, his old rival, was acting with the rest. The seniors agreed that the dignity of the Sixth Form was compromised by the Head's decision, and that it was up to them to back up the captain's cause.
 Bulkeley's friends—who were most of the Sixth—were enthusiastic; and Knowles & Co. gave their support somewhat less warmly; and even Carthew, the bully of the Sixth, for the present gave in his adhesion.
 Feeling was so strong in the Sixth, in fact, that Bulkeley's few enemies could not venture to make their voices heard, even if they wished to.
 But Bulkeley was sorely troubled by the thought of having his rights championed against the Head; and he knew by experience that Dr. Chisholm was certain not to yield the point, and that nothing but a struggle could ensue of which the results could not be foreseen.
 He was thinking over the matter as he paced to and fro, when the door opened and Neville looked in. Bulkeley gave him a sombre glance.
 "It's being settled now," said Neville. "Come along to the prefects' room, will you, Bulkeley?"
 "Neville, old chap—"
 "Come along, anyhow, and you can tell us what you think," said Neville.
 "Oh, all right!"
 Bulkeley followed his chum slowly to the prefects' room—an apartment sacred to those members of the Sixth who had been appointed prefects. Other seniors sometimes came in by permission; but to juniors and such small fry the precincts were strictly taboo.
 Only prefects were present now. Knowles, Frampton, Catesby, and Treham, of the Modern side; Neville, Lonsdale, Jones major, Carthew, Scott, and Bulkeley himself, of the Classical side.
 It was a very grave and serious assembly—only on Carthew's face was there a suspicion of a lurking grin. But the bully of the Sixth did not dare to allow his secret satisfaction at Bulkeley's fall to be seen. For the present, at least, Carthew was acting in co-operation with the rest.
 There was a murmur in the room as Bulkeley came in with Neville. The latter was about to close the door when Jimmy Silver presented himself. Behind Jimmy Silver came his chums, and behind them a little crowd of the Fourth and some of the Shell.
 "Hold on a minute, Neville," said Jimmy. "We want Bulkeley—"
 "You can't see him now—cut off!"
 "It's important."

"Cut off!" said Neville sharply.
 He did not see the importance of it—not even having noticed that Jimmy Silver had a bundle of inky sheets of impot paper in his hand, and besides being quite unaware that those inky sheets were, in point of fact, a loyal address from the Lower School of Rookwood, affirming their undiminished confidence in Bulkeley of the Sixth.
 "Look here, Neville," chimed in Lovell warmly. "This is jolly important, and we want to see Bulkeley at once. Bulkeley, we want—"
 "What on earth's the row?" called out Bulkeley.
 "Some blessed fags—" began Neville. "Cut off!"
 "It's important, Bulkeley; it may mean the end of all this trouble," said Jimmy Silver. "Let us come in!"
 "What on earth do you mean?" exclaimed Bulkeley. "Let the young donkeys come in for a minute, Neville."
 The juniors looked at one another rather uncertainly, not over-pleased by the "young donkeys." Still, Bulkeley did not know about the loyal address yet. Doubtless he would change his opinion when he did know.
 "Come on!" said Jimmy Silver determinedly.
 And the deputation of the Lower School marched in, about nine or ten of them; eyed very grimly by the prefects in the room.
 "Well?" said Bulkeley.
 "Ahem!" Jimmy Silver cleared his throat. "The—the fact is, Bulkeley—"
 "Sharp!"
 "All right! We, members of the Lower School of Rookwood—"
 "What?"
 "We, members of the—"
 "Is this a joke, Silver?"
 "Nunno!"
 "What the thump are you driving at, then?"
 "We, members of the Lower School!" gasped Jimmy Silver, a little confused. He found his task harder than he had supposed. "We have come—that is to say, we—we are hereby—I mean here, to assure—I mean—Ahem!"
 "Turn them out!" said Knowles impatiently.
 "Only some fag cheek," said Carthew. "For goodness' sake kick them out, and let's get to business!"
 "You ring off, Carthew!" said Jimmy Silver, with spirit. "This address isn't for you, anyway. The Lower School haven't any confidence in you, I can tell you."
 "What!"
 "If you have anything to say, Silver, say it and cut!" exclaimed Bulkeley. "You should not have come here, anyway."
 "We, members of the Lower School—"
 "Shut up, Lovell!"
 "Go it, Jimmy!"
 Jimmy Silver found his voice, and resumed, amid blank stares from the prefects of the Sixth.
 "We, members of the Lower School of Rookwood, have brought a loyal address for presentation—"
 "Ye gods!" murmured Neville.
 "To Bulkeley, and we hereby have the pleasure," said Jimmy, with dignity, "of handing it to you, Bulkeley."
 Bulkeley, with a look of great astonishment, took the inky sheets held out to him.
 "What on earth's this?" he asked.
 "An address, Bulkeley."
 "A loyal address."
 "Backing you up, you know."
 "Hear, hear!"
 Some of the Sixth-Formers laughed; which caused the juniors to repeat "Hear, hear!" in louder and somewhat defiant tones.
 Bulkeley stared at the loyal address. Jimmy Silver & Co. watched him, to see the pleased smile dawn upon his face.

But it did not dawn. To their surprise and consternation, Bulkeley frowned instead.
 "You thundering young idiots!" he ejaculated.
 "Wha-a-a!"
 "What does this utter rot mean?" exclaimed Bulkeley. "You cheeky little sweeps—"
 "Eh?"
 "Take this rubbish away at once," said Bulkeley sternly. "If I were a prefect now I should cane you for alluding to the Head disrespectfully. By Jove, I've a good mind to cane you, anyway."
 "Oh!"
 "I've got my ashplant here," remarked Carthew.
 "Get out, you ridiculous young duffers," said Bulkeley, "and don't play the goat again! Put that rubbish into the fire! Off with you!"
 And Neville bundled the astounded and amazed deputation of the Lower School of Rookwood out of the room, and closed the door on them.
 In the passage, Jimmy Silver blinked at the loyal address which Bulkeley had thrust back into his hands, and then blinked at his comrades. His complexion was very rich at that moment.
 "Oh, my hat!" murmured Lovell.
 "B-b-b-bulkeley didn't seem pleased, after all," murmured Newcome.
 "He, he, he!" came from Tubby Muffin. "Oh, crikey! He, he, he! Yaroooooo!"
 Tubby Muffin's acclamation changed into a howl of anguish as Jimmy Silver's boot came in contact with his podgy person.
 The juniors looked at Jimmy Silver as he stood, with a crimson face and the hapless loyal address in his hands, wishing that the floor would open and swallow him up. They walked away grinning, only the faithful Co. remaining with their leader.
 "Seems a bit of a frost!" murmured Raby comfortingly.
 "Rotten idea, if you ask me," said Lovell. "It was the way the address was drawn up, of course. If we'd put in that bit about assuring Bulkeley—"
 "Fatehead!"
 "And worded it a bit more impressively—such words as heretofore," said Lovell warmly. "In that case, I think—"
 "Oh, you can't think!" grunted Jimmy Silver.
 "Look here, you ass—"
 Jimmy Silver drew a deep breath.
 "I'll put this rot in the study fire," he said. "It will be useful to boil the kettle, anyhow. And if you fellows ever get up a loyal address again, don't ask me to have a hand in it. I simply won't!"
 And Jimmy Silver walked away, leaving his chums staring after him blankly. They did not speak; they couldn't. Jimmy had taken their breath away.
The 7th Chapter. Resignations Accepted!
 Bulkeley of the Sixth remained alone in the prefects' room. The Rookwood prefects had heard what he had to say, but Bulkeley's counsels of peace had not been heeded. And the prefects had gone in a body to the Head's study to remonstrate.
 Bulkeley could guess the kind of reception they would get, and he was very uneasy. He knew that the Head would not change his determination; and a struggle, once entered upon, would have to be proceeded with.
 There were steps outside at last, and Neville came into the room, followed by the rest of the prefects.
 All of them looked red and angry, excepting Carthew, whose face wore a lurking smile.
 "Well?" said Bulkeley.
 Neville knitted his brows.
 "He won't listen to a word!" he exclaimed. "The moment we mentioned you he told us to be silent."
 "He won't hear of reinstating you, old chap, or even of listening to a word on the subject," said Lonsdale. "He said

his mind was made up, and told us to go."
 Bulkeley nodded.
 "I expected it," he said quietly. "Now, you fellows, I want you to let the matter drop. I was to blame, though not so much as the Head seems to think; and I don't want trouble on my account."
 "It's not wholly on your account," said Knowles. "It's the position of the Sixth in the school. We've got to keep up that position."
 "Yes, but—"
 "We've been treated like a gang of cheeky fags!" burst out Neville. "It won't do!"
 "We're not standing it!"
 "The Head can't cut up prefects and push them over like skittles at his own will and pleasure, without a reason," said Jones major. "The case of one is the case of all. When the Head had a dispute with the masters the staff went on strike and brought him to reason. I'd like to know how he'd run the school without prefects."
 "But—"
 "Enough said, Bulkeley! We're standing by what we've told the Head, and if he doesn't come round we shall all resign."
 A quarter of an hour later Jimmy Silver of the Fourth was called to the prefects' room. He came with a rather red face; but he soon saw that the loyal address had been quite forgotten by those august seniors. He was simply wanted as a messenger.
 "Take this note to the Head, Silver!" said Neville.
 "Yes, Neville."
 Jimmy Silver conveyed the note to Dr. Chisholm's study. He found the Head with a very stern brow. The visit of the prefects, in a body, to remonstrate had roused the firm old gentleman's ire.
 "What is it, Silver?"
 "This note, sir, for you."
 Jimmy laid it on the desk, and waited in case there should be an answer. Dr. Chisholm opened it, and his brow was thunderous as he read:
 "We, the prefects of the Sixth Form, beg to tender our resignations."
 The signatures of the whole body of prefects followed.
 Dr. Chisholm sat silent for a minute or two, the note in his hand. Jimmy Silver hardly dared to look at him. He did not know what was in the note, but he felt the atmosphere of thunder.
 The Head took up a pen at last, wrote a few words on the paper, and replaced it in the envelope.
 "Take that back, Silver."
 "Yes, sir."
 Jimmy Silver returned to the prefects' room. He found the prefects all there, in a very subdued and serious mood. Their looks were anxious, as Jimmy handed the note to Neville.
 "It's our own note back," said Neville, as he opened it.
 "Hasn't he said anything?"
 "Yes; there's something written on it. Oh! Look!"
 The Head's reply was short, if not sweet.
 "Your resignations are accepted. New prefects will be appointed."
 That was all.
 The Sixth-Formers exchanged grim looks.
 "New prefects will be appointed, will they?" muttered Lonsdale. "Not from the Sixth—the Sixth are solid with us."
 Jimmy Silver quietly left the prefects' room, leaving the seniors in hot discussion. The trouble at Rookwood was coming to a head at last.
 The next day all Rookwood knew that the prefects were on strike. The battle had been joined between the Sixth Form and the Head, and all Rookwood looked on breathlessly, wondering what the result might be.
 THE END.

THE SCAPEGRACE OF REDGLYFFE!
 A GRAND SCHOOL SERIAL.
 BY HERBERT BRITTON.

BRIEF SYNOPSIS.
 Jack Turner—the scapegrace of the family—is sent to Redclyffe School, where his brother Dick and his chums, Bob Travers and Jack Jackson, have the hard task of reforming him. After many vicissitudes, Jack begins to see the error of his ways.
 (Read on from here.)

SOUND FOR THE ISLAND!
 "Come in, Jack!"
 Jack Turner put his head round the door of Study No. 5, to find Bob Travers & Co. engaged upon the task of packing picnic-baskets.



A BATH FOR THE DANDY! Drake got one foot into the boat, but at the same moment Wilson gave the painter a hard pull, and Drake fell backwards. Splash! The dandy landed on his back in the water!

He was about to retreat into the passage when Bob Travers called out to him.
 "You're just the chap we want to see!" said Bob cheerily.
 "Dickie want to apologise for believing me to be a thief?" asked Jack, with a glance at his brother.
 "Oh, rats!" grunted Dickie, squeezing a tin of pineapple into an already overcrowded basket.
 "Let's drop that blessed subject," said Bob Travers. "Come and lend us a hand. We're going for a picnic on the island in the river."
 "Well, if that's the case, I won't stay and bother you," said Jack. "I'll go and watch the senior trial game."
 "You jolly well won't!" declared Bob firmly.
 "But—"
 "You're coming with us, fathend!" said Bob. "Aren't you keen on a picnic?"
 "Y-y-yes."
 "Well, what do you mean by talking about watching the senior trial?"
 Jack dug his hands deep into his pockets.
 "The other day," he said slowly and with emphasis, "I was accused of being a thief. Dickie believed I was guilty, and I'm—"
 "Dry up!" said Dickie, with a grunt. "That's got nothing to do with the picnic."
 "That's just where you're mistaken," said Jack. "It's got everything to do with the picnic."
 "But—" began Bob Travers.
 "You really wish me to come to the picnic?"
 "Of course."
 "Then Dickie will have to apologise for believing me to be a thief and a liar," said Jack firmly.
 "I—I—I— Oh, rot!" growled Dickie.
 "All right," said Jack, turning towards the door. "I'll go and watch the senior match."