

"THE GOLD SCORPION!" Special Long-Complete
Detective Story **INSIDE!**

The BOYS' FRIEND 2^d

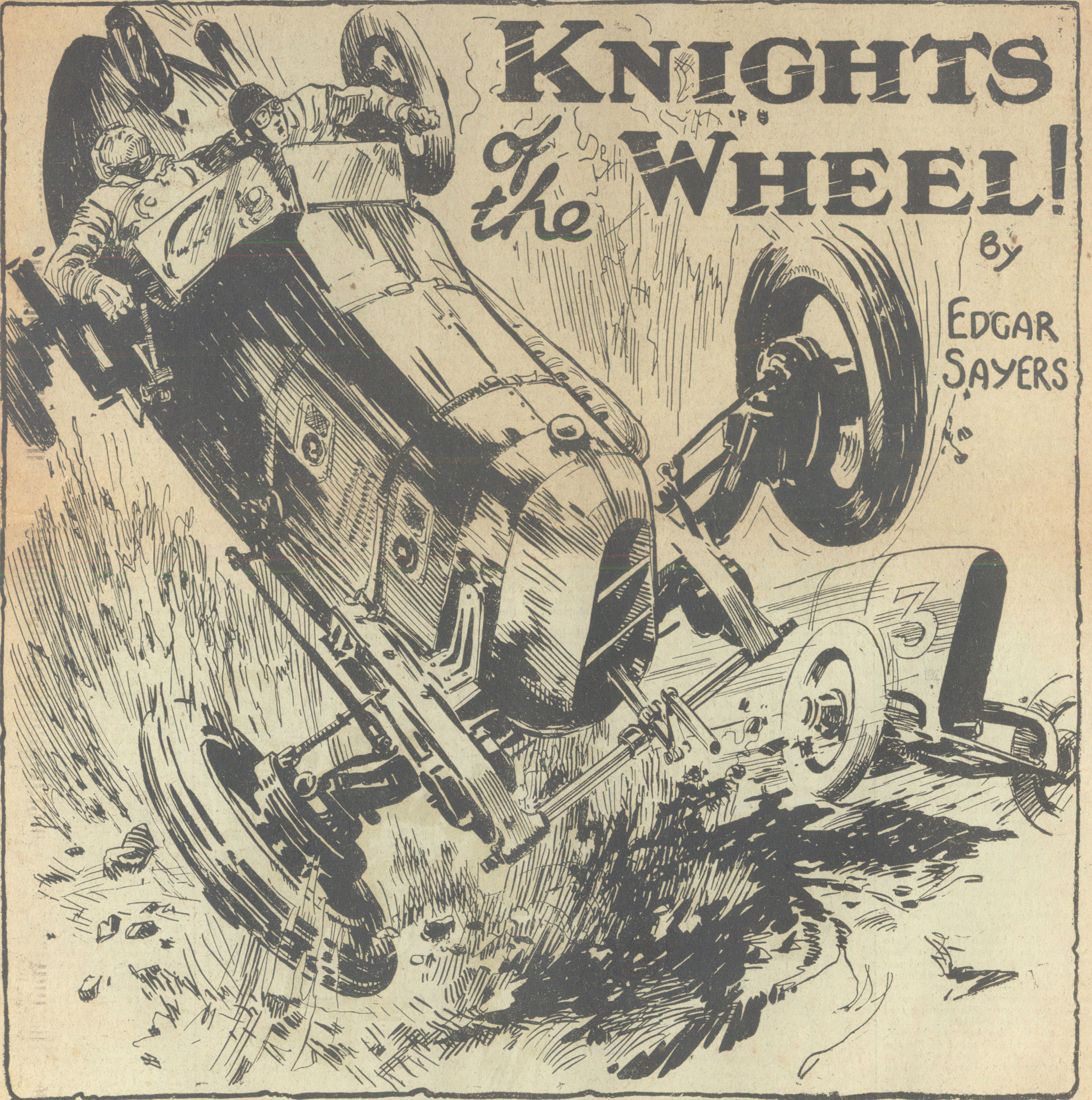
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THE BEST BOYS' PAPER IN THE WORLD!

[Week Ending August 29th, 1925.]



KNIGHTS *of the* WHEEL!

By

EDGAR
SAYERS

OVER THE BANKING!

(A thrilling incident from our magnificent motor-racing story in this issue.)

HERE'S ANOTHER TIP-TOP HOLIDAY ADVENTURE OF THE CHUMS OF
ROOKWOOD SCHOOL!



The New Passenger!

By
OWEN CONQUEST.

(Author of the tales of Rookwood appearing
in the "Popular.")

*Jimmy Silver & Co. have grave
suspicions concerning the new
guest on the Silver Cloud!*

The 1st Chapter.

A Run Ashore.

"Anything wrong, captain?" Captain Muffin smiled blandly. "Nothing," he answered. "But we've stopped!" said Arthur Edward Lovell. "Ay, ay; we've stopped," agreed Captain Muffin. "What are we stopping for?" "For an hour or two," answered Captain Muffin, as if he quite missed the point of Lovell's question. And he turned away to speak to Mr. Punter, the mate, before Lovell could explain further what he had meant.

Jimmy Silver grinned. The Silver Cloud yacht certainly had stopped. The throb of her engines was stilled.

Traffic up and down the Bristol Channel passed the Silver Cloud in either direction. The yachtsmen had a good view of Wales on the one hand, and Somersetshire on the other. And Jimmy's opinion was that they would have to entertain themselves with those views for some time to come. Fortunately, it was a bright August day, and the views were really fine. The hills of Wales and the cliffs of Somerset were worth looking at.

"Something wrong in the engine-room," remarked Raby.

"That's it!" assented Newcome. "I believe Captain Muffin picked those engines up on a scrap-heap at the same time that he bought this old tub second-hand from a washer-woman who was gettin' a new one," remarked Mornington.

"Ha, ha, ha!" "Blow the old engines!" grunted Lovell. "We were going to have a look at Cardiff to-day."

"We sha'n't see Cardiff to-day," said Jimmy Silver. "Never mind, it will keep till to-morrow."

"Br-r-r-r!" grunted Lovell.

During that summer cruise of the Silver Cloud there had been some little trouble with the engines occasionally. Captain Muffin's "paying guests" had noticed it. Indeed, they had heard the engineer express his candid opinion of the machinery. Still, as Jimmy Silver cheerfully remarked, what did it matter, so long as the yacht did not blow up? They were spending the summer vacation at sea, and they were in no hurry to get anywhere in particular.

They were enjoying themselves, and that was the chief thing. Perhaps things would have been a little more agreeable had not Ponsonby and Gadsby and Monson, of Highcliffe School, been included in the list of Captain Muffin's paying guests. And the chums of the Fourth could have spared the company of Smythe & Co., of the Rookwood Shell, without missing it. Still, as Adolphus Smythe put it, in a dashed boarding-house you couldn't choose your own dashed company, but you could keep cheeky blighters at arm's length. So Smythe & Co. kept the Fourth-Formers at arm's length, and the Fourth-Formers kept Smythe & Co. at arm's length. On board the Silver Cloud, as a matter of fact, there was little more than arm's length to keep anybody at.

The Silver Cloud was roomy, for a yacht. But undoubtedly her passengers were rather closely packed. There were twelve of them, counting

Tubby Muffin as only one, though, from his width, he might justly have been counted as two. Ponsonby & Co. grumbled a good deal, so did Smythe & Co., but Jimmy Silver and his chums kept smiling. Captain Muffin regarded the whole party, satisfied or dissatisfied, with cheery, fat good-humour. He was running the Silver Cloud as a business proposition, at four guineas a week per head, and the more heads he could count the more guineas he could count. Probably his only regret was that he could not pack them in like sardines in a tin. There was still one more passenger to come, who was to be picked up at Cardiff, and even the easy-going Jimmy Silver hoped that the skipper would "chuck it" at that.

Jimmy Silver leaned on the rail and looked shoreward. Clear in the sunny air the great hills of Wales loomed against the blue sky in the distance. At the nearest point of the shore Jimmy could see a shelving beach running back to great cliffs, and the roofs of a clustering village. It was a beautiful and rather solitary spot on the Glamorgan shore.

"What about a run ashore?" said Jimmy. "We're going to be hung up here for some time, and the skipper will let us have a boat."

"Good egg!" agreed Lovell. "Jolly good idea," said Mornington. "We can get away from Smythe's face and Pon's swank for a bit."

Adolphus Smythe and Ponsonby of Highcliffe were on deck, quite near enough to hear Morny's remark, for which Valentine Mornington did not care in the very least.

Smythe frowned and Ponsonby scowled.

"I'll ask the skipper," said Jimmy. And he went to look for Captain Muffin.

The captain had said that the stoppage would be for an hour or two. But he told Jimmy Silver not to be away longer than three hours, which looked as if the stop might be a little longer. Very cheerfully the Fistical Four packed a bundle for a picnic ashore, and took their places in the boat which was lowered for them.

Cecil Ponsonby was talking in low tones to his friends, Gadsby and Monson. Now he came quickly to the side.

"Silver!" he called out.

"Hallo!" answered Jimmy cheerily. Jimmy had a cheery word for anybody, even a fellow whom he liked as little as he liked Cecil Ponsonby of Highcliffe.

"It's your boat, of course," said Ponsonby with unusual civility, "but will you give us a run to the shore in it?"

"Certainly!" said Jimmy. Lovell grunted. Arthur Edward disliked Ponsonby intensely, and he had already "scrapped" with the dandy of Highcliffe on board the Silver Cloud.

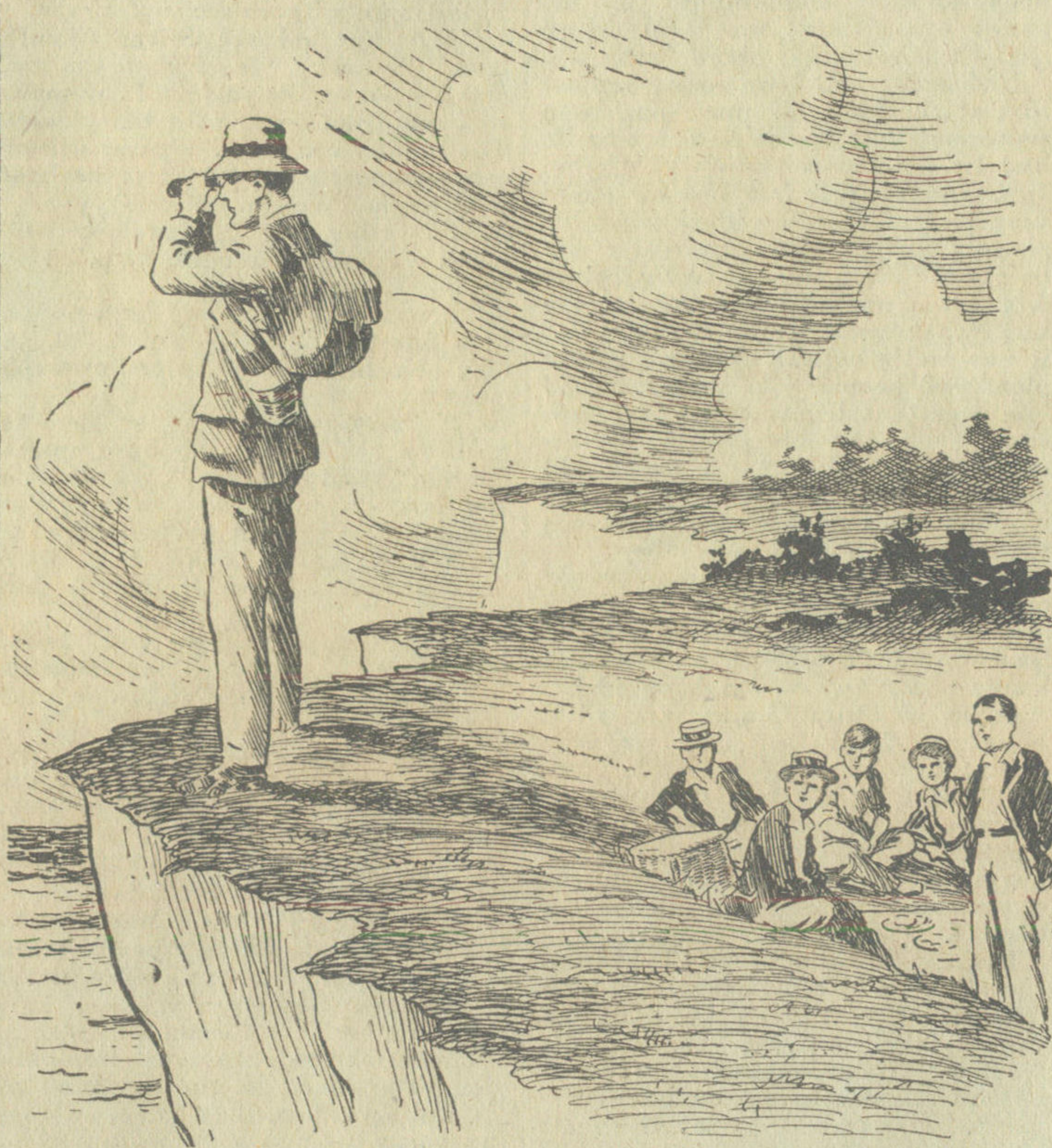
"Look here, Jimmy, we don't want those Highcliffe cads!" he muttered.

"No harm in giving them a lift ashore," answered Jimmy. "They don't want our company. Besides, it's not our boat, old man."

"You're an ass, Jimmy!" "Thanks. Jump in, you chaps." Ponsonby & Co. dropped into the

boat. The Fistical Four took the oars, and Mornington steered. Pon and Gadsby and Monson sat packed rather close as passengers.

From the yacht Smythe and Howard and Tracy eyed them rather



THE STRANGER! Passing the Rookwooders, the young man tramped on up the cliffs to the highest point, and there he stopped and took a pair of binoculars from a leather case at his side and swept the sea with them. Jimmy Silver & Co., looking at him idly, saw him focus the glasses on some object out at sea and gaze long and intently.

morosely as they departed. Smythe & Co. were chummy with the Highcliffians, and they looked on this as a desertion. But there was no room for more in the boat, even if the lofty Adolphus would have condescended to ask a favour.

"Give way!" said Jimmy cheerily, and the boat glided away towards the shelving beach.

The 2nd Chapter.

An Unexpected Meeting.

Arthur Edward Lovell was the first to jump ashore as the boat's nose ground into the sand. Naturally, he jumped a little too soon, and landed up to his knees in water, and gave a gasp and scrambled farther on in a great hurry. Then he glared back at his comrades.

"You silly asses!" he ejaculated.

"Ha, ha, ha!" "Is that how you bring a boat ashore?" demanded Lovell. "Look at my shoes! Look at my bags!"

"Blow your shoes, and bother your bags!" answered Raby. "Take hold of the painter, and make yourself useful."

The juniors scrambled out, and the boat was dragged high up on the shelving sand. Ponsonby & Co. sat down on a rock that jutted from the

sand, and Pon produced a cigarette-case. The three Highcliffe fellows lighted cigarettes, a proceeding that drew a snort from Lovell.

Jimmy Silver looked round him. The village which he had seen from the yacht was hidden by the cliffs from view now, and the shore seemed absolutely solitary.

"The boat will be all right here," said Jimmy. "We'll have a ramble, and picnic on the cliffs, and get back in good time."

"Let's get off!" grunted Lovell. "My feet are wet."

Jimmy glanced at the three Highcliffians, and hesitated.

The Rookwooders were not on good terms with the Highcliffe fellows, and on board the Silver Cloud a sort of armed truce reigned. But Jimmy was nothing if not good-natured.

"You fellows coming?" he asked. "Thanks, no," said Ponsonby.

"Going to sit there and smoke?" snorted Lovell.

"Thanks, yes."

"Just as you like, of course," said Jimmy.

"You see, you're awfully kind," said Ponsonby in his politest tone. "But we didn't exactly come ashore for a beanfeast. Thanks, all the same."

Jimmy coloured, and turned away without another word. He realised that he might have expected something caddish from Ponsonby of Highcliffe. Arthur Edward Lovell gave an angry growl.

"I told you you were an ass to give those cads a lift ashore, Jimmy," he said aggressively.

laughing. "Perhaps he will wake up when he finds the jolly old boat missin'. I wonder how he will get back to the Silver Cloud?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Gadsby and Monson.

The boat slid into the sea, and the Highcliffe fellows jumped into it and pushed off with the oars. Ponsonby sat at the lines, leaving it to his followers to row.

"We'll get along the coast about a mile," he remarked. "When time's up we'll toddle back to the yacht. I hope Captain Muffin won't be worried at hearin' that those fellows went wanderin' and lost their way, and didn't turn up in time to come back with us."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I don't suppose they'll know exactly where they left the boat, the boat bein' no longer there?" grinned Ponsonby. "They can hunt up an' down the coast for it. I believe there'll be a moon to-night, if they don't find it by dark. Quite an interestin' experience for them, what?"

And the three young rascals chuckled as they pulled away.

Meanwhile, Jimmy Silver & Co. were climbing the cliffs, quite unconscious of the trick played by the Highcliffians. Even Lovell, though he had objected to Ponsonby's presence, had only objected on general principles, as it were, and had no suspicion that Pon intended treachery.

The five juniors came out on the top of the cliffs after a long climb, and sat down to rest in the grass there. Far away on the waters of the Bristol Channel they could see the Silver Cloud riding, a tiny craft in the distance. Here and there a white or a brown sail danced on the sunny waters, and, farther out, the smoke of great steamers loomed black on the blue sky.

"Jolly here," remarked Mornington.

"Topping!" said Jimmy Silver cheerily. "I think we've earned the picnic. I'm hungry, for one."

The five juniors were all hungry; and they proceeded to do justice to the good things provided by the steward of the Silver Cloud.

Ponsonby & Co. were quite forgotten. Then they stretched themselves in the grass on the cliffs, warm and dry in the blaze of the August sun, and rested lazily and comfortably.

"Blessed if I feel inclined to move!" yawned Lovell. "After all, there's no hurry to get back. Those jolly old engines will keep Captain Muffin busy for some time."

"Well, we'd better not be late," Jimmy Silver remarked thoughtfully. "The skipper has to get on to Cardiff to pick up a passenger, you know. The chap must be waiting for him there."

"We're getting near the giddy limit with the passenger-list," said Mornington. "The Silver Cloud will be loaded down to the Plimsoll-line soon. But I'm rather curious to see that new passenger, from what the skipper told us about him."

"Lee?" said Raby. "I say, it was rather fatheaded of Captain Muffin to tell us about it, and we'd better not let Lee know about it. I dare say the chap is all right; and he couldn't help his uncle being a rotter and going to prison. He will feel rather rotten if he knows we know—what?"

"That's so," assented Jimmy Silver.

"The fact is, it's rather thick," said Mornington. "I've been thinkin' about it since the skipper mentioned it, and I remember the case in the newspapers last year. Griffin Lee was a regular rotter, and he got away with a haul of diamonds from a merchant in Hatton Garden, and though he went to prison, they never got the plunder back. Sort of gentleman cracksman, you know. There's a reward of a thousand pounds still offered for anybody finding out where the fellow hid the diamonds. They were worth a ton of money. Can't help wonderin' whether his nephew knew anything about it. Of course, he may not have. But, really, Captain Muffin ought not to have taken him on his giddy list of payin' guests on the yacht."

"Bosh!" said Lovell. "The fellow's done nothing, and I suppose he didn't bring up his uncle, did he?"

"No; but—"

"Oh, rot!" said Lovell. "I dare say the young fellow wants to see the Silver Cloud again, as he used to cruise on it with his uncle before."

(Continued overleaf.)

"The Secret of the Silver Cloud!" is next Monday's splendid long story of Jimmy Silver & Co. on holiday. It's great!



The New Passenger!

(Continued from previous page.)

way down the path over the cliffs to the beach, in company with Ulick Lee—nephew of Griffin Lee, gentleman cracksman, once the owner of the Silver Cloud, and now an occupant of one of his Majesty's prisons.

The 3rd Chapter. Painful For Pon!

Jimmy Silver & Co could not help feeling a curious interest in this new companion, who was to be their fellow-voyager on the Silver Cloud.

It would, perhaps, have been more tactful of Captain Muffin, as Raby had remarked, to tell his guests nothing of Lee and his antecedents, in the circumstances. But, doubtless, the fat captain supposed they knew all about the case of Griffin Lee, which had made rather a sensation at the time. And as Tubby Muffin knew all about the previous ownership of the Silver Cloud, it was not likely to have remained a secret.

The young man looked decent enough. Excepting for that peculiar keenness and watchfulness of his sharp eyes, there was nothing to strike the attention about him.

No charge had been made against him at the time his uncle had been sentenced; but it was known that he had lived in association with Griffin Lee, and no one but himself could have told whether he knew what his rascally uncle's character really was before the crash came. Jimmy Silver felt that it was only fair play to give him the benefit of the doubt. But it was pretty certain that there were plenty of people who would regard him with suspicious eyes; and possibly that was the cause of his curious watchful look. A man could not be a notorious convict's nephew without feeling a little conscious about it.

It was odd, too, as Jimmy could not help reflecting, that the young man had met the Rookwood party there on the Welsh cliffs. That day Captain Muffin was to have picked him up at Cardiff; and at Cardiff, of course, Ulick Lee could not have known anything about the delay of the yacht. Apparently, had the Silver Cloud gone on to Cardiff, Captain Muffin would have missed his passenger, who was tramping the coast many a long mile from the seaport.

His sighting the Silver Cloud from the cliffs could only have been pure chance. Yet, though he had evidently failed to keep his appointment with Captain Muffin at Cardiff, he was anxious to get on board the yacht. It was odd, to say the least of it.

However, it was not Jimmy Silver's business, and though it struck him as odd, he did not give much thought to it. And he soon had a more pressing matter to think about. The juniors reached the shore, but there was no sign of Ponsonby & Co., and no sign of the boat. They stared up and down the beach, puzzled and annoyed.

"Those silly asses can't have given us up, and gone off with the boat!" exclaimed Newcome.

Lovell gave an angry snort. "They've gone off with the boat, right enough!" he exclaimed. "But they haven't given us up. This is a Highcliffe trick. I told you you were a silly ass to bring Ponsonby ashore, Jimmy."

Jimmy Silver knitted his brows. The boat was gone, and the Highcliffians were gone. It was pretty clear that Pon & Co. had left the Rookwooders in the lurch.

"I suppose that's what Pon had in mind all the time," said Mornington, shrugging his shoulders. "We were rather asses not to guess that he was going to play us some dirty trick."

Ulick Lee broke in. "What's all this? Where is your boat?"

Jimmy Silver explained, rather surprised by the black look that came over Lee's face.

"Then the boat's gone!" exclaimed Lee.

"Well, it's not here, that's a cert!" said Raby. "What the thump are we going to do, Jimmy?"

"Captain Muffin will send the boat

back for us, I suppose," said Jimmy Silver. "But those rotters will get on board as late as they can, of course. We shall have to wait."

Ulick Lee muttered something under his breath. Jimmy Silver caught his words, and gave him rather a grim look.

"Swearing won't bring the boat back, Mr. Lee!" he said sharply. "And I can't see that it matters much to you, anyhow. You must have expected to miss the Silver Cloud when you left Cardiff, where Captain Muffin was going to pick you up."

"I must get on board!" snapped Lee. "I'm in a hurry!"

"Where does the hurry come in?" drawled Mornington, his eyes fixed very curiously on Ulick Lee.

Lee gave him a dark look. Obviously he was extremely annoyed and irritated by the delay, though why he should be so was rather a mystery. Certainly there seemed no reason why he should be in a greater hurry than the Rookwooders.

"Look here, we've got to get on board!" said Lovell. "There's a fishing village along the coast—we saw it from the yacht. Let's walk along and hire a boat there to take us out. It can't be more than a mile or two."

"That's not a bad idea," assented Jimmy Silver.

"I'm not going to the village!" muttered Ulick Lee.

"Why not?" asked Mornington. Lee did not answer that question. He put his binoculars to his eyes, and swept the calm sea, shining in the setting sun, with an anxious survey.

"We can find the Silver Cloud's boat," he said. "It's not on the sea, and it's not on the yacht. I can make that out from here, with the glasses. The fellows you speak of must still be ashore, and they must have the boat with them. We can find it."

"I'd rather find it, and jolly well hammer those Highcliffe cads," said Arthur Edward Lovell.

"It will be like hunting for a needle in a haystack," said Raby. "They may be a mile away—up or down the coast."

"We may as well hunt for them as wait to be fetched off by Captain Muffin," said Lovell. "Ten to one the rotters won't go back to the yacht till dark. We might get left here all night if we wait. Look here! We'll jolly well find those Highcliffe cads somehow."

"Which way shall we go?" asked Newcome, rather sarcastically. "They may have gone up or down the coast."

Lovell snorted.

"We'll go towards the village, and look for them on the way," he said. "If we don't find them, we shall get to the village, and most likely we can hire a boat there."

"Good egg!" said Mornington. "How on earth did you come to think of that, Lovell? There's sense in it."

"Look here, Morny—"

"Come on!" said Jimmy Silver.

The Rookwooders started tramping along the sands in the direction of the fishing village they had seen from the yacht. It was a toss-up, so to speak, whether Ponsonby had taken that direction or the other. They could only hope that he had taken it. If they failed to find him, there would be a fishing-boat to be hired at the village, as a last resource. Jimmy Silver glanced back as he noticed that Ulick Lee was not accompanying the party.

"Aren't you coming?" he called out.

"Oh, yes!" muttered Lee.

And he followed the Rookwooders. Mornington grinned.

"Our friend Lee doesn't seem keen on going to the village," he murmured to Jimmy Silver.

"No. I wonder why?" said Jimmy carelessly.

"Perhaps he doesn't want to be seen."

"What rot! Why shouldn't he?"

Morny laughed.

"Isn't it rather odd that he's turned up here in this queer way, and not stopped at Cardiff to be picked up, accordin' to arrangement?" he said.

"Yes; but—" Jimmy looked at Mornington. "What on earth are you driving at, Morny?"

"Nothin'. Only it looks—"

"Well?"

"Has that cheery young merchant been playin' some of his uncle's tricks in Cardiff, and had to clear?"

grinned Mornington.

Jimmy Silver started.

"Morny, what rot!"

"Well, it's odd, at least," said Mornington.

"Yes; but— Oh, rot!" said Jimmy Silver uneasily.

He glanced back at Ulick Lee, the young man was tramping on over the sands after the juniors, with a knitted brow. He was evidently intensely irritated at the delay in getting on board the Silver Cloud, and yet when he had left Cardiff he could not have had any expectation of falling in with the yachtmen in this unexpected way. He must have made up his mind, then, to miss the cruise, and his keenness now to get on board the yacht was therefore odd, at least. And there was no doubt that he disliked the idea of going into the Welsh village. Why?

Was it possible that something had happened at Cardiff to make it necessary for Lee to cut and run suddenly? Was it possible that he had reasons—such as pursuers on his track—to make him anxious to take advantage of this unforeseen chance of getting on board the yacht?

That was what had occurred to Mornington's keen mind, and the thought made Jimmy Silver feel decidedly uneasy.

But he dismissed it from his mind. In the westerly sun the juniors watched the shore with keen eyes, as they tramped on, scanning every cove and jutting rock, in the hope of sighting Ponsonby & Co. with the boat.

There was a sudden shout from Raby.

"There they are!"

"Oh, good!"

The Rookwooders broke into a run. They had taken the right direction, after all. In a little cove, where the rocks hid them from view along the shore, were Ponsonby & Co. The boat was drawn up on the sand, and the three Highcliffians were using it as a card-table. They were playing nap and smoking cigarettes; enjoying themselves in their own dingy way, and evidently thinking of anything and anybody but Jimmy Silver & Co.

The Rookwooders were quite close at hand before they sighted Ponsonby & Co. Ponsonby stared round as he heard the tramping feet on the sand.

"Those cads!" he exclaimed.

"Oh, gad!" ejaculated Monson, in dismay.

"Run the boat out quick!" shouted Ponsonby.

The playing-cards scattered unheeded on the sand. Pon & Gadsby and Monson grasped the boat and shoved it in desperate haste towards the water. Once afloat, they could have defied the Rookwooders.

"Put it on!" panted Jimmy Silver.

"Buck up!" roared Lovell.

The Rookwooders fairly flew over the sands. Pon & Co., shoving and dragging with desperate haste, floated off the boat just as Jimmy Silver and his comrades came sweeping down on them.

"Go for the cads!" gasped Raby.

"Give 'em jip!"

"Oh! Ow!" yelled Ponsonby, as Arthur Edward Lovell's hefty fist caught him under the chin. Ponsonby let go the boat, and went spinning, to collapse in the water.

Splash!

The dandy of Highcliffe sprawled in shallow water, gasping and spluttering.

"Duck them!" bawled Lovell.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I say, chuck it!" howled Gadsby, as he struggled in the grasp of the Rookwooders. "I say, it was only a lark— Yaroooh!"

Splash!

Gadsby followed his leader into the shallows.

"Now your turn, Monson!" grinned Newcome.

"In with him!" chuckled Mornington.

Monson struggled frantically.

"I—I say, we never meant to leave you behind!" he howled. "We—we were coming back for you, honest Injun!"

"Your Injun isn't very honest, old bean!" chuckled Mornington. "Stop tellin' lies, old man, and take a bath."

"I—I tell you— Ow! Ooooh!"

Splash!

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Rookwooders roared with laughter as Ponsonby & Co. crawled out of the water, gasping, panting, spluttering, and drenched and dripping.

"You—you rotten ruffians!" panted Ponsonby.

"Do you want to go in again?" demanded Edward Lovell belligerently.

Ponsonby backed away in a hurry.

Ulick Lee had already jumped into the boat and picked up an oar. The Rookwooders followed him in.

"Push off!" exclaimed Lee. "We're wasting time."

"Don't you be in such a hurry," said Mornington coolly. "You're not in command of this party, Mr. Lee. Your jolly old uncle isn't owner of the Silver Cloud, you know."

Lee gave him a quick, fierce look.

"Chuck it, Morny," said Jimmy Silver.

"We'll leave those cads ashore, same as they were going to do with us," said Arthur Edward Lovell.

"Hear, hear!"

"I—I say, you can't leave us here," panted Gadsby. "I—I say, be decent fellows, you know, and take us back to the yacht."

"We're soaking wet!" moaned Monson. "Give us a lift back, you chaps, and let's get changed. We shall catch a cold."

"Catch a cold and be blown!" retorted Lovell.

Ulick Lee was shoving the boat off shore with an oar. Mornington, with another oar jammed in the sand, kept it from moving out. Whatever might be Lee's motive for haste, Valentine Mornington did not intend to let the cracksman's nephew take command.

Gadsby and Monson trampled down to the boat with imploring looks. The lofty Pon looked on savagely, without speaking.

"Clear off, you Highcliffe cads!" exclaimed Lovell, flourishing a boat-hook.

Gadsby and Monson jumped back.

"I—I say—" spluttered Gadsby.

"Do take us back," implored Monson. "We're wet to the skin. I say, do be decent chaps, you know!"

"Go and eat coke!"

"Oh, give them a lift back," said Jimmy Silver good-naturedly. "Captain Muffin will have a lot of trouble if they're left ashore. They'll have to be fetched."

Lovell grunted.

"I've told you you're an ass, Jimmy. I tell you so again!"

"Good! And now dry up, old chap; you're wearing out your chin. Jump in, you Highcliffe rotters!"

Ponsonby & Co. crowded into the boat. With the additional passenger, the boat was rather overcrowded now, and low in the water. Fortunately, the sea was as calm as a pond. Ulick Lee handled one of the oars, and showed that he was a good oarsman, a circumstance that rather raised him in the estimation of the Rookwooders. The boat pulled out from the shore, with Ponsonby & Co. crouching in a drenched group, in the stern. The great Pon's enterprise that afternoon had not proved much of a success, after all.

It was a long pull out to the Silver Cloud, and the three drenched Highcliffians were glad enough when the yacht was reached. Smythe and Tracy and Howard stared at them when they came aboard.

"Had an accident?" asked Adolphus Smythe, with a grin. Adolphus felt very sorely his friend's desertion that afternoon, and he was not displeased to see the lofty young gentleman return looking like a drowned rat. "Fallen overboard, old bean—what?"

"You fellows look wet!" grinned Tracy.

"Takin' a swim with your clobber on—what?" inquired Howard.

Ponsonby & Co. did not reply. They brushed savagely past the Shell fellows, and tramped away below to change their clothes.

Adolphus Smythe grinned.

"You fellows been handlin' Ponsonby?" he asked.

"I think my knuckles must have tapped his chin," said Lovell. "I know he fell into the water. But these Highcliffe spoonies fall over if you touch them."

Adolphus chuckled.

"I dare say he asked for it," he said. "Pon's a bit of a swankin' cad, isn't he?"

From which it might have been deduced that Adolphus Smythe was not enjoying the society of his aristocratic friend Ponsonby on that summer cruise so much as he had anticipated.

The 4th Chapter. The New Guest.

Captain Montague Muffin stared at the newcomer who landed on the deck of the Silver Cloud with Jimmy Silver & Co. The fat skipper was evidently astonished to see him there. "Well, this beats it, Mr. Lee!" he exclaimed. "I was thinking you'd be hung up in Cardiff, wondering where the Silver Cloud was. How the dickens did you get along here?"

Lee shook hands with the captain. "The peculiar anxious watchfulness of manner which Jimmy Silver & Co.

had noticed about him on shore seemed to be gone; he was easy, polite, cheerful. It was as if the young man had left some trouble behind him in taking his feet off the shores of Wales.

Ulick Lee answered the captain's surprised question with a smile.

"The fact is, I missed the date," he said. "I went to stay with some friends along the coast, and, like an ass, timed my return to Cardiff for to-morrow instead of to-day. I was putting in a day's walk back to Cardiff, when I sighted the yacht from the cliffs, and then it came into my mind that I'd made a mistake about the date."

Captain Muffin smiled genially and unobtrusively.

"Then if we'd got into Cardiff on time we shouldn't have found you," he said. "Of course, I should have waited a bit."

"Luckily, I fell in with some of your guests," said Lee, with a nod at Jimmy Silver & Co. "They very kindly allowed me to take a passage in their boat to the yacht; so all's well that ends well."

"Lucky you knew the Silver Cloud well by sight—what?" said the skipper. "But of course you wouldn't forget the vessel, that once belonged to your uncle, and that you've sailed in many a time."

"Not many a time," smiled Ulick Lee. "I had one or two cruises in her, that is all. But I remember the old bus well, of course. I'm jolly glad to be treading her planks again, Captain Muffin. By the way, if you were only going into Cardiff to keep your appointment with me, you do a want to take the trouble now."

"Ay, ay!" assented Captain Muffin. "We've lost a good deal of time, and we'll save a little on that, Lee."

Jimmy Silver glanced at Mornington. Ulick Lee's explanation had been made in full hearing of the Rookwooders; it even came into Jimmy's mind that he wanted to hear it. Jimmy detected a slightly sarcastic smile on Morn's face.

As Lee went below with the skipper, Jimmy joined Valentine Mornington, and spoke in a low voice.

"Well, Morn?"

"Jolly clever," said Mornington. "You don't believe the chap?"

Mornington shrugged his shoulders. "He hasn't explained why he was in such a hurry to get off shore, or why he objected to being seen in a fishing village," he answered. "Still, I can't say that I actually don't believe him. That's goin' too far. But I don't think I quite trust Griffin Lee's nephew, all the same. You see how he's keepin' us from goin' on to Cardiff, where somethin' may have happened that made him clear off all of a sudden, without stopping 'to keep his appointment.'"

"But—" Jimmy wrinkled his brows in uneasy thought. "Dash it all, Morn, do you think he's a shady card like his uncle, and that he's done something in Cardiff?"

"I think it's jolly likely," answered Mornington coolly. "All the same, I believe in givin' a chap the benefit of the doubt. I don't see that it's any bizney of ours."

"Well, it's everybody's business, if that chap takes after his uncle, who is doing time for committing robberies," said Jimmy. "If there was anything substantial to go on, you ought to speak to the captain about it."

"But there isn't," said Mornington. "There's a few odd circumstances, but his explanation is plausible enough. If he's a shady card, he's clever enough to pull old Muffin's fat leg; but if the chap is goin' straight, with his uncle's juicy reputation against him, I wouldn't say a word to make things harder for him." And there was a tone of feeling in Morn's voice.

Jimmy Silver nodded assent. "Well, I believe in giving a man a chance," he said. "Anyhow, he can't do any harm on the yacht; we sha'n't miss our bobs and half-crowns, even if he follows in his uncle's footsteps."

"Ha, ha! No, that's not likely. Even if he's shady, he can't have arranged to come on the Silver Cloud for anythin' but a holiday trip—there's nothin' here to pinch, exceptin' Pon's jewellery."

Jimmy laughed. At supper that evening, Ulick Lee was the recipient of a good many glances from the other "guests" on the Silver Cloud.

The yacht was under way again now; the trouble in the engine-room, whatever it was, had been overcome, and the Silver Cloud was going strong—until the next time, as Morn put it. The yacht glided down

the estuary of the Severn under a brilliant moon.

Lee's manner was quite composed and genial. He seemed to find himself perfectly at ease on the yacht that had once belonged to his uncle. Jimmy Silver could not help wondering at it.

All the passengers of the Silver Cloud, and the seamen, too, for that matter, knew Lee's story—there was no secret about it. There could be no secret about it, in fact, for Lee bore a strong resemblance to his Uncle Griffin Lee, whose photograph had appeared in all the illustrated papers at the time of his trial and sentence.

The fact that a large packet of diamonds, stolen by Griffin Lee, had never been recovered, and that a reward of a thousand pounds was outstanding for their discovery, kept the "Griffin Lee case" somewhat alive in the public memory.

It would have been unjust to distrust or harshly judge the young man because his relative had turned out to be a scoundrel. Yet it was known that Ulick Lee had lived in association with his uncle, and it was a little difficult to believe that he had known nothing of the man's true character.

It showed a peculiar nerve on his part, at least, to take this holiday trip on the yacht that had once been his uncle's, and which Captain Muffin had bought to run as a "paying

not like Ponsonby, and only business considerations made him civil at all to that superb young gentleman. But perhaps it dawned upon Montague Muffin's fat mind that, in his keenness to rope in as many "paying guests" as possible for that businesslike cruise, he had made rather a mistake. On the other hand, Ulick Lee made himself extremely agreeable to the fat skipper, and Montague Muffin, in his rather peculiar position of half-skipper and half-boarding-house keeper, liked people who made themselves agreeable to him—which Ponsonby and Smythe certainly did not.

Anyhow, there Ulick Lee was, booked for the summer cruise in the Silver Cloud, whether Ponsonby and Smythe liked it or not. And if he found any discomfort in his situation, he showed no sign of it, as he strolled the deck after supper, in the moonlight, and smoked a cigar.

The 5th Chapter. Turned Out!

"Master Lovell!"

There was a slight hesitation in Captain Muffin's manner.

Lovell glanced at him. It was the following morning, and the Silver Cloud was gliding under a blue sky and brilliant sunshine in the Irish Sea, with the coast of Pembroke in view to the starboard. Lovell was looking away towards the

"About your room," said the skipper.

"My room?" repeated Lovell.

Arthur Edward Lovell was in possession of the only state-room on board the yacht that had a single bunk in it. With passengers packed so closely, that was an advantage much to be prized.

Lovell was restive at once.

When the Highcliffians had come on board, Ponsonby had coolly bagged Lovell's room, and a fight had been the outcome. Ponsonby had not succeeded in bagging the room; he had bagged some very prominent signs of combat instead. If the dandy of Highcliffe was trying it on again, with the captain as an ally, Arthur Edward Lovell was quite prepared to turn rusty.

Certainly he had no intention whatever of giving up his state-room, to Ponsonby or anybody else.

"Your room," said the captain. "I suppose you wouldn't mind turning out and bunking with one of your friends."

"I should!" said Lovell dryly.

"The fact is—"

"Ponsonby can go and eat coke!" said Lovell.

"I've punched him once for his cheek, and I'm ready to punch him again. So that's that!"

"I am not speaking of Ponsonby," said Captain Muffin hastily.

"Oh! Some other cheeky bounder want to bag my room?" asked Lovell aggressively. "If it's Smythe, I'm

bunking with one of your school-fellows."

"Shouldn't I just!" said Lovell warmly. "I have enough of Tubby's snoring in the dormitory at Rookwood, I can tell you."

"I dare say we can arrange for Jimmy Silver to share with Reginald, and you can take Silver's bunk."

"You mean that Jimmy can be imposed on, because he's an easy-going chap!" grunted Lovell. "I don't see it! Even if Jimmy's willing to put up with Tubby's snoring, I'm not willing to give up my room."

"I thought you were rather friendly with young Lee."

"I like the chap all right," said Lovell. "I've made it a point to be very civil to him because those Highcliffe cads turn up their cheeky noses at him on account of his uncle. But handing over my room to him is quite another matter."

Captain Muffin set his plump lips.

"I am sorry, Master Lovell—"

"Nothing to be sorry about!" interrupted Lovell acidly. "Lee can't have my room, and that's that!"

"I have told Mr. Lee he can have the room," said Captain Muffin. "I reserve the right to make or to alter arrangements on board my craft. I will order the steward to help you move your things."

Lovell's eyes blazed.

"You're going to turn me out of my room?" he almost shouted.

"Not exactly that. That is a very unpleasant way of putting it. But—"

The captain was evidently firm.

"Well, I'm not standing it!" said Lovell excitedly.

"Come, come, my boy, why make a fuss about nothing?" said the skipper soothingly. "Surely you are willing to oblige an agreeable young gentleman like Mr. Lee."

"He's jolly well not going to have my room!" roared Lovell, greatly incensed. "Like his thumping cheek to ask for it. If my room's given to somebody else I'm going ashore, and my friends will come with me."

"I shall be sorry to lose your company," said Captain Muffin politely. "But you must not forget that you and your friends have paid for the whole cruise, and you will suffer a very serious loss if you give it up."

"You'll jolly well have to shell out, Captain Muffin!"

"Come, come, my boy, business is business," said Montague Muffin. Arthur Edward Lovell trembled with anger.

"Has that cheeky bounder paid you something extra for my room?" he snapped out savagely.

"That is no business of yours, Master Lovell. I never discuss my transactions with my guests."

"It's my business if the cheeky rotter thinks he can bag my room. My father's given you a pretty fat cheque for this cruise!" said Lovell hotly. "If you like to hand it back we'll go ashore, and blow your old tub! If not, we stay on board and I keep my room!"

"I will speak to the steward now," said Captain Muffin, unmoved, and he turned away.

Lovell stared after him, and then glanced round, as a chuckle fell on his ears. Ponsonby & Co. were lounging close at hand, and evidently they had heard the conversation and were enjoying it. Smythe and Howard and Tracy were grinning across the deck.

Lovell's face was crimson.

Really, it was extremely irritating, after his kind treatment of Ulick Lee, to be treated like this in return. He had been really kind to the fellow, determined not to think the worse of him because he had an uncle who was a convict. And this was his reward! Trembling with anger, Lovell hurried across the deck to where Ulick Lee was standing smoking a cigarette and staring over the sunny waves towards the distant coast of Ireland.

"Mr. Lee!" broke out Lovell furiously.

The young man glanced at him.

"Hallo! Anything up, kid?" he asked cheerily.

"That man Muffin says you've asked him for my room, and he's going to give it to you."

Lee nodded.

"Do you think it's decent to ask a dashed boarding-house keeper to turn a fellow out of his room for you?" demanded Lovell.

"It's Captain Muffin's yacht, isn't it?" drawled Lee. "I suppose he is master of his own craft. I don't see why you can't share a room with another schoolboy."

(Continued on page 144.)



GOING FOR PONSONBY & CO.! "Put it on!" said Jimmy Silver. The Rookwooders fairly flew over the sands, Ponsonby & Co. shoving and dragging the boat with desperate haste, floated off just as Jimmy Silver & Co. came sweeping on them. "Ow! Ow!" yelled Ponsonby as Arthur Edward Lovell's fist caught him under the chin. Ponsonby let go the boat and went spinning, to collapse in the water.

guest" proposition. To be shut up at close quarters with a crowd of fellows who knew his story could hardly have been pleasant for a fellow at all sensitive.

Really, anybody might have expected Ulick Lee to take his summer holiday in some other way, or, at least, on some other craft.

So obvious was that consideration, that the thought came into Jimmy Silver's mind that Lee had, perhaps, some private reason of his own for sailing in the yacht, apart from taking a summer cruise.

Such a reason, if it existed, was rather difficult to guess at, unless it was some sentimental attachment to the vessel on which he had sailed with his uncle in the days when the "gentleman cracksman" had been reputed a respectable member of society.

Lee did not seem sensitive, at all events. He must have known that his peculiar story was in the minds of his fellow-guests, but it did not seem to concern him.

Jimmy Silver & Co. were civil enough to him; indeed, Arthur Edward Lovell was quite friendly. But Smythe and Howard and Tracy made no secret of the fact that they disapproved of him, and the Highcliffe fellows sneered almost openly. Ponsonby, indeed, had spoken quite warmly to the skipper when he discovered who his fellow-guest was; in Pon's opinion, it was "too thick."

Captain Muffin pooh-poohed the Highcliffe dandy's remarks; he did

blue, Welsh mountains when the fat skipper addressed him.

Montague Muffin gave a fat little cough.

Lovell knew that cough.

Sometimes, under the exigencies of business, Montague Muffin had to drop the skipper and become the boarding-house keeper pure and simple. If a fellow remarked that quarters were rather close, or seemed to imagine that the diet might be a little more varied, or showed too keen a sensitiveness to the rather potent scent of the engines, then there would come a steely, boarding-house keeper look into Montague Muffin's eye. As in the days when he had kept a boarding-house on shore, Montague Muffin made it a rule that in his establishment all was well; and if his guests did not think that all was well, at least they were bound to keep up an appearance of thinking that all was well.

On other occasions, Montague Muffin had to give some guest a hint that he expected this, or expected that, and then his remarks would be heralded by that fat little cough. So now Lovell knew that something was coming, and wondered whether the skipper was going to tell him that guests on board the Silver Cloud were not supposed to duck other guests when they had a run ashore.

But it was not of Ponsonby and his misadventures that the skipper was thinking.

"Heave ahead!" said Lovell,

as ready to punch Smythe as to punch Ponsonby."

"You are rather a little too much given to punching, Master Lovell. I expect order to be kept on board my yacht!"

Sniff, from Lovell. He was quite ready to treat Montague Muffin as a sea-captain, if the fat gentleman so desired. Nevertheless, there was something in the view propounded by Adolphus Smythe, that the guests of the Silver Cloud were paying for their keep, and consequently did not want Montague Muffin to "come" the sea-captain too strong. Really, the fat gentleman could not claim all the consideration due to a host and commander, while he was receiving the fees of a boarding-house keeper. Lovell did not often agree with Smythe; but he reflected now that there was something to be said for the views of Adolphus.

"The fact is, Mr. Lee wants the room," said Captain Muffin, taking the plunge, as it were.

"That chap?" exclaimed Lovell in surprise.

"Yes. Of course, it was a case of first come first served on board my yacht," said Captain Muffin. "Lee had some business in Cardiff that prevented him from joining up at the beginning of the cruise. But, as matters stand, he's sharing a room with my nephew Reginald, and, of course, it's more suitable for him to have a room to himself. You would naturally have no objection to

THE GOLD SCORPION!

(Continued from previous page.)

In a flash he had sprung up the last few steps, had grappled with his man. A terrible crash echoed through the tower as the carved figure that Hood had held came hurtling downwards, to smash deafeningly upon the flagstones below.

Outlined against the moonlight, the two men swayed together. But the strength of the one-armed man seemed utterly amazing. Twisting like a cat out of Scarlett's grasp, Hood sprang suddenly for the parapet. The next moment he had vanished from sight, and a mighty splash was heard as he took the water. The man had dived clean into the lake!

"He's got away!" gasped the old man at Jimmy's side. "Don't let him escape! After him—after him!" Scarlett was already hurrying down to them.

"Stop!" he drawled. "Don't bother to follow Hood, Jim."

"But he'll get away!" cried the bewildered youngster.

"I dare say he will!" murmured Scarlett. "But it can't be helped. Better that we let him escape than that we let Mardyke get away!"

And to Jimmy's amazement Scarlett whipped out a pair of handcuffs and snapped them on the wrists of the old manservant.

Dawn was flooding the grounds of Rook Hall as Jimmy and Scarlett sat guard in the big dining-room over their prisoner, awaiting the arrival of the local police, for whom the detective had telephoned. Upstairs, a doctor was with Hylton. He had already given them a reassuring report on the injured man.

"Yes, it was that hair I picked off your coat that told me who Mardyke was, and enabled me to collar him without any fuss," murmured the Hon. John Scarlett, glancing with that lazy, fascinating smile of his towards their prisoner. "A curious hair—white, except for the root, which was quite dark. Bleached, you see, and the fresh-grown end gave the game away. I knew that it could only have come from one of three men in this house, and that man was the white-haired old servant. Well, though a servant with white hair might well dye it dark, I never yet came across one with dark hair who wanted to turn it white."

Scarlett drew at his Egyptian cigarette. The man with the handcuffs on his wrists, sitting by the wall, scowled savagely. A consummate actor, he had played the part of an old man superbly. But now the mask was off, as it were, despite the bleached hair, Jimmy saw Mardyke as he really was—a powerful, vigorous man with a face utterly hard and ruthless.

Scarlett reached out a hand to the table. A curious object lay there—a golden scorpion, nearly six inches long, beautifully shaped, with all the craftsmanship of the East.

It had been found safe in its hiding-place beneath the ninety-ninth step in the old ruin, and Scarlett's keen eyes had not taken long to discover that the head unscrewed, revealing in its hollow interior a folded paper—a paper which had proved to be a signed confession on the part of a dead associate of Mardyke's—proof enough to put Mardyke in the dock for the murder of Sir William Secker four years ago, and so end that master-criminal's amazing career.

"Yes, I realised that Hood was not Mardyke from the first," went on Scarlett. Hood and Sark, of course, are really quite minor wrong 'uns; they were out to get the gold scorpion in order to blackmail Mardyke afterwards—little dreaming

THE NEW PASSENGER!

(Continued from page 135.)

"Well, I don't choose to, anyway." Ulick Lee shrugged his shoulders. "I thought you were a decent chap," said Lovell. "I've been decent enough to you. You've nothing to complain of."

"Nothing," assented Lee. "Yet you're getting hold of my room behind my back, in this sneaking way, because it happens to be the best room on the old tub."

Lee smiled faintly. "Aren't you making rather a fuss about a trifle?" he said. "Young Muffin is your schoolfellow at Rookwood, I am told. You're used to him in the dormitory there, I suppose."

"That's not the point!" said Lovell savagely. "If you'd come to me and asked me it would have been different. You never thought of doing that, and that shows that you're not a decent chap."

"Thanks!" said Lee, blowing out a little cloud of smoke.

"I jolly well wish we hadn't given you a lift in the boat yesterday, now!" snorted Lovell.

"It's rather late in the day to wish that, isn't it?" smiled Ulick Lee.

Lovell stared at him. The fellow was mocking him, he could see. It was only too plain that Griffin Lee's nephew did not care two straws for Arthur Edward Lovell and his opinion, good or bad. Only too plainly, Arthur Edward had wasted his kindness on this very objectionable young man.

The Rookwood junior breathed hard.

"Well, I'm not standing it!" he exclaimed. "I'll jolly well go and tell the steward to let my things alone."

"Go!" yawned Ulick Lee, and he turned his back on the excited Arthur Edward.

Jimmy Silver and Raby and Newcome had drawn near, rather surprised by what they were hearing. Lovell gave them a look, and went tramping down the companion. He came back in a few minutes with a very red face, his looks indicating that his interview with the steward had not been a success. He was breathing hard as he joined his comrades.

"Look here, what's the thumping row?" asked Mornington.

Lovell explained in tones choking with wrath. Valentine Mornington whistled.

"What the thump is the man so keen on gettin' your room for? he asked.

"It's the best room on this rotten old tub!" snapped Lovell.

"Oh, rot! He wouldn't cause all this fuss for that."

"Well, he has!" hooted Lovell. "And that fat porpoise, old Muffin, is backing him up, and the steward's moving my things! I've told him not to, and he only chortled at me and said it was the captain's orders. Chortled at me!" said Arthur Edward, almost choking.

Evidently when the steward of the Silver Cloud ventured to chortle at Lovell it was time for the summer skies to fall, in Arthur Edward's opinion. But the Co. did not grin. For once they were in full agreement with Arthur Edward Lovell, and they admitted that Arthur Edward did well to be angry.

"It's too thick!" said Jimmy Silver. "The fellow's a cad, a sheer cad! Old Muffin has been tipped to do this, and I suppose he thinks of business first. But that fellow Lee—well, he's a cad, and he's not going to have Lovell's room. We can't keep him out of it, but—"

"But what?" asked Raby.

"But we can make him jolly sorry he's bagged it," said Jimmy Silver. "We can make him so jolly sorry that he will be willing to give it up again. It's going to be a campaign, my infants. We're going to make that rank outsider tired of life till he gives up Lovell's room. What?"

"Hear, hear!" said the Co. heartily.

And the deeply injured Arthur Edward found comfort in the hearty support of his comrades. Comfort, however, was what Ulick Lee was not likely to find so long as he was an occupant of Arthur Edward's state-room. It was, as Jimmy said, a campaign—and when the Fistical Four of Rookwood went on the war-path something was bound to happen.

And something was not long in happening on board the Silver Cloud.

THE END.

(For next Monday—"The Secret of the Silver Cloud!" Another exciting adventure of Jimmy Silver & Co. on holiday. On no account must you miss it.)

IN YOUR EDITOR'S DEN.



Your Editor is always pleased to hear from his readers upon any subject. Address your letters to: Editor, "Boys' Friend," The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C. 4.

NEXT MONDAY'S BIG BILL.

First in the field for next week comes No. 1 of Mr. Arthur S. Hardy's football series with Jim Gryce in the glare of the limelight. Mr. Hardy has done jolly well to make Jim the central figure. I have every confidence that "The Rovers' Recruit" will prove a lucky scoop. Our new issue, too, will contain a yarn called "The Ship That Came Back." This speaks for itself. The Glory Hole Gang are at home once more, and so it will be each alternate Monday. Look out for a ripping Bombay Castle tale next Monday. The week after Mr. Francis Warwick will give us "The Mystery of the Air Express," featuring the Hon. John Scarlett and the versatile and ventriloquial Jimmy West. Rookwood is still holiday-making, and Owen Conquest's new story, "The Secret of the Silver Cloud," carries on in grand style. Compliments pour in about our serials. Breezy instalments of "Knights of the Wheel" and "The Three Gold Feathers" will make fine running next week. The following Monday Sidney Drew's "City of Ghosts" starts what is dead safe to be a brilliant career. Two or three more items strike me as preemptorily calling for mention. One is about the "Holiday Annual." The publishing day for it is September 1st, and the rush will be terrific. If you have not given your order for a copy, do it now. By the way, "Goalie" has a lot more to say about footer, all right to the point.

AN AUSTRALIAN BIG BROTHER.

One extra important contribution in our next number is a special article by Richard Linton, called "Big Brothers of Australia." Mr. Linton is the founder of the Big Brother Movement. You will ask me what this movement means. It is a scheme which will have a tremendous appeal to all British boys who are starting life in the big Dominion down South. It is specially intended for those fellows who are going out more or less on their own. This Big Brother

scheme provides that every youngster who goes out to Australia shall be met on arrival by a Big Brother, who will do his best to see the newcomer through his difficulties. There will be someone to go to for advice and practical help. The Big Brother will be a counsellor who knows the ropes. He will see to it that the new arrival gets among the right people and finds suitable work. But just read next Monday's splendid article. It will put you wise to a host of useful things.

AT WEMBLEY!

A reader up North says he had the luck to pass three days in London recently, and, of course, he went to Wembley. In fact, so far as I can gather from his letter, he spent the bulk of his holiday there. He tells me what he liked better than anything was the history of the British Army from the earliest times, with the representations of past days, and the figures of the heroes who fought through the Mutiny. Anyone who has seen the battle tableaux and the portraits of the great soldiers will share my correspondent's views. You can swot up more history in an hour by going through the wonderful gallery than is possible out of a book, for it all has the ring of real life.

THE QUI-VIVE MIRROR.

Tim Johnson, of Stoke-on-Trent, asks me whether it is all moonshine about the old-time worthies having mirrors fixed on their desks so that every part of the room could be seen? Yes, that's quite right. Very prudent it was, too, in times when enemies were always dropping in with daggers and poison. I saw one of these handy looking-glasses on a table at Aston Hall, Birmingham, the seat of Sir Timothy Holt. That mirror had been the property of King Charles the First, and it furnished a decided reflection on the kind of life his ill-fated Stuart Majesty had to live.

Your Editor.

THE GOLD SCORPION! (Continued from col. 1.)

that the man himself was in the house with them all the time, in disguise as a servant. We've nothing against Hood and Sark. That's why I let Sark go. Mardyke, of course, was desperately anxious to persuade us to chase Hood, in order to give him the chance to get hold of the gold scorpion himself during our absence from the tower. But he had accompanied us from the house, had helped us, because he was as keen as we were to prevent Hood from obtaining the scorpion. And he never dreamed for a moment that he ran any risk—that his disguise had been pierced. It was to throw dust in his eyes that I pretended in his presence to think that Hood was Mardyke."

Suddenly Scarlett's tone altered. "Jim, what about Darkford? Do you still feel you want to look for a job at the fair there? No need to if you'd sooner not. For, as a matter of fact, I happen to know of a job myself that's waiting for a boy-ventriloquist!"

"You know of a job?" echoed Jimmy eagerly.

The Hon. John Scarlett laughed and blew a smoke-ring.

"Yes, young feller-me-lad. It's not quite an ordinary job, but it might suit you. It consists chiefly of being a pal in tight corners to a chap I know. He's wanted an assistant for years, and you are just the sort of youngster he's been on the look-out for."

"Why, who is he?" cried Jimmy, in bewilderment.

"His name is Scarlett," murmured the millionaire-detective. "Would you cotton on to the idea of joining in with him? I think I could promise you some fun now and again. You will? Then shake, young feller-me-lad!"

THE END.

(All your old favourites of the school-ship, Bombay Castle, reappear again next Monday in "The Ship That Came Back!" Whatever you do, don't miss this splendid story! Order your copy of the Boys' Friend in advance and thus make certain of obtaining it!)

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