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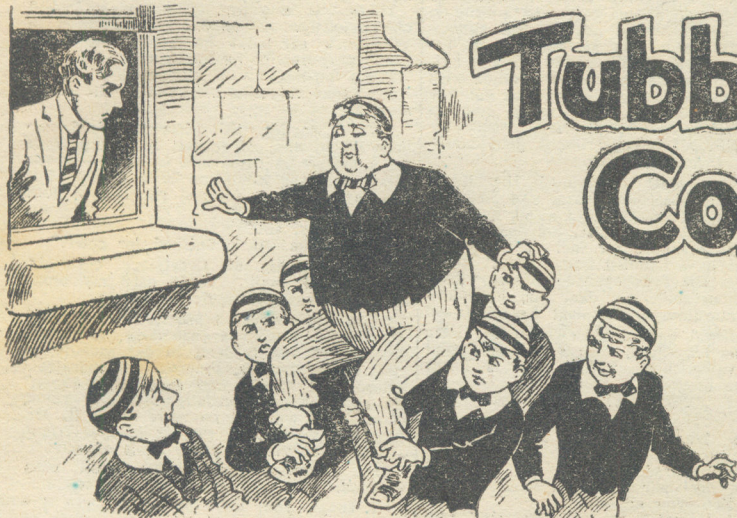
SAVED BY THE HEAD OF GREYFRIARS!

(A Dramatic episode from the long complete Tale of Harry Wharton & Co., inside.)

CAPTAIN TUBBY MUFFIN!

When Tubby, the new captain of Rookwood, exerts his authority, there's trouble for somebody—and himself!

FUN AT ROOKWOOD!



Tubby Takes Command!

There's Fun, Thrill, and Drama in this Splendid Tale of Jimmy Silver & Co., the famous Chums of Rookwood School.

BY

OWEN CONQUEST

(Author of the stories of Rookwood appearing every week in the "Boys' Friend.")

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

The New Captain of Rookwood!

CAPTAIN TUBBY!
"Ha, ha, ha!"
"Hurrah!"
There was a roar of mingled laughter and cheering in the old quadrangle at Rookwood School.

Bulkeley of the Sixth looked out of his study window, with a puzzled expression on his face.

A peculiar scene met his gaze. Nearly all the Lower School of Rookwood seemed to be in the quad, where the dusk was falling. An extraordinary procession was passing within view of Bulkeley's study window.

First came Jimmy Silver & Co.—the Fistical Four of the Fourth Form. On their shoulders they supported a fat figure—that of Tubby Muffin—and it needed all four of them to keep the fat Tubby successfully in his elevated position.

Round them, and following them, came a swarm of the Fourth, the Third, and the Shell. Classics mingled with Moderns.

Bulkeley looked on at the scene in amazement.

Why Tubby Muffin should be chaired round the quadrangle was a mystery to the former captain of Rookwood.

Tubby was distinguished for nothing but his circumference—though that, certainly, was very distinguished indeed.

Tubby's fat face was quite beatific in expression. He was enjoying himself, as he was impressed with a due sense of his own importance.

Everybody else seemed to take the matter more or less as a joke; but to Tubby Muffin it was extremely serious.

Teddy Grace was beating a tin can with a cricket-stump, by way of musical accompaniment, and Mornington added to the musical honours with a pair of saucepan lids, which served as cymbals.

Crash, crash! Bang! Jingle!

"Hurrah!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Upon my word!" murmured Bulkeley, starting from his window. "What on earth can it mean? They'd better stop that row!"

Bulkeley was about to throw open his window and call to the "processing" juniors, but he paused. He remembered that he was no longer captain of Rookwood—and no longer even a prefect. He possessed no more authority now than any other senior in the school.

So he stood looking out in silence. His study door opened, and Neville of the Sixth came in. There was a very peculiar expression on Neville's face, as Bulkeley noted, looking round at him.

"What's that row about, Neville?" asked Bulkeley, with a nod towards the shouting procession in the quad.

"The election's over," answered Neville.

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"All the the seniors stayed away from Hall, as we agreed; but I've just learned the result from Smythe of the Shell."

"Is Carthew elected?"

"No."

"Well, I'm glad of that," said Bulkeley. "Carthew isn't the kind of fellow to make a captain of Rookwood. But I understood that the election would be a walk-over for him, as no other senior would put up. What has happened?"

Neville pointed to the window.

"That's happened," he answered. "The juniors put up a candidate—Tubby Muffin of the Fourth!"

Bulkeley started.

"What utter nonsense!" he exclaimed.

"Nonsense or not, they did it, and Muffin of the Fourth has been elected captain of Rookwood—by an overwhelming majority, too," said Neville, with a grimace. "The seniors boycotted the election, and the juniors weren't likely to vote for a bully like Carthew. A few did, I think, but they didn't count. Muffin of the Fourth is captain of the school."

"My hat!"

Bulkeley turned to the window again, and stared out at the uproarious procession. The juniors were celebrating their victory, such as it was. They were making a great deal of noise—rejoicing in unaccustomed freedom, in fact. For since Bulkeley's dismissal by the Head had been followed by a "strike" of the prefects, in protest, the Lower School were no longer in dread of those great Panjandrums of the Sixth.

It was as in the old days, when there was no king in Israel, and every man did that which was right in his own eyes.

"This is simply absurd!" exclaimed Bulkeley at last. "It's turning the election, and the captaincy itself, into ridicule!"

Neville smiled.

"I fancy that's the idea," he answered. "In fact, I'm sure of it. Some of the Fourth—Jimmy Silver and his friends—are at the bottom of it. They think the Head will come round, and reinstate you, old chap, rather than have that fat little duffer as captain of the school."

Bulkeley frowned thoughtfully.

"It's ridiculous!" he said.

He opened the window as the procession came along by the windows of the Sixth, and called out to Jimmy Silver.

"Silver!"

"Halt!" sang out Jimmy.

"Hurrah!"

The procession came to rather a disordered stop. The clanging of the improvised cymbals ceased.

"Hallo, Bulkeley!"

"What does this mean?" exclaimed Bulkeley. "What are you playing the fool like this for?"

"Oh!"

Tubby Muffin blinked at Bulkeley. On the

shoulders of the Fistical Four, he was nearly on a level with the Sixth-Former at the study window. Tubby raised a podgy forefinger, and wagged it reprovingly at George Bulkeley's frowning face.

"Shut up!" he said.

"Wha-a-at?"

"Shut up!" commanded Tubby loftily.

"You're nobody!"

"Hurrah!"

"Don't cheek Bulkeley, you fat duffer!" growled Jimmy Silver.

But Tubby did not heed.

He was taking himself very seriously as captain of the school—very seriously indeed—and he intended that his importance should be recognised and acknowledged. He brooked no rivals, and he did not intend to have another "Richmond in the field," so to speak.

"You were captain of Rookwood, Bulkeley," he said, more loftily than ever. "Now I'm captain! You've got to obey my orders. We obeyed your orders, didn't we, when you were captain? I'm going to have some discipline in this school, I can tell you!"

There was a roar of laughter from the procession. Tubby, in his new state of dignity, was entertaining.

"Go it, Tubby!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I want no cheek from you, or any of the Sixth," went on Tubby. "The Sixth don't amount to much in this school now. I'm going to be fair all round, though. I shan't cane you, Bulkeley—"

"Wha-a-t!"

"Unless you ask for it. But if there's any cheek from you, I shall give you the asphalt. Bear that in mind!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Bravo, Tubby!"

"So put that in your pipe and smoke it, Bulkeley!" said Tubby Muffin. "You're nobody! You're less than nobody! And if you—Yaroooh!"

Tubby Muffin broke off, with a loud yell, as the Fistical Four let him down with a run. The new captain of Rookwood disappeared all of a sudden from his elevated position.

Bump!

"Yoooooop!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Tubby the Great!

TUBBY MUFFIN sat on the cold, unsympathetic quadrangle and roared. The procession roared, too, with laughter. But Tubby Muffin was not laughing. He roared with anguish.

"Yaroooh! You silly asses! Wharrer you bumping me for? Don't you know how to treat a captain of the school? Ow, ow, ow!"

Jimmy Silver & Co. glared down at him.

The Chums of Rookwood Refuse to Recognise Carthew as Captain of the School!

"If you check Bulkeley," said Jimmy Silver, in measured tones, "we'll bump you till you burst!"

"You fat chump!" said Arthur Edward Lovell. "If you check Bulkeley—"

"We'll scalp you!" said Raby.

"We'll boil you in oil!" said Newcome impressively.

Tubby Muffin blinked up at the Fistical Four in wrath and dismay. They had been his firmest supporters at the election. But this, certainly, was not the support a captain of Rookwood had a right to expect.

It began to dawn upon Reginald Muffin that his captainship was not being taken with proper seriousness.

"Look here," he howled, in great wrath, "you cheeky rotters, who's captain of Rookwood, I'd like to know?"

"Bulkeley is—or he's going to be," answered Jimmy Silver. "You're a silly stopgap, till the Head comes round. See?"

Tubby scrambled to his feet.

"You cheeky ass!" he roared. "I'll show you whether I'm captain of Rookwood or not, Bulkeley!"

Bulkeley stared at him from the window.

"Throw me out your ashplant!" commanded Tubby Muffin.

"What?"

"Your ashplant—sharp!"

"You little idiot!" was Bulkeley's reply.

"Buck up—I'm going to cane Silver!"

"Cane me!" yelled Jimmy Silver.

"Yes, rather! Captain of the school canes when he chooses, doesn't he?" demanded Tubby.

There was a yell of laughter. It was pretty certain that the new captain of Rookwood would not be allowed to exercise his new authority to that extent. There was much disillusionment in store for Reginald Muffin.

Jimmy Silver chuckled.

"Never mind the ashplant," he said. "Come on, you fellows; we haven't talked to Carthew yet."

"Up with Tubby!"

Up went Reginald Muffin again to the shoulders of the Fistical Four. He was borne along to the window of Carthew's study. Mark Carthew of the Sixth was in his study, with a black brow and a heart full of rancour. At the last moment, unexpectedly, his ambition had been foiled; the election he had counted on as a walk-over had turned into an overwhelming defeat for him, and to add to the bitterness of his humiliation, he had been defeated by so absurd a rival as Muffin of the Fourth.

It was a well-deserved punishment. He had deserted the cause of Bulkeley, and abandoned the rest of the prefects in their strike—for this! He had earned the contempt due to a "blackleg," in order to see the fat and egregious Tubby elected captain of the school over his head.

And the Rookwood electors evidently meant to "rub it in." They halted under Carthew's window, and there was a roar.

"Wake up, Carthew!"

"Carthew! Carthew!"

"Yah!"

"Hurrah!"

The window did not open, but the prefect's face could be seen within, pale with anger and chagrin.

"Make him come out!" ordered Tubby Muffin. "Bust the window if he won't open it!"

"He's a prefect, you know," murmured Jones minor.

"Captain of the school has authority over all prefects," answered Tubby. "Carthew is under my orders, isn't he?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"My hat! I suppose he is," said Arthur Edward Lovell. "Captain of the school is always head prefect. Tubby is a prefect in virtue of his position as captain. That's Rookwood law."

"Jolly good law, too!" chuckled Jimmy Silver.

"Carthew," shouted Tubby Muffin truculently, "open that window at once! I order you!"

The window flew open, though probably not in obedience to Tubby Muffin's order. Mark Carthew's furious face looked out.

"You young scoundrels—" he began.

"Silence!" commanded Tubby.

The prefect did not heed.

"Stop this at once!" he exclaimed. "Go indoors immediately. You will take five hundred lines all round!"

"Yah!"

"Blackleg!"

"That's it!" exclaimed Tubby Muffin. "Give it him! You're a bully, Carthew! You're a cad! I'm going to keep you in order!"

"Bravo, Tubby!"

Carthew's face was a picture.

"Muffin," he gasped, "come to my study at once! I'll give you the licking of your life!"

Tubby Muffin indulged in a scornful sneer. "I don't think!" he retorted. "It's you that's going to have the licking, Carthew. I'm down on bullies. Remember that I'm your superior now, now I'm captain of the school!"

"You fat fool!" roared Carthew.

"You forget yourself," said Tubby, with dignity. "That isn't the way to speak to the captain of Rookwood, Carthew."

"Come to my study!" roared Carthew, brandishing a cane at the fat Classical, who was fortunately beyond his reach.

"Rats! You come to my study!" answered Tubby. "In fact, I order you to. Come to my study in half an hour, Carthew. Don't fail!"

"You—you—you—" spluttered Carthew.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Come on," said Raby. "Tubby's rather a weight. Good-bye, Carthew—and don't forget to come up to the Fourth Form passage to be caned!"

And the procession marched on, leaving Carthew gesticulating at his window in a state of fury that was quite Hunnish.

The procession "processed" to the School House doorway, where it came to a halt at last. The celebration was over, and Tubby's weight was telling on the Fistical Four, sturdy as they were.

Mr. Bootles, the master of the Fourth, looked out as Tubby Muffin was set down on the steps.

"Boys," he exclaimed, "this—this disturbance—you must really—"

"Only celebrating the election, sir," said Jimmy Silver. "There's always a bit of noise on election nights, you know, sir."

"Yes, yes; but—but—" Mr. Bootles blinked at Tubby Muffin over his glasses.

"Quite so; but—but—"

"It's all right, sir," said Tubby Muffin cheerfully. "I can keep the juniors in order, Mr. Bootles."

"What—what?"

"Go to your studies!" said Tubby, with a wave of his fat hand. "Order, please! Leave them to me, Mr. Bootles!"

"Bless my soul!" murmured Mr. Bootles. Captain Tubby Muffin was a little too much for him. He beat a retreat, and the crowd of juniors dispersed in a more or less orderly manner.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Cancelled!

PREPOSTEROUS!

Thus Dr. Chisholm.

The Head of Rookwood was frowning, evidently very much annoyed.

Mild little Mr. Bootles blinked at him, and said nothing.

"Preposterous!" repeated the Head.

He stared at Mr. Bootles almost aggressively, as if daring him to deny that it was preposterous. But Mr. Bootles didn't! He knew better than to argue with the somewhat autocratic old gentleman.

He had reported the result of the captain's election to the Head, and he could not help wondering how Dr. Chisholm would take it. It was pretty clear that the Head was not taking it in good part.

"Preposterous!" said the Head for the third time, as the Fourth Form master did not speak. "Unheard of! A junior captain of Rookwood—absurd! Such a thing has never been heard of!"

"Certainly not—before now!" assented Mr. Bootles. "There is, however, no rule laid down upon the subject, I believe."

"Such a rule was not necessary; it is a matter of common-sense," said the Head tartly. "Only a Sixth Form prefect can be captain of the school. This election is an absurdity."

Mr. Bootles nodded assent to that. He was quite of the Head's opinion there, but he did not quite see what was to be done. The election was "au fait accompli," and it was rather too late to make new rules on the subject.

"I fully understood that Carthew would be elected," continued the Head. "He has my approval. He is the only one of the prefects who had not set himself in opposition to my authority. He has a sense of duty."

Mr. Bootles coughed.

"He does not seem popular in the school, sir," he murmured.

"A sense of duty does not always make a prefect popular, Mr. Bootles. Carthew, at least, knows what is due to his headmaster. This election is an absurdity, and the result must be cancelled. I shall take steps to that end immediately. Pray request Carthew to come to my study, Mr. Bootles."

"Certainly, sir!"

Mr. Bootles withdrew, perhaps glad to leave the presence of the angry old gentleman.

Dr. Chisholm was pacing his study with a knitted brow when Carthew of the Sixth tapped discreetly at the door, and entered.

The Head's brow cleared a little as he glanced at the prefect—the only prefect, at present, that Rookwood School could boast.

"This is an extraordinary occurrence, Carthew," said the Head.

"I agree with you, sir," said Carthew, in the meek, ingratiating tone he always adopted towards the Head. "I was very devious, sir, of carrying out your wishes. I did my best—"

"I am sure of that, Carthew. You have my complete confidence. I shall not forget that you returned to your duty at once, when the other prefects took up their present inexcusable attitude."

"Thank you, sir!" said Carthew meekly.

He was well aware that his conduct was looked upon in a very different light by the rest of Rookwood. Most of the Rookwood fellows knew exactly how much "duty" had been Carthew's motive in deserting the prefects. But it was the Head whom Carthew desired to propitiate.

"This election will be cancelled!" said Dr. Chisholm. "I shall not dream for one moment of allowing such a result to stand."

"I suppose so, sir."

"A new election will be ordered, and you will stand again, Carthew."

"Certainly, sir!"

"The result will, no doubt, be different; if not, I shall take still more drastic steps!" said the Head. "I assure you of my continued support as a reward for your faithfulness to duty."

"You are very kind, sir."

"I have written this notice," added the Head. "Kindly post it on the board for me, Carthew."

"Certainly."

The prefect left the study with the paper in his hand. He read it in the corridor, and smiled.

A few minutes later it was pinned on the notice-board for all Rookwood to read and comment upon.

A numerous crowd gathered before the board. In the crowd was the new captain of Rookwood, and he snorted with great indignation over the Head's paper.

"Rot!" said Tubby Muffin emphatically. "Check! That's what it is—check!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I've a jolly good mind to go to the Head and tell him so!"

"Do!" chuckled Smythe of the Shell. "We'll come and carry you away afterwards—what's left of you."

Tubby Muffin snorted again, but he decided not to go to the Head. He was captain of Rookwood, certainly; but the Head was rather too terrible an old gentleman for Tubby Muffin to face at close quarters. Baring the lion in his den was not in Reginald Muffin's line.

There was much comment on the Head's notice, which had been rather expected by the juniors. It was pretty certain, anyway, that the Head would not have allowed the election to stand without interference.

The notice stated briefly that the late election was cancelled, and that a new election would be held on Monday to fill the vacant post of captain of the school.

"Isn't a vacant post at all, you know," said Tubby Muffin, in a greatly aggrieved tone. "The Head's right of the mark."

"Can the Head cancel an election?" inquired Putty of the Fourth. "Isn't he getting a bit over the limit?"

Jimmy Silver rubbed his nose thoughtfully. "Blessed if I know!" he answered. "I suppose the headmaster has power to cancel an election. But it comes to the same thing."

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We have the power to elect the same candidate over again, if we choose."

"And we shall jolly well choose!" said Conroy.

"Yes, rather!"

"Tubby's the man!" grinned Lovell.

"Muffin for the money!"

"Hear, hear!"

Tubby Muffin beamed.

"That's right!" he exclaimed. "You fellows stand by me, and I'll stand by you."

The Head can't cancel an election a second time. We won't take any notice of him if he does!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And I'll tell you what," continued Tubby.

"After Monday's election even the Head can't make out that I'm not the captain of the school. And the first thing I'll do will be to cane Carthew before all the chaps."

"Bravo!"

"Well back you up, Tubby!"

"Of course, I shall expect to be backed up!" said Muffin, with dignity. "Loyal support is what I want!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"There was no doubt that Reginald Muffin would get plenty of loyal support. As Jimmy Silver put it, Rookwood would keep on giving the Head Tubby Muffin till the Head gave them Bulkeley. And Jimmy added that they could keep up that game quite as long as the Head could.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Tubby Takes Command!

MONDAY was a day of some excitement at Rookwood School.

Rookwood was still without prefects—with the exception of Mark Carthew, who was careful not to over-exercise his solitary authority. Carthew's aim was to conciliate the fellows as much as possible till the election was over. He restrained his bullying propensities, and he was remarkably civil even to fags in the Second Form.

Carthew hoped to catch votes—and he hoped, too, that the Head's displeasure would prevent a ridiculous candidate like Muffin from being put forward again.

But it killed not, as a novelist would say. Carthew was too well known for his "soft sawder" to have any effect on the fags; and, besides, the "lark" of electing the egregious Tubby appealed to their sense of humour. And the fact that they were, in a perfectly constitutional way, "dishing the Head" appealed still more to the juniors.

The "strike" of the prefects still continued, and, though the Head gave no sign, the other masters were growing restive.

A great deal more work fell upon them in consequence of the prefects' strike. A prefect was not merely an ornament, by any means. They had their uses and their duties—and now their duties fell on the masters.

Mr. Bootles had to see lights out for his Form, and to attend to many other matters that had usually been taken off his hands by a prefect. The supervision of the games, too, was a rather serious matter, and certainly little Mr. Bootles was not the man to take the Fourth Form in charge at cricket practice.

And the masters could not be everywhere at once. Sliding down the banisters, shrill whistling in the passages, "rows" in the studies and the Common-room, became frequent and painful and free.

Probably all the staff would have been very glad if the Head had decided to close the matter by reinstating Bulkeley, and thus conciliating his supporters. But the Head did not waver. The fact that the whole school was against his decision only rendered him the more determined; and he was, to do him justice, far from suspecting that his firmness partook of the nature of obstinacy.

He would have been surprised, as well as shocked, if he had known that the Rookwooders regarded him not so much as a firm man as a maulish one.

After lessons on Monday the new election took place in Big Hall.

Rookwood came to it in a swarm.

The seniors stood out of the proceedings, as before. The Sixth were solid behind Bulkeley, and the Fifth followed the Sixth. In fact, the seniors regarded the proceedings not only with disdain, but with a certain grim satisfaction. Their captain was selected by the Head—and the Head could

make the best of Tubby Muffin—and they charitably hoped that he would like it!

Carthew's hopes of a majority had been faint, and they were soon dissipated. The election was a still more overwhelming triumph for Reginald Muffin of the Fourth. His majority was well over ten to one, and could have been larger if more votes had been wanted.

Loud laughter and cheers greeted the announcement of the result.

Tubby Muffin beamed on his majority.

He had received the loyal support he desired, and he was once more captain of Rookwood, in spite of the cancellation of the first election.

Tubby seemed two or three inches taller as he rolled out of Hall, in the midst of cheering.

He grinned at Carthew, who was striding away with a savage brow.

"Beaten you again, old top!" he remarked cheerily.

Carthew gave him a furious look.

"Don't scowl at me," continued Tubby.

"None of your cheek, Carthew! For two pins, I'd— Yoop!"

Tubby Muffin went spinning as the enraged prefect smote him, and he rolled along the floor with a loud yell.

Carthew strode away.

"Yow-ow-ow!" roared Tubby Muffin, sitting up dazedly. "Yow-ow! I'll thrash you! I'll cane you! Yoop! Gimme a hand up, somebody! Wharrer you all cackling at? Ow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Putty of the Fourth helped Tubby Muffin to his feet, and the fat Classical clung to him, gasping.

"Where's that rotter?" he panted.

"Mizzled!" answered Jimmy Silver, laughing.

Tubby raised a fat hand commandingly.

"Silver!"

"Ha, ha! Yes, my lord!"

"Go and tell Carthew to come to my study at once!" ordered Tubby Muffin. "I'm going to put the stopper on his cheek."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And bring me a cane!" added Tubby.

"You can get Bootles' cane from the Form-room. I authorise you to do so."

"You authorise— Oh, my hat!"

"Do as I tell you, Silver! Tell Carthew I expect him in my study in five minutes. We'll see who's captain of this school, I can tell you."

And Tubby Muffin gasped away to his study, leaving the juniors yelling.

"All the same, Tubby's within his rights," said Mornington. "We won't let him cheek Bulkeley; but Carthew's a bully, and he's fair game!"

"Yes, rather!"

"I'll give him our giddy captain's message, anyway!" chuckled Jimmy Silver.

"Go it!"

Captain Tubby Muffin's authority depended on what support he might get; and the juniors were quite prepared to support him against the unpopular bully of the Sixth. Calling Carthew of the Sixth up for judgment seemed an excellent idea to the Fourth.

Jimmy Silver followed Carthew at once to his study. He found the Sixth-Former with a black brow. Carthew fixed a savage look on him.

"Does the Head—" he began. Carthew was expecting a summons to the Head.

"I haven't come from the Head, old bean," answered Jimmy Silver. "I've an order for you from the captain of the school."

"What!" roared Carthew.

"Tubby Muffin—"

"Oh, don't be a fool!"

"Not at all," answered Jimmy Silver blandly. "I leave that to you, Carthew; it's your stunt. Tubby Muffin requires you in his study at once!"

"You—you—"

"You're to go immediately."

Carthew clutched up a cane.

"Come here, Silver!" he rapped out.

"No jolly fear!" answered the captain of the Fourth, backing out of the study.

"I order you—as a prefect—"

"My dear man, I'm acting under orders of the captain of Rookwood," answered Jimmy coolly. "I suppose you know the captain of the school has authority over prefects?"

Carthew's reply was a rush, with the cane brandishing in the air. Jimmy Silver scudded down the passage.

"Come back!" roared Carthew, from his doorway.

"Bow-wow!"

And Jimmy Silver went cheerily up the staircase to report to the captain of Rookwood. He found Tubby Muffin in his study, with a good many other fellows—all grinning, with the exception of Tubby. The fat Classical had Mr. Bootles' cane in his hand, Lovell having obligingly fetched it from the Form-room.

"Is he coming?" demanded Muffin, as Jimmy Silver looked in.

Jimmy shook his head.

"He's refused, Tubby."

"Refused!" thundered Muffin. "Refused to obey the captain of the school!"

"Ha, ha! Yes."

"Don't cackle, Jimmy Silver! It's disrespectful!"

"Oh!"

"So he's refused to come, has he?" exclaimed Tubby, evidently greatly incensed.

"He won't obey the captain of the school! I'll show him! Carthew is going to be caned—very severely caned!"

"How are you going to do it?" asked Erroll, with a smile.

"Go and fetch him, Tubby," suggested Mornington. "As the mountain won't come to Mahomet, you know, Mahomet will have to go to the mountain."

Tubby Muffin shook his head.

Seriously as he was taking the new powers and authority as captain of the school, he had no desire to tackle Carthew of the Sixth in his study—by himself. Carthew was rather too hefty for that. Besides, as commander-in-chief, Tubby felt that there was no necessity for him to go into action, as it were. It was the duty of his loyal followers—priates, so to speak—to go into action, while he directed operations from headquarters.

"Silver, Lovell, Raby—" he rapped out.

"Adsum!" grinned the juniors.

"Newcome, Mornington, Erroll—"

"Here!"

"Conroy, Pons, Van Ryn—"

"Here we are, mighty chief!" grinned the Colonial Co. in the doorway.

Tubby raised a fat hand commandingly.

"Fetch Carthew of the Sixth here," he said.

"Oh!"

"I authorise you to use force!" said Tubby grandly. "As captain of the school, I authorise you, and will see you through. If Carthew won't come, carry him."

"Oh, my hat!"

"Get a move on!" rapped out Tubby.

"But—" began Erroll.

"Silence!"

"Wha-a-at!"

"Obey orders, and no back-chat, please!" said Tubby, frowning. "Who's captain of the school, I'd like to know? Fetch Carthew here! I command you! Go!"

And Jimmy Silver & Co.—after a grinning glance at one another—went.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Captain's Orders!

TUBBY MUFFIN sat down again with lofty content.

His followers were obeying orders, which—to Tubby's fat mind—was exactly as it should be. True, they were obeying with their tongues in their cheeks, but that did not matter—Tubby wasn't aware of that.

Jimmy Silver & Co. intended to suit themselves exactly how far they obeyed the orders of the new captain of Rookwood. But when it suited them to do so their obedience was prompt. It suited them in this case. Handling the bully of the Sixth was no trouble—it was a pleasure—and the thought of the prefect being caned by Tubby of the Fourth made them chuckle with glee. And, as captain of the school, Tubby was acting within his rights; and certainly Jimmy Silver & Co. were acting within their rights in obeying him—if they chose!

The juniors realised that a Fourth Form captain had his uses; it enabled them to deal with the Sixth in a hitherto undreamt-of manner.

True, if the other seniors interfered, there was no doubt that Tubby's followers would be driven in rout from the Sixth Form passage. But they were not likely to interfere on behalf of the "blackleg" who had

sold them. If they did not, Carthew hadn't much chance against nine sturdy juniors.

The cheery nine arrived in the Sixth Form passage, and Jimmy Silver hurled Carthew's door open. There was a whiff of tobacco-smoke in the study. Mark Carthew was consoling himself with a cigarette.

He threw it hastily into the grate as his door flew open, and started to his feet, catching up an ashplant.

"Carthew, you're wanted!" shouted Lovell. "Clear out of my study!" exclaimed the prefect angrily.

"You're wanted!"
"Captain's orders!"
"This way, Carthew!"

Carthew came that way—with a rush. Lovell yelled as he caught the ashplant with his shoulder, and Conroy roared as he captured the next "lick." But the bully of the Sixth had no time for more.

Jimmy Silver was gripping him, and Raby and Newcome got hold, and Pons and Van Ryn piled in, and Carthew was borne backwards. He went down on his carpet with a crash, the juniors sprawling over him.

"Hands off!" shrieked Carthew.

"Pile in!" yelled Jimmy Silver.

"Down him!" roared Lovell.

"Hurrah! Down him!"

Like a wave the invaders flowed over the unhappy bully of the Sixth. Carthew struggled desperately, but he could not throw them off. The odds were much too great even for the big Sixth-Former.

His arms and legs were captured, and Morny took a good grip on his back hair, while Pons and Van Ryn captured an ear each.

Carthew, still wriggling, was a prisoner; he could not do much more than wriggle with so many hands on him.

"Bring him along!" shouted Raby.

Carthew, gurgling and wriggling spasmodically, was brought up to the Fourth Form passage, and to the doorway of No. 2, where the new captain of Rookwood sat in state.

Jimmy Silver & Co. whirled him into the study and set him upon his feet, dishevelled and breathless.

"Here he is, Muffin!"

"We've brought the bounder!"

Carthew stood panting for breath, with a crimson face, and in a state of fury that was beyond words.

Tubby Muffin rose to his feet, with a lofty look, and picked up the cane.

"Carthew!" he rapped out.

"Groooh!"

"You laid hands on me, the captain of Rookwood! I'm going to cane you!"

"Grooggh!"

"I'm going to maintain discipline in this school, or know the reason why!" said Muffin. "Hold out your hand, Carthew!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Silence!" roared Tubby. "How dare you fags laugh!"

"Fags!" ejaculated Jimmy Silver. "Oh, my hat!"

"Draw it mild, fatty!"

"Do you want to be caned, too, Jones minor? You'd better be careful. Now, Carthew, hold out your hand! Sharp's the word!"

"Hold out your hand, Carthew!" roared the juniors, in great merriment.

Carthew did not hold out his hand. Having recovered his breath, he made a rush at Tubby Muffin. The new captain of Rookwood roared as the bully of the Sixth seized him.

"Yaroooh! Help! Buck up!"

The cane was snatched from Tubby's fat hand, and Carthew, grasping the fat Classical by the collar, laid it on Tubby.

Whack, whack, whack!

It was a most disrespectful way to treat the captain of the school. It was very painful, too, as Tubby's fendish yells testified. Carthew laid the cane on as if he thought he was beating a carpet.

Whack, whack, whack!

"Yoop! Help! Rescue! Yaroooh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Whack, whack!

and Tubby's frantic yells rang through the study and to the end of the passage. In those awful moments the captain of Rookwood probably repented of having sent for Carthew.

But Jimmy Silver came to the rescue, and the other fellows followed his lead. Carthew was seized and dragged off, some of the juniors getting lashes of the cane in the process.

But the bully of the Sixth was downed again, in spite of his furious resistance. And the juniors did not let him go after that. He was rather too dangerous to be let loose.

Carthew disappeared under seven or eight juniors on the floor, who pinned him down by sheer weight. His nose was grinding into the carpet, as Putty of the Fourth sat on the back of his head. A wild and inarticulate gurgling came from the unhappy senior.

"Yow-ow-ow-ow!" roared Tubby Muffin. "I'm hurt! You rotters, why didn't you draggin' off? Yow-ow-ow-ow! Yaroooh! I'll cane the lot of you! Oh crumbs! Ow-ow-ow-ow!"

"All serene now, Tubby——"

"Yow-ow-ow-ow!"

"Aren't you going to cane Carthew?" chuckled Lovell.

"Ow! Oh, yes, rather! Gimme the cane!"

The cane was handed to the fat junior, and he gripped it, with a vengeful gleam in his eyes. It was Tubby's turn now, and Carthew was evidently going to get it hot and strong. Certainly he had asked for it by the way he had treated the captain of the school.

"Hold him!" exclaimed Tubby. "Face down—that's it! Pin him, you know! Mind you don't let the beast gerrup! That's important!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Now, then! Count five hundred, Jimmy Silver!"

"Five hundred! Oh crumbs!"

"No; a thousand!" said the vengeful

Tubby. "I'm going to give him a thousand! Keep clear!"

Whack!

Part of Carthew was left clear for the licking, the juniors standing or sitting on the rest of him to keep him pinned to the carpet. The cane came down with all the strength of Tubby's podgy arm. It rang like a pistol-shot, and it was answered by a fearful yell from the Sixth-Former.

Whack, whack, whack!

Wild yells from Carthew answered every whack. Tubby was laying it on, not wisely but too well. The prefect struggled furiously, but quite in vain; he was too well held. Whack, whack, whack!

"How many's that, Jimmy?" gasped Tubby, pausing for breath.

"About a dozen!" gasped Jimmy. "I think that will do, Tubby!"

"Shut up!"

"Wha-a-at!"

"Don't argue with me!"

"Oh!" stammered Jimmy.

"I'm captain of Rookwood! I'm going to give him a thousand, and you're to count. Shut up!"

Whack, whack, whack!

Tubby Muffin was laying it on again. He was smarting from the cane himself, and so long as he smarted he was not likely to think that Carthew of the Sixth had had enough. It was fortunate for the hapless prefect that Tubby Muffin was not an athlete.

There was a step in the passage, and Smythe of the Shell came through the laughing crowd of juniors.

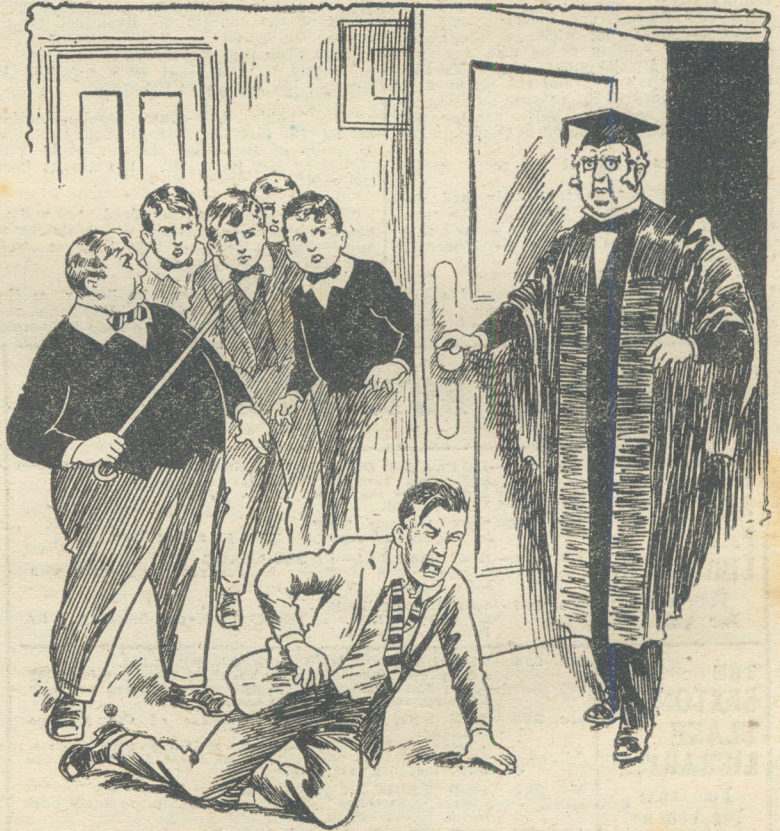
"You've got Carthew here?" he asked.

"Oh, my only aunt!"

Adolphus Smythe stared at the scene in amazement, as Tubby Muffin laid on the cane again.

"You—you—you're whacking a prefect!" he gasped.

"Captain of the school can whack anybody.



THE HEAD INTERRUPTS! "Cave! The Head's coming!" gasped Flynn. The juniors released Carthew as Dr. Chisholm's step was heard in the passage outside. The prefect sat up, howling with pain, as the Head appeared in the doorway. Dr. Chisholm gazed at the scene speechlessly. (See Chapter 6.)

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

The High Hand.

JIMMY SILVER & CO., for a moment or two, were laughing too much to go to the aid of the hapless captain of Rookwood. In those few moments Carthew put in a good many lashes with the cane,

he likes, can't he?" retorted Tubby Muffin independently. "If I have any cheek from you, Smythe, I'll whack you!"

"Will you, by gad!" said Adolphus. "Yes, I will!" roared Tubby truculently. "I'm going to have discipline in this school, I can tell you!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" "Oh, gad!" said Adolphus. "That fat idiot is too funny to live! Look here, you kids, the Head's sent me for Carthew. He's in Carthew's study now, waitin' for him. He looks waxy."

"Phew!" "Better let him clear!" said Mornington. "Rot!" exclaimed Tubby. "I've only given him about twenty! You're not counting, Jimmy Silver! You'd better be careful, if you don't want some of the same. I'm going to give him a thousand!"

"But the Head—" said Lovell. "Let the Head wait!" "Good old Tubby!" grinned Mornington. "Isn't he swelling? Mind you don't burst, like the giddy frog in the fable, fatty!"

"Shut up!" "Whack, whack, whack!" "Yow-ow-yoop! Help!" came in frantic tones from Carthew. "You young villains! Help! Yoooop! Help!"

"The Head will hear this!" said Smythe, with a scared look. Tubby Muffin snorted. "Let him hear!" he answered. "The Head's no right to interfere with the captain of the school executing his duty."

Flynn put an excited face into the study doorway. "Cave! The Head's coming!" he gasped. "Oh crumbs!" "Hold him!" shouted Tubby Muffin, as the juniors crowded off Carthew. "Keep him pinned! I haven't finished yet. He's got to have a thousand—"

"You fat idiot! The Head—" "Bother the Head!" "Look here—"

"Hold Carthew, I tell you!" roared Tubby Muffin. "Do you hear? Aren't I captain? I order you!"

His new dignity had evidently got into Tubby Muffin's head with an intoxicating effect. But, captain as he was, his order was not obeyed. The juniors released Carthew as Dr. Chisholm's step and the rustle of his gown were heard in the passage outside.

The prefect sat up dazedly, howling with pain, as the Head appeared in the doorway—majestic.

Dr. Chisholm gazed at the scene speechlessly. The juniors outside the study had fled, but there were nine or ten inside the room, and they were cornered. They showed a remarkably unanimous desire to avoid meeting the Head's eyes.

All excepting Tubby Muffin. That egregious youth was quite "beyond himself," so to speak; "swank" had mounted to his head like new wine. He stood, cane in hand,

and confronted the Head, the juniors spell-bound at his audacity. But Tubby was not aware that he was being audacious. He was acting with proper dignity as captain of the school, that was all!

"What—what—" The Head found his voice at last. "What does this scene of ruffianism mean?" "Come in, sir!" said Tubby Muffin cheerily. "What?"

"You're welcome to witness Carthew's punishment, sir," said Muffin, with dignity. "I have been compelled to give Carthew of the Sixth a rather severe licking, sir."

"Oh, my hat!" murmured Jimmy Silver. "Insubordination, sir," explained Tubby, as the Head blinked at him, speechless again. "Carthew was wanting in proper respect to the captain of the school. He actually laid hands on me—me, sir, the captain of Rookwood. I've had to give him a rather severe warning."

"Yow-ow-ow!" came from Carthew, in tones of deep anguish. "Muffin!" thundered the Head. "Yes, sir?"

"You—you have dared to assault a prefect—"

"Not at all, sir! I've caned him." "Caned him—caned a prefect—you, a junior in the Fourth Form!"

"Captain of Rookwood, sir," said Tubby Muffin respectfully but firmly. "The captain of the school has authority over the prefects, sir."

"Boy!" "Yow-ow-ow-ow!" "Muffin, I—I think you must be out of your senses. Give me that cane!"

"Are you going to cane Carthew, sir?" "No!" thundered the Head. "I am going to cane you, Muffin."

Tubby jumped. "C-c-c-cane me!" he stuttered. "Yes, decidedly. Hold out your hand!" Tubby Muffin blinked at him.

"B-b-but, sir," he stammered, "the—the captain of the school can't be caned, sir! It's—it's against all the rules! Nobody ever heard of the captain of Rookwood being caned! Oh, no, sir!"

"You utterly absurd boy—" "Excuse me, sir, that isn't the way to speak to the captain of the school."

"What?" "It's liable to cause insubordination among the fags, sir," said Tubby Muffin. "Captain of the school expects to be supported by the Head, sir. It's always been the rule."

"Ha, ha, ha!" "Silence!" thundered the Head. "How dare you laugh at the absurdities of this ridiculous boy! Muffin, give me that cane at once, and hold out your hand!"

"But, I—I say, sir—" Tubby Muffin broke off in dismay, as the Head jerked the cane from his hand and took him by the collar. The cane rang upon

Tubby's plump person, and Tubby's yells resounded far and wide.

Carthew staggered to his feet, and looked on, gasping. Tubby Muffin wriggled in anguish under the infliction.

He had woke up, as it were, and descended with a rush from his exalted position as captain of the school, and he was once more a fag of the Fourth, yelling under an unusually severe licking.

It was a painful awakening for the new captain of Rookwood!

"Yow-ow-ow! Yow-wow-wow!" howled the hapless captain of the school. "Oh! Ah! Ow! Stoppit! Yoop! Yah! Phew! Oh crumbs!"

Jimmy Silver & Co. looked on in stony silence. They had rescued Tubby from Carthew's grasp, but they could not rescue him from the Head. The captain of Rookwood had to take care of himself when he came into conflict with the headmaster, and he did not seem quite equal to the task.

"There!" exclaimed the Head. "Now, Muffin, I trust that will be a warning to you, you utterly absurd boy!"

"Yow-ow-ow-ow!" "Carthew, kindly come with me." "Yes, sir," gasped Carthew.

He was wriggling painfully as he followed the Head from the study. He had been well licked before the Head arrived, and that was some solace to the juniors. Tubby Muffin was beyond solace, however, for the present. He was rocking with woe and anguish.

"Wow-wow-wow!" he moaned. "Oh dear! Ow-yow! Is that the way to treat a captain of the—yow-ow!—school? Oh dear! The Head never caned Bulkeley—yow-ow-ow! You fellows ought to have stopped him—wooop! I—I say, what's a captain of the school to do, you fellows, if the Head goes on whopping him just as if he's a—yow-ow-ow—fag?"

But there was no answer possible to that question. Jimmy Silver & Co. really didn't know what it was proper for a captain of the school to do under such circumstances, and Tubby Muffin was left to work out the problem for himself. But the general opinion of the juniors was that Tubby's days as captain of Rookwood were numbered.

And they were!

That evening a new notice appeared on the board in the Head's hand, and it was read with keen curiosity by crowds of Rookwood fellows. The notice was brief, but to the point. It stated that Mark Carthew of the Sixth Form had been appointed captain of the school by authority of the headmaster, and it was signed by Dr. Chisholm.

"Appointed captain of the school, without an election!" said Jimmy Silver, with a deep breath. "That's rather thick."

"Unconstitutional!" said Lovell. "Check!" said Mornington.

"The Head can't do it!" exclaimed a dozen voices.

"But he's done it, by gad!" remarked Smythe of the Shell.

Jimmy Silver knitted his brows. "Gentlemen, chaps, and fellows!" he said. "The Head's overridden all our rights of election, and appointed a captain of the school! We refuse to recognise any such captain!"

"Hear, hear!" "We refuse to acknowledge Carthew as captain of Rookwood, and any fellow who does acknowledge him will be sent to Coventry—"

"Bravo!" There was a roar of assent. Carthew of the Sixth had reached the goal of his ambition, but it did not look as if he would find the captaincy a bed of roses!

THE END.

(The juniors of Rookwood have made up their minds not to have Carthew at any price — and when juniors come up against their own headmaster there is bound to be trouble. Every reader of the POPULAR should make a point of reading next Thursday's remarkable story of Jimmy Silver & Co., entitled "The Campaign Against Carthew!" by Owen Conquest.)

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