

The Study Stealers—Grand Rookwood School Story Inside

The POPULAR

2^d

EVERY
TUESDAY



POSHER P. POSH'S PILE-DRIVING PUNCH!

BACK AGAIN AT ROOKWOOD!

their study, the famous End Study, has been stolen from them! The question is, how to get it back?



The Study-Sneakers!

A Rollicking long complete story of Jimmy Silver & Co., the Chums of Rookwood.

BY
OWEN CONQUEST.

THE FIRST CHAPTER. Lovell's Way!

"THIN!"
"Yes."
"Thick, old chap," said Lovell—"thick as your head—or nearly."

Lovell knew best. It was one of the weaknesses of Arthur Edward Lovell that he always knew best.

The vacation was almost over—a few days more, and Jimmy Silver & Co. were to return to Rookwood School for the new term. The little party at the Priory was breaking up on the morrow. Mornington and Putty Grace were already gone, and Raby, Newcome, and Lovell were going. On their last afternoon together Jimmy Silver & Co. had decided to skate, if the ice would bear.

There was plenty of ice on the lake in the grounds of the Priory. But there had been a thaw.

Jimmy Silver was of opinion that the ice was too thin; Raby and Newcome agreed with him. Lovell didn't.

"We'll go for a drive instead," said Jimmy Silver.

"You fellows go for a drive, if you're nervous about the ice," said Lovell. "I'll skate."

"It's too thin—"
"You mean thick?" asked Lovell amicably.

"Fathead!"
"Same to you, old chap, and many of them!" Arthur Edward Lovell sat down to put on his skates. "You fellows watch me, and when you see that it's quite safe, follow on."

"It's not safe!" howled Newcome.

"Bow-wow!"
"Look here, Lovell, don't be an ass!" urged Raby.

"Pooh!"
Lovell finished with his skates. He grinned reassuringly at his chums.

"Just you watch!" he said.

"Oh, we'll watch!" growled Jimmy Silver. "We shall have to fish you out, I expect. The water's deep in places."

"Oh, you're an ass!"
Lovell slid out on the ice. He went

with a skimming rush almost across the lake.

The three juniors watched him with anxiety.

Lovell proceeded to execute figures of eight, thoroughly enjoying the rush through the keen winter air.

"Dash it all, it looks all right!" said Newcome. "We might as well go on, too, Jimmy."

Crack!
"There goes the ice!" said Jimmy Silver grimly.

There was a sudden yell from Lovell. Fairly under his feet the ice cracked, and an ooze of dark water spread over the smooth surface.

Lovell's expression changed. It was borne in upon his mind that he had been a little too positive.

But repentance came too late, as it so often does. Lovell made a desperate rush for the bank, with the ice cracking under him at a great rate.

Crash!
A skate went through, and the next moment Lovell was sprawling, thrashing the cracking ice with frantic arms and legs.

Crash, crash, crash!
"Ow! Grookh! Help!"

Under the horrified eyes of his chums Arthur Edward Lovell went through the ice a dozen yards from the bank, in the midst of broken ice and swirling water. "Good heavens!" gasped Jimmy Silver.

"He's done it!" stuttered Raby.

"The ass!" breathed Newcome.

"Get the pole, quick!" shouted Jimmy; and he ran out on the ice towards the swirling opening.

Lovell's head came up. His face was white—the water was bitterly cold. He struggled spasmodically, clutching at the sharp edges of the ice, which broke and broke again in his clutch.

Without assistance, Lovell certainly never would have got out of the icy water. But Jimmy Silver was there.

"This way!" panted Jimmy.
Kneeling on the edge of the opening

where the ice looked safest—though none was safe—Jimmy held out his hand to his chum. Lovell caught it, and Jimmy pulled.

Cra-ac-ack!
Under Jimmy Silver the ice gave, and he plunged in headlong, with a mighty splash.

"Ooooooh!"
Jimmy Silver came up like a cork, and swam strongly. He seized Lovell by the collar to help him.

"Help, you fellows!" yelled Jimmy Silver.

"We're coming!"
Newcome was racing down to the lake side now, with the long pole in his hand. He stepped out cautiously on the ice, pushing the pole across to the opening. Raby followed him with a rope.

But the cracks in the ice were extending now. Loud and ominous creaking and cracking sounded under the two juniors as they came to the rescue.

"It—it's going!" gasped Newcome.
It went.

Newcome's feet sank through—fortunately in shallow water. The ice was round his waist as he stood in mud. Raby followed him the next moment, with a breathless gasp as icy water washed round his legs.

"Help!" spluttered Lovell. "Can't you fellows hurry up! What are you hanging about for? Grooogh!"

Newcome pushed the pole across the ice. Fortunately, from where he stood half-submerged, it reached to the opening where Lovell and Jimmy Silver were floundering.

They grasped it near the end.
Then Raby threw the end of the rope. There was a yell from Lovell, as it landed on his ear.

"Ow! You ass!"
"Catch hold, you fathead!" roared Raby.

Jimmy Silver grasped the rope, Lovell clinging to the pole. Then Raby and Newcome tramped away shoreward through broken ice and mud and swirling water, dragging the other two after them.

How they got ashore the juniors hardly knew. But they floundered out

of chippy ice and swirling water at last, and crawled on the bank.

There they stood drenched and gasping and shivering.

"Lovell, you ass—"

"Lovell, you dummy—"

"Hook it!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver. "Get to the house as fast as you can go. We shall catch a frightful cold over this! Get a move on!"

"Mum-mum-my skates!" stuttered Lovell, through his chattering teeth.

"Oh, blow your skates!"

Lovell's skates were dragged off, and the Fistical Four of Rookwood started for the house at a rapid run. They arrived there breathless, coughing, spluttering, and sneezing.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Startling News!

"GOODNESS gracious!" Mrs. Silver held up her hands in horror at the sight of four drenched and dragged schoolboys who burst into the house. "Goodness gracious! What—what has happened?"

"You young duffers!" It was Mr. Silver's voice. "Get to your rooms at once! Turn in—sharp!"

"Groogh! Yes, dad!"

"Ow! Yow! Oooch!"

Jimmy Silver & Co. lost no time. They scooted up the staircase, and hurled off their drenched clothes, and tumbled into bed. With blankets piled on them and hot-water bottles at their feet they felt better; what time Mrs. Silver was telephoning to Hadley Priors for the doctor.

Mrs. Silver was greatly agitated, and the Hadley Priors doctor received the impression that he had to attend a desperate case, for which a supply of death-certificates would probably be required.

He arrived post-haste. Fortunately, he found that the case was not so desperate as he had supposed.

He found four schoolboys in the throes of a severe cold; and he prescribed for them nasty things which contrasted painfully with the Christmas fare the juniors had lately been enjoying.

The next few days were unpleasant for Jimmy Silver & Co.

Jimmy and Raby and Newcome drew some solace from the happy prospect of ragging Lovell, as soon as he was well enough to be ragged. But Lovell had no such solace; he had only the cheery consciousness that his obstinacy had caused all the trouble.

Still, there was a silver lining to the cloud.

The opening day of the term came round, and found the Fistical Four still sneezing and spluttering, with streaming eyes and noses, and a general feeling that the universe was a nasty place to live in.

Certainly they could not join up at Rookwood for the new term.

That was the silver lining.

While all the other fellows were going into class-rooms, and taking up the reading of the adventures of the pious Æneas at prep, Jimmy Silver & Co. were gradually becoming convalescent—and lessons were still distant.

The term was several days old when Jimmy Silver & Co. were allowed to come downstairs.

"After all, we're in luck!" argued Lovell. "We shall cut the term short by a week. This very afternoon all the fellows will be grinding Latin with Mr.

Dalton. I'd rather sit in the armchair and eat walnuts."

Convalescence at the Priory, in fact, was not unpleasant when the worst of the sneezing and sniffing was over. The Fistical Four did not yearn for a clean bill of health from the doctor, which would enable them to return to Rookwood.

But a letter that arrived from the school changed their mood of subdued satisfaction. It was a letter from Putty Grace to Jimmy Silver. Jimmy read it after breakfast one morning, and gave a howl.

"The cheeky rotters!"

"Hallo! What's the trouble?" asked Lovell.

"Look!"

Lovell and Raby and Newcome read the letter together. Putty Grace was giving Jimmy the latest news at Rookwood. One item was startling enough to the Fistical Four, and extremely exasperating.

"Dear Jimmy,—I hear that you're laid up with a cold, and can't join up. Sorry, old bean! I was afraid something would happen to you fellows after I left you to your own devices. Everybody else has turned up. Carthew of the Sixth is as big a beast as ever. Hanson of the Fifth has come back in a new waistcoat that is a real stunner; you can see him across the quad on a dark night. Tabby Muffin brought a Christmas-pudding to school with him, and ate it all one evening, and now he is on the sick list. By the way, Lattrey and Peele and Gower have taken the end study for this term. You fellows will have to shift to their old quarters. Buck up and get well, and come along—especially Lovell. Life is too serious without Lovell to put in his usual comic relief.—Yours,

"PUTTY."

"Cheeky worm!" growled Lovell.

"I'll give him comic relief!"

"They've bagged our study!" said Raby blankly.

"Our study!" gasped Newcome.

"Those cads, Peele & Co., bagged our study! Why, we'll scalp them!"

"We'll smash them!" roared Lovell.

"We'll lynch them! Our study!"

Jimmy Silver made a grimace.

"They were first in the field," he remarked. "Any fellow can bag an unoccupied study at the beginning of term."

"Not our study!" hooted Lovell.

"No fear!"

"Do you mean to say that you're going to sit down and let them bag our study, Jimmy Silver?" bawled Lovell.

"Not quite! Still, they're within their rights, to a certain extent," said Jimmy. "Of course, they ought to let our study alone—"

"I should jolly well think they ought!"

"They'll have to!" said Raby.

"Wait till we get back to Rookwood—we'll show the cads whether they can have our study! Why, it's the best study in the Fourth Form passage!"

Jimmy Silver grinned.

"I dare say that's why they've bagged it," he remarked.

"Rats! It's sheer cheek!" said Lovell.

"All Lovell's fault!" remarked Newcome. "Lovell landed us with this cold and kept us away from school. We shall have no end of trouble getting our study out of Peele's clutches; you know what an obstinate cad he is! We haven't ragged Lovell yet for landing us with this cold!"

"Look here—" snorted Lovell.

Jimmy Silver rose to his feet.

"That reminds me," he assented. "Three bumps!"

"Hear, hear!"

"You silly asses!" roared Lovell, jumping up. "Hands off! I'll—I tell you—Yoooop!"

Bump, bump, bump!

"Oh, my hat! I'll—"

"And one more, for letting Peele & Co. bag our study!"

"I say—Yaroooh!"

Bump!

"Is that a new game, Jimmy?" asked Mr. Silver's quiet voice at the door.

"Oh! Ah! Yes! No!" stammered Jimmy. "Only—only celebrating getting well, dad! I say, do you think the doctor will let us go back to school to-morrow morning?"

The Fistical Four were eager now to return to school. They were yearning to get to close quarters with Peele & Co., and settle the question of the ownership of the end study.

But several more days had to elapse before they could start, and in the meantime they consoled themselves with making plans for the discomfiture of the enemy. A letter was concocted and addressed to Cyril Peele at Rookwood.

All the Fistical Four helped in the concoction of the letter, and all of them signed their names at the end. It ran:

"Dear Peele,—We hear that you have had the cheek to bag our study. Get out of it! If we find you cads in our study when we get to Rookwood, there will be trouble!

"(Signed) J. SILVER.

A. E. LOVELL.

G. RABY.

A. NEWCOME."

That letter was duly despatched to Cyril Peele, at Rookwood School, Sussex. A couple of days later the reply came. It was brief, short, if not sweet.

"Dear Silver.—RATS!"

"(Signed) CYRIL PEELE.

C. GOWER.

M. LATTREY."

Jimmy Silver & Co. read that polite reply, and looked at one another, and breathed hard. And they were more than ever anxious to get to Rookwood—and to close quarters with Peele & Co.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

The Return of the Natives!

"COMFY, what?" Cyril Peele made that remark, with a lazy grin.

He was leaning back comfortably in the armchair in the end study, in the Fourth Form passage at Rookwood School.

There was a cigarette between Peele's finger and thumb—cigarettes being one of Peele's little relaxations when he was safe from the eyes of masters and prefects.

Lattrey and Gower, Peele's chums and study-mates, grinned and nodded. They were smoking cigarettes also.

There was no doubt that the end study was "comfy."

It was quite a large room, for a junior study; it had two windows, one of which looked on the quad; it had a capacious cupboard, and several other advantages.

Undoubtedly it was a change for the better from Peele & Co.'s old quarters—the study at the other end of the passage.

A good deal of property belonging to the Fistical Four was still there; but Peele & Co. had shifted out a good many things into the box-room, putting in their own property instead.

There were articles in the study that certainly would never have found a place there in Jimmy Silver's time, such as a box of cigarettes in the table drawer, and a pink sporting paper hidden under a cushion on the armchair.

Peele & Co. had quite made themselves at home. They had bagged the study immediately on their arrival for the new term, finding that the Fistical Four had not yet arrived.

As clearly they had a right to do—according to Peele. And the other fellows in the Fourth had to admit that there was no law against it.

The rest of the Classical Fourth wondered how the Fistical Four would take it when they came. They did not think Peele & Co. would remain long in possession of the study.

But the usurpers seemed to be determined. They announced that if Jimmy Silver made a fuss, they were going to stand up for their rights.

How long would they "stand up" to the Fistical Four, if it came to fisticuffs, was a question with an easy answer. But probably Cyril Peele was thinking of more satisfactory methods than fisticuffs.

And the usurpers remained in peaceable possession of the study while the Fistical Four were still absent at Jimmy's home in Wiltshire. They knew that the Classical Fourth, or most of them were against the usurpation; but they did not mind.

They found the study "comfy," and, still more, they felt that it was a score over their old enemies, and they were sticking to it, and intending to stick.

"Comfy, and no mistake!" continued Peele. "We're keepin' this. I say, I hear that Silver and his crowd are comin' along to-day."

"Let 'em come!" said Gower. "We're within our rights!" said Lattrey.

"Oh, blow our rights!" said Peele. "Between ourselves, of course. We're up against that lot, and we've scored over them, and we're keepin' the cads out. That's the programme!"

The door of the end study bumped open, and the fat face of Tubby Muffin looked in, grinning. Reginald Muffin looked fat and ruddy and podgy as ever, and had apparently recovered from the catastrophe of the Christmas-pudding.

"They've come!" announced Tubby. Peele blew out a little cloud of smoke with exaggerated nonchalance.

"Who've come?" he asked carelessly. "Jimmy Silver and his gang," said Tubby.

"Nothin' to do with us," said Peele. "They're not friends of ours. We're not askin' them to tea in this study."

"He, he, he!" cackled Tubby. "I fancy they're going to ask themselves to tea! You fellows are going to catch it now. He, he, he!"

"Go and cackle somewhere else, will you?" asked Peele; and as Tubby did not oblige instantly Peele backed up the request with a hurtling cushion, which hurled Reginald Muffin into the corridor.

Tubby departed with a roar. Peele & Co. looked at one another. The crisis had come, and perhaps the study-baggers did not feel quite so easy in their minds as heretofore. "Uncle James," of Rookwood, was not an easy handful to tackle.

"I—I suppose there'll be a row," murmured Gower.

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"Bound to be!" assented Peele.

"If they cut up rusty——"

"They will! But, as I told Morny, there's such a thing as law and order. The prefects are bound to support us in our rights!"

"Hem! Will they think we're in the right?"

"Carthew will, at least," said Peele, coolly. "Carthew's down on Jimmy Silver, and always glad of a chance against him. I've asked Carthew to see fair play, and he's promised to."

"I suppose they can't back up against a Sixth Form prefect!" said Lattrey reflectively.

"Of course they can't! We've done them hollow."

And Peele, to show how confident he was, lighted a fresh cigarette, though he was listening very intently for footsteps in the corridor.

Putty of the Fourth looked in.

"You fellows not gone yet?" he asked.

"We're not goin'!"

"Let me advise you as a friend," said Putty, "to get out while there's time. You've played a dirty trick; but there's still time."

"Go and eat coke!"

"Well, if you ask for it, you'll get it!" said Putty.

And he strolled away, having given his good advice in vain.

Jimmy Silver & Co. did not seem in a hurry to arrive in their old study. They were busy downstairs for a time. But there came a tramp of feet in the Fourth Form passage at last—the tramp of many feet.

The Fistical Four were coming, and apparently most of the Classical Fourth were coming with them to see the proceedings, which were certain to be of an interesting nature.

Peele drew a deep breath. He was not a great fighting-man, and he was a good deal of a blackguard in his ways; but he was obstinate, and he did not mean to give in. Lattrey and Gower, however, looked as if they wished themselves safe back in their old study just then.

Four juniors walked in at the open doorway—Jimmy Silver, Lovell, Raby, and Newcome. Behind them the passage was crowded with the Classical Fourth, with looks of anticipation.

"Hallo, here we are!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver cheerily. "Kind of you fellows to have the fire lighted ready for us!"

Peele & Co. glared.

"Ready for you?" repeated Peele.

"Why, you ass——"

"But you shouldn't smoke in our study," said Jimmy Silver chidingly.

"You know we bar smoking."

"It's not your study. You——"

"Still, we'll overlook it, this once, as you've got the fire going, and made everything so comfy and home-like," said Jimmy.

"Now we're going to have tea. Sorry we can't ask you fellows——"

"You're not going to have tea here!" roared Peele.

Jimmy nodded amicably.

"Yes, we are, old chap! We don't care for tea in Hall!"

"Look here——"

"Outside, you chaps!" said Lovell.

"This is our study!" howled Gower.

"Your mistake; you're at the wrong end of the passage," said Jimmy Silver.

"Would you mind travelling off?"

"We're not going. This is our study. We bagged it——"

"Now we're going to bag it, then. Good-bye!" said Jimmy Silver.

The trio sat tight.

Outside, the Classical Fourth shoved and squeezed for good places to look into the study.

"Going?" asked Jimmy, still amicably.

"No!" said Peele, between his teeth.

"Chuck them out!" roared Arthur Edward Lovell.

"Shush! Let them walk out!" said Jimmy Silver, holding up his hand.

"Go and eat coke!"

That was enough! Arthur Edward Lovell led the rush; and in a moment more the end study in the Fourth was a scene of wild excitement.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

The Fight for the Study!

CRASH!

Bump!

"Yaroooooh!"

"Help!"

"Gerroff!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" came in a roar from the crowded passage.

Cyril Peele went over the back of the armchair, in the hefty grip of Arthur Edward Lovell. Where his cigarette went he did not know, till he felt the burning end inside his collar. Then Peele knew, and announced his knowledge with a terrific yell.

Gower was in the grasp of Jimmy Silver, struggling wildly. Jimmy was persuading him doorward, with the assistance of a grip on Gower's collar and a knee jamming into Gower's back. Gower went. He could not argue with persuasion like that.

Lattrey caught up a cushion to defend himself, and a swipe of the cushion sent Newcome sprawling on the carpet. But Raby was upon Lattrey the next moment, and Lattrey went down, sprawling.

Lattrey found himself travelling doorward, with his ankles held, on his back.

"Here they come!" chortled Tubby Muffin.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Make room there!" grinned Mornington.

Room was made for the exit of Peele & Co. Gower came first, in a gasping bundle. Lattrey followed him, spluttering, and sprawled over Gower. Peele was still putting up a fight with Lovell, his face pale with rage; but he was no match for the hefty Arthur Edward. By main force, Lovell wrenched him to the doorway and hurled him forth.

"Going—going——" chuckled Mornington. "Gone!"

Three breathless and dishevelled youths sprawled in the passage, amid a chortling crowd of the Fourth. They picked themselves up, gasping.

"Good-bye, kids!" called out Jimmy Silver. "Thanks for lighting the fire."

"We're not goin'!" shrieked Peele, in breathless wrath.

"Not satisfied yet that this is our study?" asked Jimmy Silver, in surprise.

"What more can we do?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I tell you——" roared Peele.

"They've forgotten the way to their own study," said Jimmy Silver. "It's up to us to show them! Come on!"

"What-ho!" chuckled Lovell.

The Fistical Four rushed out, and promptly collared Peele & Co. The study-raiders would have fled at that point, but it was too late.

In the grasp of Jimmy Silver & Co. they were up-ended, and three pairs of ankles were grasped by three pairs of hands.

In that manner Peele & Co. were led along the Fourth Form passage. Jimmy Silver, Lovell, and Raby led them. Newcome walked ahead of the procession, blowing on his mouth-organ.

Wild yells rang out from Peele & Co. as they went, almost drowned by the roars of laughter from the Fourth-Formers.

"Leggo!"

"Help!"

"Prefect!"

"Yahoooooh! Leggo!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Heedless of the objurgations of the study-raiders, Jimmy Silver & Co. led them along the whole length of the Fourth Form passage. Newcome opened the door of the first study, now vacant.

"Here you are, you fellows," said Jimmy Silver cheerily. "This is your study, you know."

"Yow-ow-ow!"

"Shove 'em in!" roared Lovell.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Peele & Co. were whisked into their own study. They were deposited on the floor there.

"Satisfied now?" asked Jimmy Silver.

"Yow-ow-ow-ow!"

"Anything more we can do?"

"Wow-wow-wow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Fistical Four, with cheery smiles, walked back along the Fourth Form passage. They had the feeling of duty well done. Peele & Co. had a feeling that it had been overdone.

The Fourth Form crowd broke up with many chuckles, and the Fistical Four took possession of their old study—what time Peele & Co. groaned in chorus at the other end of the passage.

"Cheeky asses!" grinned Lovell.

"Thinking they could bag our study, you know! Well, we've jolly soon put the stopper on that!"

And the chums of the Fourth prepared for tea. Jimmy Silver had a rather thoughtful look. The usurpers had been dealt with, but Jimmy wondered whether this was the end of it. In any case, Uncle James was quite determined that the study belonged to its old owners; there was to be no question on that point.

"Jolly glad to get back, after all!" Lovell remarked, as he cracked his third egg. "Rookwood's all right. I dare say the Moderns have been getting their ears up while we've been off the scene. We'll jolly soon put a stop to that!"

"Hear, hear!" said Raby.

"Hallo! What does that fat image want?" asked Lovell, as Tubby Muffin grinned in at the door.

"Carthew's coming!" squeaked Tubby.

"Very kind of him to give us a call!" said Jimmy Silver. "I didn't know Carthew was so anxious to see us back. Hallo, Carthew, old bean! Top of the afternoon!"

Carthew of the Sixth strode into the study. There was a frown on his brow and a cane under his arm.

It was only too clear that the bully of the Sixth had not come on a friendly call. It was clear, too, that he had not forgotten old troubles with the cheery chums of the Fourth.

Peele was behind him—still rather dusty and dishevelled, and pale and spiteful. At sight of Peele the Fistical Four knew why Carthew had come.

"You young ruffians!" was Carthew's greeting.

"Hallo! What's biting you?" inquired Jimmy Silver.

"Don't talk like that to a prefect, Silver! Get out of this study at once!" snapped Carthew.

"What?"

"This study belongs to Peele for the term. He claimed it before you came,"

said Carthew sharply. "You know the rules."

The Fistical Four were all on their feet now, with very dogged looks. Carthew was a Sixth Form prefect, and the word of a Sixth Form prefect was supposed to be law to such small fry as the Fourth Form. But the Fistical Four did not look like acknowledging the law as expounded by Carthew of the Sixth.

"Go and eat coke!"

The prefect made a stride at Lovell. Arthur Edward dodged warily round the study table.

"Look here, Carthew—" began Jimmy Silver.

"Silence!"

"This is our study!" roared Jimmy, his temper getting the better of prudence, "and we're jolly well not



PEELE & CO. IN TROUBLE! In the grasp of Jimmy Silver & Co., they were up-ended, and three pairs of ankles were grasped by three pairs of hands. In that manner Peele & Co. were dragged along the Fourth-Form passage to their own study! (See Chapter 4.)

"Blow the rules!" roared Lovell belligerently.

"Lovell! You—"

"Hold on!" said Jimmy Silver quietly. "A fellow generally has his old study back in the new term, Carthew. That's in the rules."

"If he turns up to claim it," said Carthew. "If he stays away a week or more malingering, he takes his chance."

"Malingering!" yelled Lovell indignantly. "We were all laid up!"

"So you say!" sneered Carthew. "Anyhow, you weren't here, and Peele has claimed the study, and it's his. Get out!"

"Malingering!" gasped Lovell, much incensed by that accusation. "There's only one malingering here. I've seen you fall down to dodge a charge at footer, and let the other man go by."

Carthew turned crimson.

"You cheeky young rascal! Hold out your hand!"

"Rats!" snorted Lovell.

Carthew swished the cane.

"I've come here to see fair play," he said, "and—"

"Fair play!" jeered Lovell. "What do you know about fair play? It's not in your line at all."

"I'm going to cane you for cheeking a prefect, and turn you out of the study!" said Carthew grimly. "Your hand, Lovell!"

going to be turned out, prefect or no prefect!"

Peele grinned in at the doorway. A tame surrender of the study would not have pleased him so much as this. The Fistical Four were setting themselves up in opposition to a prefect of the Sixth, and thereby asking for very serious trouble. Which was very gratifying to the amiable Peele.

Carthew pointed to the door with his cane.

"Outside!" he snapped.

"Rats!"

"Are you going?" roared Carthew, surprised and enraged.

"No!"

"By Jove! I'll show you!"

Carthew closed in on Jimmy Silver and grasped him. The junior swung round with Carthew's powerful grip on his collar, and the cane came down across his shoulders.

There was a yell from Jimmy Silver that woke every echo of the Fourth Form passage.

"Pile in!" roared Lovell.

Arthur Edward rushed recklessly on the enemy. Before Carthew knew what was happening, he was grasped behind and dragged down. Raby and Newcome piled on him at once. Spluttering and threatening, the bully of the Sixth

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THE SPOOFER of the REMOVE.

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Bunter's jaw dropped.
 "And you never went to the chemist's and bought a syringe, and you never dropped it and broke it," pursued Walker, with the same deadly smile.
 "And you're not deaf, Bunter! Not the least little bit in the world! You've been having a little lark with me, dear boy. Isn't that so?"

The juniors looked on breathlessly.
 Bunter made a strategic movement to place the table between himself and James Walker.

Walker made a stride. Billy Bunter flew round the table, and made a desperate dive for the door.

Walker spun round after him, and his grasp closed on Bunter before the Owl was half way to the door.

"Yaroooh! Help!"
 The Sixth-Former swung Billy Bunter across a chair. He held him there with his left hand. His right was busy with the cane.

Whack, whack, whack!
 "Help! Murder! Fire! Thieves!" bawled Bunter.

The celebrated Bull of Bashan would have hidden his diminished head in despairing envy if he could have heard the roars of Billy Bunter just then.

Whack, whack, whack!

"That's enough, Walker!" said Harry Wharton.

"Stand back!" snapped Walker.

Whack, whack, whack!

"Yooop! Rescue! Yaroooh!"

Harry Wharton & Co. made a rush. Billy Bunter undoubtedly was deserving of punishment; but there was a limit. Walker, in his enthusiasm, was passing the limit. The rush of the Famous Five shoved Walker away from his victim.

"Nuff's as good as a feat!" remarked Bob Cherry.

Bunter rolled off the chair, howling.
 "Yow ow ow ow-woop!"

Walker glanced at him. He felt that perhaps Bunter had had enough. He strode out of the Common-room, with a happy feeling of satisfaction. He was quite merry when he dropped into Loder's study for a chat.

But the hapless Owl of the Remove was far from merry.

Billy Bunter did not call on his friend in the Sixth any more. Indeed, he showed a strong inclination to dodge round corners and behind doors whenever he saw Walker coming. And he recovered his hearing completely.

THE END.

(Look out for another ripping long complete tale of Harry Wharton & Co., of Greyfriars, featuring Billy Bunter, next week, entitled: "Heading For Trouble!")

THE STUDY-STEALERS.

(Continued from page 23.)

struggled on the carpet, in the grasp of the excited juniors.

"Kick him out!" gasped Jimmy Silver.

Jimmy lent his aid to his chums. The astonished and infuriated prefect went whirling to the door. He crashed into Peelo.

Carthew of the Sixth rolled in the passage, breathless and dazed. It was time for the skies to fall when a Sixth Form prefect was handled in this manner. But the skies did not fall—though Carthew did, with a heavy bump. He was not allowed to rest. Four pairs of hands grasped him, and rolled him along the passage to the stairs.

Jimmy Silver & Co. returned to their study, breathless. They looked at one another.

"We've done it now!" grasped Lovell. "There was no doubt about that. The Fistical Four had "done it," with a vengeance, and it only remained to be seen what the awful consequences would be.


THE END.

(The fight for the end study is continued in next week's grand long story of Jimmy Silver & Co., of Rookwood entitled "A Matter of Strategy!")

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