

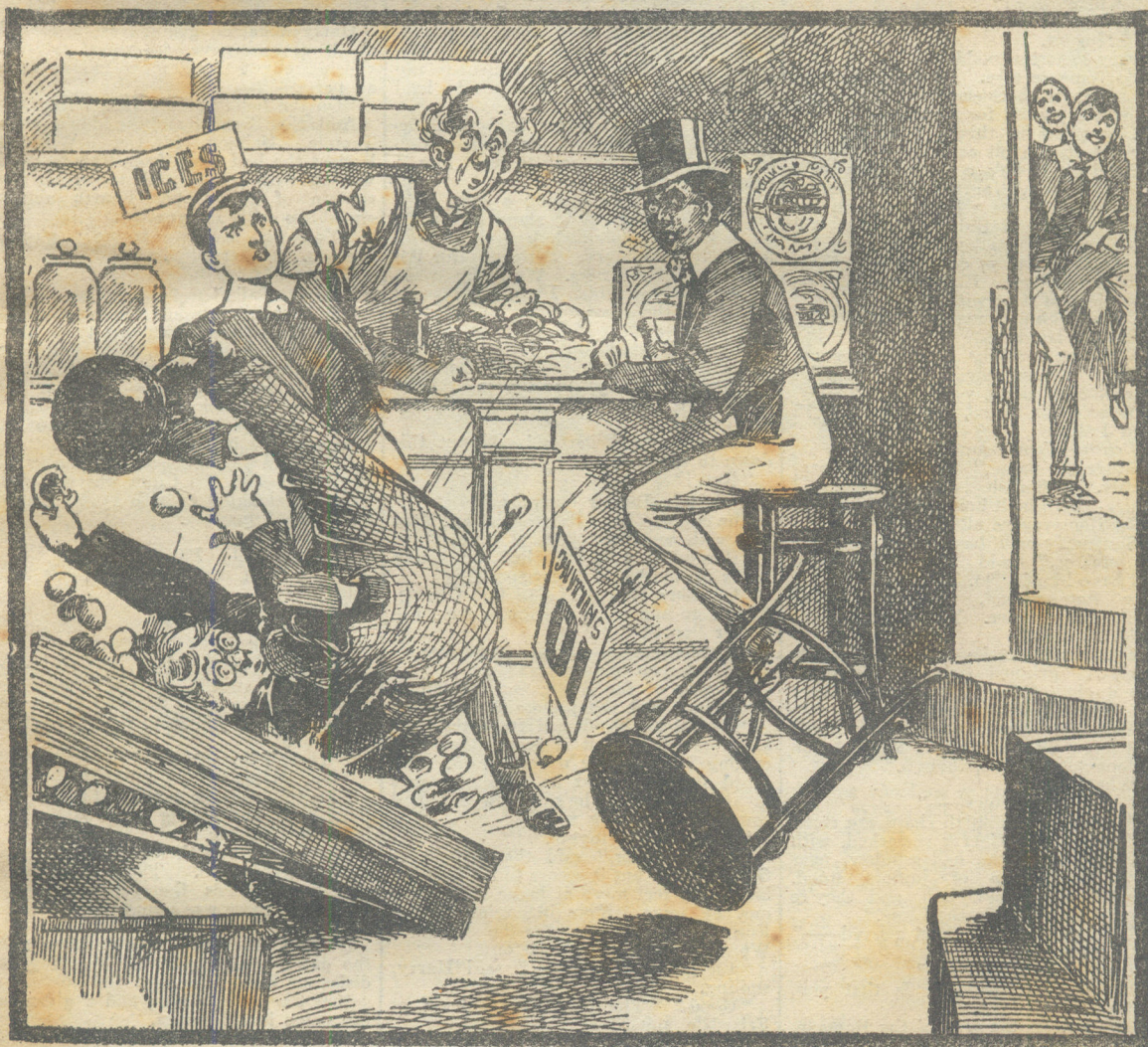
THE ARRIVAL OF TOM BROWN!

(See Inside for a Splendid Long Complete Tale, dealing with the Arrival of Tom Brown at Greyfriars.)

The Penny Popular

No.
258.

Three Complete Stories of—
HARRY WHARTON & Co.—JIMMY SILVER & Co.—TOM MERRY & Co.



BOWLING OVER BILLY BUNTER!

(A Humorous Scene from the Magnificent Long Complete Tale of Harry Wharton & Co. contained in this issue.)

A GRAND
LONG COMPLETE
STORY, DEALING
WITH THE
EARLY ADVENTURES
OF
JIMMY SILVER & CO.

THE ROOKWOOD

COOKS!

BY
OWEN
CONQUEST

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Preparing for the Strike.

"I'M not going to stand it!" said Jimmy Silver resolutely to his chums, in the end study at Rookwood School.

Lovell, Newcome, and Raby nodded sympathetically.

"The whole thing is getting too thick, and I'm not going to stand it any longer."

Jimmy Silver looked very determined as he made that statement.

And the looks of his chums showed that the matter was a serious one.

There had been discontent, not loud, but deep, in the Fourth Form at Rookwood for some days past. And it was not without reason.

The housekeeper was down with influenza. That was not what the juniors were dissatisfied about. A housekeeper, as Jimmy Silver admitted, had a right to be down with influenza if she wanted to. But the housekeeper, being on the sick-list, her place was temporarily taken by a substitute.

Now, Dr. Chisholm, the Head of Rookwood, was quite satisfied with the many recommendations of Miss Skinner. But the boys were not satisfied with the fare she provided.

What Miss Skinner knew about cooking would have filled whole cookery-books. What she knew about economical management ought to have made her fortune. But what she didn't know about boys would have overflowed libraries, and was likely to cause trouble at Rookwood.

Savings on the housekeeping bills might be gratifying in some quarters. Experimental dishes might increase Miss Skinner's knowledge of the noble art of cooking and management, and of what the human frame could stand. But fellows who found a sparing allowance in the place of plenty could not be expected to be pleased.

The Fifth and Sixth took it philosophically. It was beneath their dignity to complain. And, besides, they were better treated.

Moreover, as most of them had liberal pocket-money, they could compensate themselves for sparing meals in the Hall by expensive study feeds.

With the juniors it was different. Their pocket-money was more limited; while, on the other hand, their appetites were keener, and made bigger demands.

And, besides, as Jimmy Silver pointed out, the juniors were not so well treated as the seniors. Miss Skinner's idea seemed to be that the younger a boy was the less important he became. Which, of course, was absurd.

"Why shouldn't we go on strike, and let the grub alone?" suggested Jimmy Silver.

Lovell, Newcome, and Raby stared at him.



The frying-pan was overturned, and the hapless leg of mutton was hissing away in the midst of the embers.

"Well, what do you think of the idea?" demanded Jimmy Silver.

"Oh, ripping!" said Lovell sarcastically. "I can see myself missing meals as a protest against the diet, I don't think!"

"I think you're a howling lunatic!" added Newcome. "I get hungry enough as it is, without missing my meals entirely."

"Ass! I don't mean you to miss your meals."

"But if we cut the grub—"

"What's the matter with grubbing ourselves in the study?"

"My hat!"

"That's the wheeze!" said Jimmy Silver, with considerable satisfaction. "I reckon I know a lot about cooking—"

"Sure you reckon correctly?"

"Oh, don't be funny! I reckon I'm all there in that line. And you kids can help. We'll grub ourselves in the study, and cut meals in the Hall. Bootles won't miss us at first, perhaps; but if there's an inquiry, why, all the better. We explain in public that we cut the grub be-

cause we can't stand it. We're willing to go to the trouble and expense of providing grub and cooking it for ourselves. I don't see how the Head himself could find fault with that."

"But what about the tin?" said Lovell doubtfully. "It costs money grubbing oneself, you know!"

"That's all O.K. I've had a remittance from the pater, and it was really that that made me think of it. I've got nearly five pounds in hand, and that will see us through for a start. If we find the idea catches on we can get the whole Form to back us up, and have a whip-round for funds. Of course, we can feed a large number more cheaply than a few."

"Of course! The Form will want to know something about the cooking, though."

"That's all serene! I'm a good cook."

"Have you done much cooking?" inquired Raby.

"Well, no, I haven't had much actual practice; but I've been reading up a cookery-book, and I've got a lot of ideas on the subject, so let's get along to the

tuckshop and lay in some provisions before they close."

"We can't get all we want at the tuckshop," Lovell remarked thoughtfully. "We shall want meat for dinner to-morrow. I suppose we're dining in the study to-morrow?"

Jimmy Silver nodded.

"Yes. I'll get Bulkeley to give us a pass down to the village, and we can run down there on our bikes to do the shopping. We'll get the groceries at the school-shop, though. It will save time."

As the Fistical Four walked into the school-shop three Modern juniors, who were chatting in the doorway, looked round at them. Tommy Dodd & Co., the rival leaders of the Fourth Form at Rookwood, at once saw that something was on. The important looks of the Fistical Four were sufficient to betray that fact.

"Hallo! Some jape, I suppose?" said Tommy Dodd.

"Looks like it!" said Tommy Cook.

"My word! Listen to the orders he's giving!" exclaimed Tommy Dodd, in amazement. "Two pounds of raisins, two pounds of sultanas, two pounds of currants, two pounds of peel. I say, Silver, are you giving a two-pound feed?"

"I think I know what I'm doing!" said Jimmy Silver loftily. "We might take you merchants into the idea."

"They might think it was their own!" suggested Raby.

"Yes. Perhaps it'll be safer to leave them out."

"What's the little game?"

"Little boys shouldn't ask questions. It's not up against you. We've no time to attend to you just now," said Jimmy Silver, in a tone of superiority that got the Modern chums' backs up at once.

"You'll know some time."

"Look here—"

"Rats! Buzz off, young 'uns!"

The bill slowly ran up to more than a pound, and still the leader of the Fistical Four did not seem to be finished. Many juniors had gathered round now.

Extensive and curious grew the crowd, watching the movements of the Fistical Four, and the little school-shop was crammed; but this was rather pleasing than otherwise to the four chums.

They felt that they were taking their proper place as chiefs of the Fourth Form, and the cynosure of all eyes.

Tommy Dodd & Co. occupied an extremely back seat just now. All eyes were on the Fistical Four.

Tommy Dodd was puzzled. This could not be an ordinary study feed that the Fistical Four were planning; but, then, what was it? What was the little game?

The purchases in the tuckshop finished, Jimmy Silver planked down twenty-seven shillings, a sum that made the juniors stare. Then the new purchases were packed into a basket, and Jimmy Silver and Lovell carried it between them as they left the place. After them went a crowd of curious juniors.

"What on earth does it mean?" said Tommy Doyle, in wonder. "Are they going to have a barring-out in the end study and stand a siege?"

With an accompaniment of questions and jokes, the Fistical Four marched to their study and dumped down the basket, and slammed the door in the faces of half the Fourth Form.

The latter dispersed, excitedly discussing the matter, and wondering what on earth was in the wind.

The Fistical Four did not choose to enlighten them. Jimmy Silver looked at his watch.

"I'll get the pass from Bulkeley," he said. "He's bound to give it to me. You chaps get the jiggers down to the gates ready."

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"Right you are!"

The provisions were stacked away in the cupboard, which almost overflowed, and the juniors left the study, locking the door after them.

The pass was duly obtained, and the four Classical juniors set off for the village, where they speedily made their purchases.

The first purchase was a leg of mutton, which Jimmy Silver carried under his arm. Then the chums passed on to the greengrocer's, and ordered huge quantities of every kind of vegetable. These were to be sent.

Then they remembered that they had no cooking utensils, and proceeded to supply themselves with saucepans and pans of every description, including a roasting-jack on which to roast the mutton.

These purchases were secured to Jimmy Silver's bicycle, and the juniors set out upon the return journey.

A musical clink-clink proceeded from Jimmy's machine, with its rattling burden, and attracted some attention on the road. They reached the gates in good time before locking-up, and the clink-clink brought a curious crowd round them at once.

Tommy Dodd & Co. were not to be seen, but there were plenty of juniors to inquire what Jimmy Silver was investing his cash in old tins for.

The chums maintained a lofty silence. They wheeled their machines into the shed, and left the tins there for the present, intending to smuggle them into the end study after dark.

Jimmy Silver took the leg of mutton with him as he went up to the study. He uttered an exclamation as he came in sight of the study door.

He left it locked. It was wide open now, and light was streaming out, and a sound of laughter and merry voices.

"My hat!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver.

And with keen apprehension in their hearts, the Fistical Four hurried forward.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

A Daring Raid by the Moderns.

TOMMY DODD & CO. were in the end study, and pretty nearly half the Fourth Form seemed to be there with them. The study was a large one for the Fourth; but it wasn't built to accommodate the number of juniors who were crammed inside it now.

There hardly seemed to be breathing-room. But the juniors looked very cheerful, apparently not greatly troubled by their close quarters.

Tommy Dodd was sitting on the table, with Tommy Cook and Tommy Doyle. The chairs and stools were occupied by other juniors, and still more were sitting on the window-sill and the fender, in fact, anywhere, and all were eating.

And the things they were eating!

The Fistical Four, staring in blankly, saw that the cupboard-door was wide open, and the purchases they had made at the school shop an hour or so before were in the hands of the raiders.

All kinds of materials for cooking—raisins, sultanas, currants, lemon-peel, and so forth—the juniors were handing to one another, with the unlimited gene-

rosity of fellows who did not have to pay for them.

"Get out of this!" roared Jimmy Silver. "Let that grub alone!"

"Oh, draw it mild, old chap!"

"We came here for a feed!"

"This is Doddy's treat!"

"It isn't!" shouted the leader of the Fistical Four excitedly. "This is my grub!"

"You can settle that with Doddy!" said Lacy obstinately. "We came here for a feed, and I don't see leaving till it's finished."

"I reckon—"

"You bouncers—"

"It's all right," said Tommy Dodd.

"You can have some; and what more do you want? We should have had to wait till you came back for this feed, only I managed to get the lock open with a crowbar. I hope I haven't damaged the lock. It seemed to give a sort of crack when it gave way."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Fistical Four exchanged glances.

It was useless to lose their tempers and make a fuss about the matter, especially as it was pretty clear that the Fourth-Formers wouldn't be turned out of the study till they had finished their feed.

It was a joke that they themselves might have played upon the Modern chums had the circumstances been different; but that was very little comfort to the Fistical Four.

Jimmy Silver pushed his way into the study. Along with the other supplies for the cookery, he had laid in plenty of condiments, and he expected to find them still untouched in the cupboard. There was a grim smile on Jimmy Silver's face.

"Here, don't shove," exclaimed Towle, as Jimmy pushed against him, and sent a tin of condensed milk he had just opened streaming down his trousers.

"Look what you've done!"

"Rats!"

Jimmy groped in the cupboard. What he was looking for was a large packet of pepper, and, as he expected, it was untouched. There was nothing in that to tempt the juniors. But they were destined to have it, all the same!

Jimmy Silver opened the end of the packet, and turned from the cupboard with it in his hand.

"Hallo! What have you got there?" grinned Tommy Dodd.

"Pepper!"

"Eh?"

"Will you have some along with the tart?" asked Jimmy blandly.

"No, no! Oh! Look here—"

"I think you will!"

"Ow! I tell you— Atchooooo-o-o!"

With a sweep of the hand, Jimmy Silver scattered the pepper over the feasting juniors.

A blinding cloud of it spread all over the room.

The feasters sprang to their feet, coughing and sneezing and shouting.

"You—you rotter!" roared Tommy Dodd. "Ow-oooo-atchoo!"

"Hold on!" gasped Lacy. "I'm finished! I'll get out!"

"Stop it! I'll bunk!"

"Ow! Hold on, you ass!"

But Jimmy Silver did not hold on.

He was master of the situation now. He scattered clouds of pepper on all sides, and there was a frantic stampede to the door on the part of the coughing, sneezing juniors.

Lovell, Newcome and Raby were roaring with laughter at the door. Tommy Dodd & Co. and two or three others came in a rush for the doorway, and jammed in it, and rolled over one another. After them came the frantic juniors, stumbling

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over them, and piling over in all directions, yelling and sneezing wildly.

The noise of sneezing could be heard the length of the corridor. And over the struggling, frantic crowd Jimmy Silver was still scattering clouds of pepper.

Jam and marmalade and condensed milk and other things were mixed up with them, and as they sorted themselves out and escaped into the passage, they presented a series of shocking sights.

With all the fun taken out of them, the Modern chums and the rest of the feasters retreated, amid a storm of coughs and sneezes; and the Fistical Four stood in the study and roared with laughter. But there was still plenty of pepper in the air, and the laughs were soon changed to sneezes.

Jimmy Silver jammed the window wide open, and Raby waved a newspaper about, with the idea of fanning away the pepper. Lovell wrenched away the paper and pushed Raby into the arm-chair.

"I say!" gasped Raby. "I—"

"You ass! Let the pepper settle!"

"Snakes!" said Jimmy Silver. "This is a ghastly mess and no mistake! But I think we've taught Tommy Dodd & Co. a lesson about interfering with our culinary arrangement."

"Ha, ha! I rather think so!"

"There's a lot of the stuff left yet, too. They've not had time to scoff it all,"

broom, but Tommy Dodd held up his hand in sign of peace.

He had a swollen nose, very red from the sneezing, and Tommy Cook and Tommy Doyle both bore marks of the conflict upon their faces. But the Modern chums were friendly, all the same.

"It's pax!" said Tommy Dodd.

"Keep that lunatic quiet!"

"But, I say—"

"Rats!" said Jimmy Silver. "It's not pax if you put your faces inside this study! Travel along!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, come, get off that!" said Tommy Dodd, with perfect good humour.

"We've come to cash up."

"Cash up for what?"

"The grub. How much did we scoff?" And Tommy Dodd drew a handful of silver from his trousers' pocket. "It was a jape, of course, but we're going to cash up."

"Oh, no, you're not!" said Jimmy Silver. "We won't take it. We might have japed you in the same way. Thanks for the offer, all the same."

"Oh, just as you like," said Tommy Dodd. "But what on earth are you kids driving at? What's that thing fixed up on the mantelpiece for?"

"They're going to roast something," said Tommy Cook. "Is that a new wheeze for roasting chestnuts, Silver?"

then, and we'll let you into the scheme on equal terms. We're going to grub ourselves in the study, and cut all the meals in the Hall."

Tommy Dodd gave an expressive whistle.

"That will mean trouble, my son. We're allowed to have tea in the studies, but there would be a row if we started missing dinner."

"I don't care! If there's a row it will lead to an inquiry, and the Head wouldn't let Miss Skinner go on with her theories if he knew how it worked out in practice. Anyway, we're up against the present rules, and we're ready for a row."

"Exactly."

"I know a lot about cooking," said Tommy Dodd. "I'll help you with that mutton. Of course, you'll be glad of a little expert advice?"

"I reckon I'm expert enough," said Jimmy Silver. "You can grease the dishes for the puddings if you like, and stone the raisins. Get those tins here as quick as you can, you chaps."

Lovell, Newcome, and Raby went for the tinware. Jimmy Silver unwrapped the leg of mutton, Tommy Dodd & Co. watching him with great interest.

There was a sound of bumping in the passage. Tommy Dodd opened the door, and stared at a hirsute individual who was dragging along a heavy sack.

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said Jimmy Silver. "Let's get the place tidy and start."

And the Fistical Four set to work.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Jimmy Silver as Cook.

IT took some time to get the study in order again, but the Fistical Four were industrious. They cleared away all the litter, and packed up what was left of the provisions.

The pepper settled at last, and they left off sneezing. A huge fire was banked up in the grate, and Jimmy Silver affixed the roasting-jack to the mantelpiece.

He stepped back to admire it.

"Snakes! That looks jolly business-like!" he remarked. "We shall want a tin to catch the gravy, too. You chaps go down to the bike-shed and get up the tins. It's dark now, and you can get 'em in without being noticed."

The three were about to leave the study, when there was a kick at the door, and the Modern chums came in. They stared at the roasting-jack, and the Fistical Four stared at them.

Raby reached out for the hearth-

"Of course it isn't, ass! That's to roast a leg of mutton."

"A—a—a which?"

"A leg of mutton," said Jimmy Silver. "Look here, I don't mind letting you kids into it. I don't want you chipping in and mucking the business up all the time. We're going on strike!"

"My only hat!"

"It's the rotten grub we've had lately under Miss Skinner's rule!" explained Jimmy Silver. "We're not going to stand it!"

"Good for you!" said Tommy Dodd cordially. "We'll back you up if you've got a scheme. We don't like it any more than you do. I was famished in the class-room this afternoon. Weren't you, kids?"

"Absolutely!"

"It's simply rotten!" said Tommy Dodd, growing excited. "Miss Skinner may have boxes and trunks full of certificates, but we don't want the blessed recipes worked off on us. I know 'em—how to make three gallons of nourishing soup out of a mutton chop that the dog has finished with, and so on. Scat!"

Jimmy Silver grinned.

"Well, you chaps can back us up,

"Hallo! What's that?"

"Greengroceries for the young gentlemen, sir."

"Phew! My hat!"

"That's all right!" said Jimmy Silver, coming to the door. "Bring them in here. Shove them into the corner if you want the sack. There's a bob for you."

"Thank you kindly, sir!"

The greengrocer's man departed, and Jimmy Silver rather anxiously watched him go. Though the juniors were allowed eatables in their studies while the quantity was not specified, anything on this scale had never been attempted before.

Jimmy Silver's heart beat as he saw Bulkeley stop the greengrocer's man on the stairs and question him; but, to his relief, the Rookwood captain only laughed and walked away.

Tommy Dodd gazed at the huge heap of greengroceries in the corner of the study. Potatoes were rolling in all directions from the heap. There were enough cabbages and turnips and carrots to last the juniors for weeks, Tommy Dodd thought.

"We want enough, you know," said

Jimmy Silver. "You see, stews are awfully nourishing, and you can make ripping stews out of vegetables and a little meat. I reckon we shall have this leg of mutton hot to-morrow, and cold the next day. That's the economical way of running a house, you know, and you save waste."

"Quite so."

"You chaps can begin peeling potatoes now," said Jimmy Silver. "I am thinking of having mashed potatoes to-morrow with the mutton, and we want to get them boiled to-night ready. We sha'n't have much time after morning lessons."

"Anything to help," said Tommy Dodd obligingly. "But what are you doing with the mutton, Silver?"

"I'm hanging it up to roast."

"Better let me do it. You see—"

"Rats! You peel the potatoes."

Jimmy Silver fastened up the joint to roast. A slightly puzzled look came over his face.

"I say, you chaps, do you remember whether mutton ought to have a slow or a quick fire?" he asked.

"Quick," said Tommy Cook.

"Slow," said Tommy Dodd.

Jimmy Silver grunted.

"Lot of good asking you for advice! I dare say a medium fire is about the thing—a fire about what we've got. Hallo! What's that unearthly row?"

There was a sound of running feet in the passage, and a clatter-clatter of tins. The juniors rushed to the door. Lovell, Newcome, and Raby, laden with tin-ware, were coming along the passage at top speed, with eight or nine vengeful Fourth-Formers hot on their track.

"Stop 'em!" shrieked Lacy. "We'll give 'em pepper!"

"Collar the rotters!"

The three Classical juniors dashed breathlessly up to the door of the study. They had left a trail of clattering tins behind them, and had not brought in more than half their load.

"Collar them!" roared Towle.

"Here, quick! Help!" gasped Lovell.

They pulled him in, and Newcome and Raby, and the clanking, clinking tins. The pursuers stopped, not caring to tackle the juniors who stood in the doorway, and retreated, kicking the fallen tins before them.

The din was terrific, and in a few moments an angry voice called up the stairs.

The juniors scuttled off, and the prefect growled as he saw the tins scattered along the floor, and went to look for the youngsters. Jimmy Silver and his chums hurried out and gathered up the tins, and quickly brought them into the study. A smell of burning greeted them.

Lovell sniffed.

"What's that? Something's burning!"

"Snakes! It's the mutton! Turn it, quick!"

Jimmy Silver had hung the mutton much too close; it was not beginning to cook, but it was beginning to burn. Raby dashed toward it, and dragged it away from the fire—and dragged the jack away from the mantelpiece at the same time.

"Oh, now—"

The leg of mutton crashed down into the cinders.

"You ass!" roared Jimmy Silver.

"How could I help it?"

Jimmy Silver dragged the mutton out of the fender.

"Give me a cloth to wipe it!" he said crossly.

And he wiped off ashes and cinders, and set up the jack again, and cut off the burnt corner with his pocket-knife.

"I think that'll do. You can watch and turn it, Raby."

Jimmy Silver arranged a large flat tin on the fender to catch the drippings from the mutton. There was none as yet, but it was as well to be ready.

Tommy Dodd & Co. cheerfully peeled potatoes. Raby watched the joint, and turned it, whether it wanted it or not.

Lovell began to peel onions, a task that seemed quite a pathetic one, for it soon made him weep. Jimmy Silver continually looked at the mutton, and admonished Raby.

The Rookwood cooks were very busy—so busy that they forgot that it was long past tea-time, and that the Fistical Four, at least, had not had tea.

A curious smell began to make itself observed in the study, and Tommy Dodd looked at the mutton, and sniffed.

"Better if you'd taken my advice, Silver. I told you I knew how to cook."

"What's wrong now?" demanded the leader of the Fistical Four.

"Something's wrong with that blessed mutton, or it wouldn't be niffing like that. The fire's too quick, I expect."

"Too slow, to my mind," said Tommy Cook.

"Oh, rats!" Jimmy Silver sniffed. "There does seem to be a sort of a niff about, though. I don't reckon it comes from the mutton."

"Where does it come from, then?" grinned Tommy Dodd.

Jimmy Silver sniffed and sniffed.

"Why, it's the saucepan!" he exclaimed suddenly.

"The saucepan! Bosh!"

"It is! Lock here! Phew!"

Jimmy Silver dragged off the lid of the saucepan. A smell of burning potatoes so strong that it could almost have been out with a knife, emerged from the saucepan, and a blinding vapour that filled the study. The juniors sniffed and coughed.

"What do you call that?" exclaimed Jimmy Silver triumphantly. "Is that the giddy way you cook potatoes, Dodd?"

Tommy Dodd stared blankly at the smoking saucepan.

"The potatoes are all right!" he grunted.

"Rats! You can't cook for toffee!"

"Look here, Silver—"

"I suppose I shall have to cook the vegetables as well as the meat," said Jimmy, in a tone of resignation. "The work always falls upon the most sensible chap in a party. I've noticed that."

"You don't seem to be cooking the mutton very quickly," jeered Tommy Dodd. "The potatoes are getting done, anyway."

"Done for, you mean," said Lovell.

They made the fire bigger. The grate was not a large one, but it was necessary to have a large fire to cook the mutton, and so the coals were banked up on the hobs.

"My hat!" said Tommy Dodd. "It's warm!"

"The mutton will be done pretty soon, I think."

"What's that row in the quad?"

"Blessed if I know, or care, either!"

But Lovell went to the window. It was quite dark in the quad, but a crowd of fellows were there, staring up apparently at the sky over Rookwood College. Lovell looked upward, and saw sparks floating across the dark sky.

"Somebody letting off fireworks, I think," he said, turning back into the study.

Jimmy Silver did not listen. He was cocking his eye thoughtfully at the

mutton. In spite of the huge fire it did not seem to be getting on satisfactorily.

"Look here—"

"Why not fry it?" suggested Cook. "There's a jolly big frying-pan among these things, and fried mutton is—ripping!"

Jimmy Silver hesitated a moment, and then decided to act upon the suggestion. The pan was produced, and the mutton was placed in it.

"By Jove! It's cooking now!" exclaimed Raby.

There was no doubt about that. The leg of mutton seemed to be on the way to being reduced to dripping bodily. The frying-pan was swimming with gravy, and the parts of the joint that stuck over the edges of the pan were burning and smelling vilely.

"We shall have to let the fire down a bit!" gasped Jimmy Silver, his face streaming with perspiration.

Raby jumped up.

"I'll pour a jug of water on it!"

"Stop, you ass! Oh, great Scott!"

Jimmy Silver had reached out to stop the over-zealous Raby, and knocked the handle of the frying-pan. A flood of melted grease overflowed into the fire. There was a terrific burst of flame, and the juniors scuttled off to escape it. Then from the door they watched the fire in dismay.

The frying-pan was overturned, and the hapless leg of mutton was hissing away in the midst of the embers. Blaze was roaring up the chimney, and they heard the duller roar above that told of a chimney on fire.

There was a fresh burst of shouting from the quad, and the meaning of the crowd there dawned upon Lovell.

"My hat! It was our chimney they were watching!"

Jimmy Silver dashed forward to drag the mutton from the fire, but the heat and the spluttering drove him back.

"I reckon it's done in!"

"And so are we!" gasped Lovell.

"The chimney's afire!"

Footsteps, rapid and heavy, sounded in the passage. The door was kicked open, and Bulkeley stared in. He started back in amazement.

"Why—what the—how the—you young rascals!"

"It's—it's all right, Bulkeley!"

"All right!" roared the captain of Rookwood. "Do you call this all right?"

The chimney's on fire! Do you hear?"

"We didn't mean—"

"No, I don't suppose you did! Get out of the study at once!"

"But—"

"Get out!"

That the Rookwood cooks were hauled over the coals for that escapade we need not say.

But the Head, if he was a Tartar, was a just Tartar. He had learned enough from the stammering explanations of the juniors to know that they had cause for complaint, and no doubt he gave Miss Skinner a hint on the subject, for the next day there was a decided improvement in the House fare.

THE END.

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