

100% WILD-WEST THRILLER INSIDE!

The POPULAR

Week Ending
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New Series.
No. 489.

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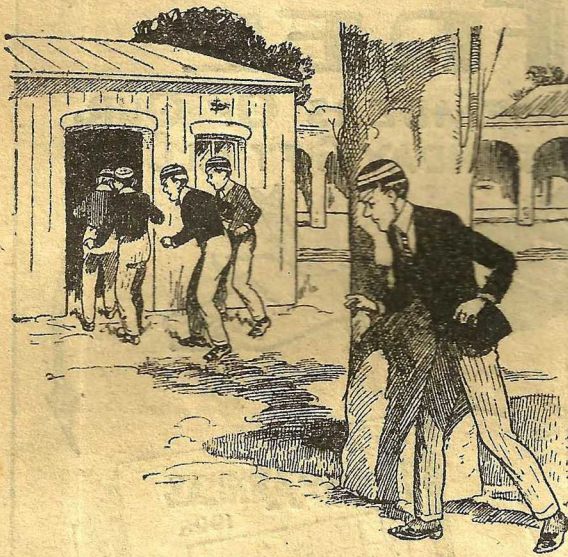
EVERY TUESDAY.



DRIVEN OUT UNDER FIRE!

SHOWING UP A BULLY!

Mark Carthew, the bully of the Sixth, tries hard to catch Jimmy Silver & Co. out in some wrongdoing. But his spying leads him into an extremely unpleasant situation!



SPOOFING A SPY!

OWEN CONQUEST

A ROLLICKING LONG COMPLETE STORY
OF JIMMY SILVER & CO., THE CHUMS
OF ROOKWOOD

THE FIRST CHAPTER. Too Hasty!

ARTHUR EDWARD LOVELL sniffed.

It was a pronounced, an emphatic sniff.

Lovell had just come in from cricket. He entered the end study in the Fourth Form passage and banged down his bat in a corner. And then he coughed, and then he sniffed. There was a thick atmosphere of tobacco-smoke in the end study—the air was quite heavy with it. Hence Lovell's pronounced, emphatic, disgusted sniff.

Newcome stood by the study window waving a newspaper to clear off the cigarette-smoke. Arthur Edward fixed an accusing glance on him.

"You silly ass!" said Lovell.

"Eh—what?"

"Smoking in the study! My hat! You ought to be jolly well ashamed of yourself, Newcome!" exclaimed Lovell hotly.

"You born ass!" roared Newcome.

"You silly blunder!" retorted Lovell.

"You fooling chump! I haven't been smoking!" howled Newcome. "I haven't been indoors two minutes, fat-head, and I found the study just like this, duffer! And I've a jolly good mind to punch your silly head, dummy!"

"Oh!" said Lovell, rather taken aback.

It was one of Lovell's little ways to jump to hurried conclusions. He seldom stopped to think. Indeed, his loyal chums, Jimmy Silver, and Raby, and Newcome, sometimes averred that he lacked the necessary mental apparatus for thinking.

"Well, if it wasn't you, who was it?" demanded Lovell.

"Fathead!"

"Look here, Newcome—"

Newcome seemed annoyed.

There was a step in the passage, and George Raby came in. Arthur Edward Lovell's accusing glance turned on him.

"Look here, Raby, this is too thick! If you're going to smoke cigarettes, like that cad, Peele, you might at least smoke them somewhere else."

Raby stared at him.

"Who's been smoking cigarettes?" he inquired.

THE POPULAR, No. 488.

"Haven't you?" demanded Lovell.

"Fathead!"

"Slanging isn't answering," said Lovell loftily. "I asked you a question."

"You asked me to punch your silly nose, I suppose you mean!" said Raby warmly.

"Well, if it wasn't you or Newcome I suppose it was Jimmy," said Lovell. "It must have been somebody. The study fairly reeks with it. I'm surprised at Jimmy, and I'll jolly well give him a talking to! Hallo! Here he is!"

Jimmy Silver came in.

He looked round and sniffed.

"Somebody's been smoking here!" he remarked.

"And I want to know who it was," said Lovell. "Newcome says it wasn't him, and Raby says it wasn't him; and so I suppose it was you, and you jolly well want kicking!"

"So you suppose it was me?" said Jimmy, looking at him. "You shouldn't suppose anything, Lovell, old man. You really ought to remember that on the few occasions when you do any thinking you make a hash of it. Never think, old man. Your brain won't stand it."

"Look here—" roared Lovell.

"It's clearing off," said Newcome, still waving the newspaper at the open window. "I wonder who it was? Awful cheek for some cad to sneak in here to smoke while we were out!"

Lovell started.

"Oh! You think that's it?" he asked. "Fathead! Of course that's it!"

snapped Newcome. "If you had the brains of a bunny rabbit you'd know without being told."

"That's all very well—" began Lovell.

"Peele, I suppose," said Jimmy Silver. "Just one of his tricks! Rather rotten for us if a master or prefect dropped in and found the study reeking with smoke."

"I should jolly well say so!" exclaimed Lovell. "And if it wasn't one of you chaps—"

"Cheese it, ass!"

"Well, if you give me your word, of course—" said Arthur Edward Lovell magnanimously.

"Not at all!" said Jimmy Silver cheerily. "No need for that, Lovell.

You're not judge and jury and prosecuting counsel in this case. You're only a cheeky ass! What you really want is a bumping! That's what you're going to have—see?"

"Look here—"

"Collar him!"

"What-ho!" grinned Raby and Newcome.

"Hands off, you cheeky chumps!" roared Lovell. "I tell you—I say—I—Yooop! Ah—ow! Yarooooop!"

Bump!

Arthur Edward Lovell, in the grasp of three pairs of hands, landed on the study carpet with a loud concussion and a louder howl.

"Oh! Oh, my hat! Oooooo! You rotters! Ow!"

Bump!

"There!" said Jimmy Silver. "Now own up that you're a cheeky ass, old chap, and say you're sorry to have given us the trouble of bumping you!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I—I—I'll wallop you all round! I'll—I'll—" gasped Lovell, spluttering with breathless wrath.

"Are you a cheeky ass?" inquired Jimmy.

"Ow! No! I—"

Bump!

"Whoop!"

"Are you a cheeky ass?" again inquired Jimmy Silver, while Raby and Newcome roared with laughter.

"Oh, my hat! Yes, if you like!" gasped Lovell. "Oh dear! Leggo! I'll scrag you! I'll give you the kybosh! I'll—Ow!"

Lovell scrambled to his feet as his chums released him. He seemed about to charge at the three like an enraged bull. But just then there was a step at the door, and Newcome ejaculated:

"Hallo! It's Dicky!"

THE SECOND CHAPTER. Mr. Dalton Wants to Know!

NONSENSE!" said Mr. Dalton. Mr. Richard Dalton, the master of the Fourth Form, fixed his eyes on Carthew as he spoke. He spoke in a very decided tone. Carthew of the Sixth flushed.

"I've reported to you, as the juniors concerned are in your Form, sir," said Carthew tartly. "If you prefer it, I'll take the matter before the Head."

"You will do nothing of the kind, Carthew," said Mr. Dalton quietly. "As you have reported this matter to me, I shall look into it. But I have said that it is nonsense, and I repeat that it is nonsense. It has not escaped my observation, Carthew, that you seem to have a personal dislike for Silver and his friends. I am afraid that you allow this to influence you—which is extremely unbecoming in a Sixth Form prefect of Rookwood."

Carthew compressed his lips.

"I suppose I can believe my own eyes, sir!" he snapped. "I passed Silver's study a short time ago, and it was reeking with tobacco-smoke. I suppose you do not intend to allow Silver to smoke, any more than any other junior at Rookwood, because he is a favourite of yours."

"That is an impertinent remark, Carthew. I have no favourites in my Form," said Mr. Dalton sternly. "I know Silver too well to believe him guilty of any such folly. However, I shall go to his study at once and see into the matter. You will kindly accompany me."

Mr. Dalton rose and left his study, and the bully of the Sixth followed him.

The Fourth Form master frowned as he mounted the staircase. It was not the first time by many that Carthew had brought him reports of Jimmy Silver & Co.; and Mr. Dalton was quite aware of the feud between Carthew and the end study. Nevertheless, a plain statement of fact was easily put to the test, and the Form master felt that he could not pass the matter without notice.

Several fellows of the Classical Fourth were in the passage, and they looked after the Form master as he passed along with Carthew, and wondered what was "up."

Peele and Gower looked out of their study, the first in the passage, and exchanged a grin.

"Trouble for somebody!" murmured Peele.

"Looks like it!" grinned Gower.

Mr. Dalton stopped at the doorway of the end study, which was wide open. He heard Newcome ejaculate "It's Dicky!" but affected not to hear. He was aware that he was called "Dicky Dalton" by the Fourth. He frowned into the study. There was an unmistakable atmosphere of tobacco-smoke, and Carthew's statement was borne out by that evidence.

The Fistical Four looked rather sheepishly at their Form master. Lovell was red and breathless, and panting; and the other three looked warm from their exertions in bumping their chum for his own good. They wondered whether Mr. Dalton had heard the uproar, and come along to inquire into it.

"What does this mean, Silver?" asked Mr. Dalton quietly.

"Only a rag, sir," said Jimmy. "Nothing the matter. We didn't think you'd hear the row."

"I have heard nothing. I am alluding to the atmosphere of smoke in this study," said Mr. Dalton sternly. "Someone has been smoking here."

"Yes, sir."

"I was sure that Carthew was mistaken when he reported the circumstance to me. I trusted this study."

Jimmy crimsoned.

"None of us has been smoking here, sir," he said. "We've been in only a few minutes, and we found the study smoky like this. We don't know who's done it."

Carthew burst into an involuntary

laugh. This seemed to him about the thinnest story he had ever heard.

Mr. Dalton gave him a cold glance.

"This is not a laughing matter, Carthew. From Silver's statement, it seems that some other boy has been smoking in his study, and if I were a suspicious master I might very well believe that Silver was the guilty party."

"I suppose you don't believe him, sir," said Carthew scoffingly.

"I certainly do, Carthew."

"It's just the first yarn that came into his head," said the prefect. "A lie on the face of it."

Jimmy Silver opened his lips and closed them again. He could not tell Carthew what he thought of him in the presence of Richard Dalton.

"On the contrary, Carthew," said the Fourth Form master, "I know Silver well enough to be sure that he is speaking the truth. I accept his statement absolutely."

"Thank you, sir!" said Jimmy.

Carthew set his lips.

"Then it's not much use my making reports to you, sir," he said, unable to control his chagrin and annoyance. "The evidence is plain enough, and if Silver's word is to outweigh it, Silver can do as he likes."

"Not at all. I intend to carry this investigation further," said Mr. Dalton. "Someone has been smoking here—a thing that is against the laws of the school. How long have you boys been in?"

"I was in first, sir," said Newcome.

"About ten minutes—"

"There was no one in the study when you came in?"

"No, sir."

"You saw no one leave?"

"No, sir. There were some fellows in the passage."

"The smoking must have been quite recent when you came in ten minutes ago, as the odour is still so perceptible."

Mr. Dalton turned to the prefect. "Carthew, you found this study reeking with smoke, as you told me, when you passed the door. How did you happen to be in the Fourth Form passage at the time?"

"It's a prefect's duty to look around the junior quarters occasionally."

"I know that. Were you simply making a round, or had you any special reason for looking into this study?"

"Well, I had a reason," admitted Carthew, after a moment's hesitation. "As a matter of fact, I suspected something had been going on."

"Why?"

"I heard a remark made by a junior," said Carthew sullenly. "It led me to believe that smoking had been going on here."

"Very good. Who was the junior whose remark you heard?"

"Peele of the Fourth."

"He spoke in your hearing—intending you perhaps to hear?" said Mr. Dalton.

"I don't suppose so for a moment."

"You heard his remark, at all events," said Mr. Dalton dryly. "We will now speak to Peele."

The Fourth Form master walked back along the passage, followed by Carthew, who was now looking sullen and uneasy. Jimmy Silver & Co. exchanged a grin. They could guess by this time that Carthew's leg had been pulled by the cad of the Fourth—though certainly Cyril Peele had not expected the investigation to take the line it was now taking.

Mr. Dalton stopped at the first study, and Peele and Gower faced him in uneasy surprise.

"Peele and Gower," said the Form

master quietly. "On two or three occasions I have had to punish you for smoking. Have you been smoking this afternoon?"

"No, sir!" answered the two juniors together.

"This study doesn't smell of smoke, Mr. Dalton," said Carthew viciously.

"Quite so; and the end study does. Peele, at least, was aware of the fact that smoking had been going on there."

"Oh, no, sir!" said Peele, in alarm.

"You made a remark in Carthew's hearing to that effect, Peele."

"Oh! I—I mean—"

"Have you been smoking in the end study, Peele, and did you cause Carthew to visit that study, intending punishment to fall upon boys who had been out of doors at the time?"

"Oh, no, sir!" gasped Peele.

"Have you been smoking at all today?"

"No!" said Peele desperately.

"Show me your hands! If you have not been smoking, Peele, how comes it that your fingers are stained with cigarettes?"

"Oh!"

"Turn out your pockets, both of you!" said the master of the Fourth sternly. "Turn them out to the lining. Ah, I thought so!"

The hapless black sheep of the Fourth had to obey. Among the other articles turned out of their pockets were a packet of cigarettes from Peele, and two or three loose cigarettes from Gower.

"I think that settles the matter," said Mr. Dalton calmly. "I am afraid you allowed yourself to be misled, Carthew, by this unscrupulous boy Peele. I suppose it is clear to you now who has been smoking in Silver's study."

Carthew did not answer. He realised only too clearly that he had made a fool of himself in the most hopeless way, and he did not utter a word.

He gave the two black sheep of the Fourth a savage look, and quitted the study. The Fourth-Formers in the passage grinned as he stalked away furiously to the stairs.

"Peele," said Mr. Dalton, "you will fetch a cane from my study."

Cyril Peele fetched the cane. As soon as he returned with it there was a sound of swishing in Study No. 1, and dismal howls from Peele and Gower. When Mr. Dalton left he left two hapless juniors wriggling and rubbing their hands.

"Oh!" groaned Gower. "Oh, you ass, Peele! Oh! You said it was quite safe. Ow! Wow!"

"Ow! I thought it was all right," groaned Peele. "Ow! It would have been all right, but for Carthew—wow! That beast Dalton seems to see through everything. Yow-ow!"

Ten minutes later Carthew of the Sixth looked into the study. He had his ashplant under his arm, and an extremely unpleasant look on his face. "So it was you who smoked in the end study?" he said grimly.

"Ow! Mr. Dalton's licked us for that!" groaned Gower, looking apprehensively at the ashplant.

"He hasn't licked you for making a fool of me," said Carthew. "I'm goin' to do that!"

And he did. Loud yells rang from the study as the bully of the Sixth made active play with the ashplant. There was weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth when Carthew went at last.

After tea in the end study Jimmy Silver & Co. came along the passage

and looked in. Lovell had a cricket-stump in his hand.

"We know all about it, you rotters!" announced Lovell, "and we're going—Great Scott! What's the matter with you?"

"Keep off, you beasts!" groaned Peele. "We've had it from Dalton and we've had it from Carthew! Ow! Ow! Ow!"

Gower did not speak; he only groaned and mumbled. Jimmy Silver & Co. looked at them, and even Arthur Edward Lovell relented and held back the cricket-stump.

"Well, you look as if you've had enough," he said.

"Ow! Ow! Wow! Wow!"

"Only don't play any more tricks in the end study," grinned Lovell.

"Ow! Ow! Wow!"

The Fistical Four walked away smiling, leaving the hapless black sheep to groan. Peele and Gower were not likely to play any more tricks in the end study—at least, for a good while. The results were really too painful.

THE THIRD CHAPTER. Done Again!

CARTHEW of the Sixth scowled at Jimmy Silver & Co. when he came on those cheery juniors the next day in the quadrangle.

They passed him with smiling faces, not at all disconcerted by his black looks.

Carthew looked after them with knitted brows.

There was trouble of long standing between the bully of Rockwood and the Fistical Four of the Fourth. In his position as a prefect, it was in Carthew's power to make things very unpleasant for Lower boys whom he disliked. But he had to acknowledge that in his feud with the end study the chums of the Fourth had given as good as they had received.

"Poor old Carthew!" murmured Jimmy Silver. "The dear man was awfully disappointed yesterday! I verily believe that he would like us to take to smoking and playing banker in the study, so that he could catch us out."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Of course, we want to please a Sixth Form prefect—it's our duty," said Jimmy Silver. "But we really can't go so far as that, even to make Carthew happy."

"Not quite!" chuckled Raby.

"But we'll do what we can," continued Jimmy Silver. "The good soul is keeping an eye on us now. Follow your leader!"

Jimmy Silver struck off from the path and headed for the bike-shed. His chums followed him.

At the door of the bike-shed Jimmy Silver & Co. glanced round them with a very cautious air before entering the building—looking in every direction save that of Carthew.

Then they dodged into the shed very quickly.

Carthew's eyes gleamed.

It was impossible that the juniors had gone into the building for their bikes, for it wanted only six or seven minutes to third lesson. And they had dodged in in an obviously surreptitious manner.

Carthew hurried forward. There was something "on," that was clear to Carthew, and he meant to know what it was.

A minute after the juniors had gone in the Sixth-Former was at the door, looking in after them.

He uttered an exclamation of triumph.

THE POPULAR—No. 488.

Jimmy Silver had taken a little cardboard box from the saddle-bag of his bicycle. Plain to the view, in Jimmy's hand, was a cigarette-box. Carthew could read the print on it—"WILD ROSE CIGARETTES."

"Here they are, you fellows," Jimmy was saying.

"And here I am!" exclaimed Carthew. Jimmy Silver gave a dramatic start, and put his hand, with the box in it, behind him.

"Carthew—" he stammered.

"So I've fairly caught you out at last, have I?" grinned Carthew.

"Cigarettes in the bike-shed, what?"

"I—I haven't any cigarettes, Carthew—"

"My hat! And you're the fellow whose word Mr. Dalton takes as the frozen truth!" exclaimed Carthew in genuine disgust. "You young rascal! We'll see what Mr. Dalton says about this! I fancy he won't be able to screen you this time!"

"I—I say, Carthew—"

"You'll come with me," said Carthew, dropping a heavy hand on Jimmy's shoulder. "Keep that in your hand—you're going to take the box just as it is to your Form master!"

"I—I—"

"Shut up and come on!" growled Carthew. "You others follow."

He marched Jimmy Silver out of the bike-shed. Lovell and Raby and Newcome followed in silence.

It was nearly time for third lesson, and the Classical Fourth were converging on their Form-room, where Mr. Dalton already awaited them. Jimmy Silver, with Carthew's heavy hand on his shoulder, was marched along in the midst of a crowd of juniors, heading for the Form-room, and there was a buzz of voices on all sides.

"What the merry dickens is up, Silver?" asked Mornington.

"Carthew's caught me, and he's taking me to Mr. Dalton," answered Jimmy.

"He's got a box of cigarettes in his hand!" giggled Tubby Muffin.

"Make way there, you fags!" snapped Carthew.

Still with the prefect's iron grip on his shoulder, Jimmy Silver was marched into the Fourth Form-room. Lovell & Co. followed, and the rest of the Classical Fourth swarmed after them, in a buzz of excitement. Mr. Dalton was at his desk, and he looked up with a frown.

"What is all this?" he exclaimed. Carthew gave him a vaunting look.

"I report Silver for smoking, sir," he answered.

"Really, Carthew, this is too much!" exclaimed the master of the Fourth impatiently. "After your absurd mistake yesterday—"

"There's no mistake this time, even if there was yesterday, which I'm not sure of," said Carthew viciously. "I saw these four juniors sneaking into the bike-shed, and I followed them, in time to see Silver take a box of cigarettes from his bicycle-bag."

"Nonsense!"

"You can call it nonsense if you like, sir," said Carthew insolently. "But he's still got the box in his hand. I brought him straight here with it, as I knew he could pull the wool over your eyes if I gave him a chance. Put that box on Mr. Dalton's desk, Silver."

Jimmy Silver obediently placed the cigarette-box on the Form master's desk. Mr. Dalton stared at it.

"I scarcely understand this," he said. "You saw Silver take this from his bicycle-bag, Carthew?"

"Yes, sir; and I hardly think he will have the nerve to deny it."

"Do you deny it, Silver?"

"No, sir."

"Then what am I to conclude?" exclaimed the master of the Fourth. "Is it possible that I have been deceived in you, Silver?"

"I hope not, sir," said Jimmy meekly.

"You may as well admit that you went into the bike-shed to smoke, you young rascal!" said Carthew.

"But I didn't," said Jimmy, still



THE BOX TRICK! "What is this?" "Here? Why—what—what—" The master Carthew.

meekly. "I went into the bike-shed because I knew you were watching me, Carthew."

"Eh?"

"I was pulling your leg," said Jimmy demurely. "I didn't guess that you'd be ass enough to bring me to Mr. Dalton. I didn't want to waste Mr. Dalton's time."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Lovell.

"Silence, Lovell!" said Mr. Dalton, frowning. "Silver, this is a box of cigarettes—"

"Not at all, sir," said Jimmy cheerfully. "It's a cigarette-box. I use it to keep patches for mending punctures in. Perhaps you'd look into the box, sir."

There was breathless excitement in the Fourth Form-room as Mr. Dalton quietly opened the cigarette-box. No cigarettes were disclosed to view. Carthew's face was a study in scarlet as he saw the contents of that cigarette-box. There was an irresistible yell of merriment from the Classical Fourth.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Mr. Dalton smiled; he could not help it. He held up the open box for Carthew to view.

"You seem to have made another mistake, Carthew," he said dryly.

Carthew gasped.

"I—I—yes—no—yes—" he stammered.

some of them laughing, and some of them angry and annoyed.

"Found anythin', old bean?" asked Morny, as Carthew turned away at last. "Why did you close down the lid as I came in?" snapped Carthew.

"Just to set you huntin' through the old thing," answered Mornington cheerily.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Jimmy Silver & Co.

Carthew scowled savagely, and strode out of the box-room. In his own suspicious mind, he was certain that he was on the track of a secret smoking or gambling party; but there was no evidence to be found. Jimmy Silver kicked the door shut after him.

"I'm fed up with this!" he said. "Carthew's got to chuck up his Chingachgook stunt. We've got to make him!"

And the rehearsal of the Classical Players proceeded, uninterrupted further by Carthew—though when the juniors came out, they found the prefect hanging about the passage. There was nothing for Carthew to discover, had he only known it; but he was a sticker.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Carthew Asks for it!

"HALF-PAST five in the box-room!" said Jimmy Silver.

"Right-ho!" said Lovell.

It was two or three days later, and during those days Carthew had been playing Chingachgook, as Lovell called it, indefatigably. His eye was almost incessantly upon the Fistical Four.

It was really getting on their nerves by this time, and they were more than ever determined to teach the prying prefect a lesson. Hence the remark Jimmy Silver made to his chums, as they were passing Carthew in the Fourth-Form passage after lessons.

The juniors passed without appearing to observe Carthew—but they knew he was there, and knew that he heard the remark. Carthew glanced after them with a gleam in his eyes.

These meetings in the box-room, with the door locked, seemed exceedingly suspicious to Carthew; but he felt that the young rascals were too deep for him. But forewarned is forearmed, and now Carthew knew about the meeting in advance, and so he was able to take his measures.

Towards five, Jimmy Silver & Co. were in the end study, and the door was sufficiently ajar to allow Jimmy to watch the passage and the box-room.

He was not at all surprised to see Carthew of the Sixth come quietly along the passage and slip into the box-room, closing the door after him. He had expected it.

"The jolly old bird's in the nest!" announced Jimmy, turning to his chums. "Carthew's gone into the box-room—all ready to watch the giddy meeting. I suppose he'll be hiding in a corner behind a trunk?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Lovell.

"The spying cad!" said Raby indignantly. "Pretty goings-on for a Rookwood prefect."

"Well, he's going to have a lesson this time," said Jimmy. "He's there to watch us, so, of course, he'll be out of sight—skulking in a corner, or something. He's in good time. It's only five o'clock. There won't be any jolly old meeting; but the box-room door is going to be locked on him, and when he wants to get out he can yell—nobody in the Fourth will hear him!"

THE POPULAR.—No. 488.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Jimmy Silver allowed ten minutes to elapse, to give Carthew plenty of time to take cover. Then he strolled into the box-room.

He glanced round the room.

Had he not actually seen Carthew slip into the room, certainly he would not have suspected that the prefect was there. There was no sign of him to be seen. Jimmy wondered a little where he had hidden himself, and his eyes fell on the big packing-case in the corner. He grinned.

The packing-case was amply large enough for Carthew to get inside, and it was the securest hiding-place to be found in the room. Certainly, had a meeting taken place, the juniors would never have dreamed of suspecting that a prefect was hidden in the packing-case. The case was of rather solid construction; but two or three of the wooden slats had been removed in opening it, and the hidden watcher had plenty of air, and was able to watch the proceedings from inside.

Jimmy Silver's eyes gleamed.

This was really better than he had anticipated. His idea had been to look the door on Carthew and leave him to skulk in the box-room till he was tired—then to give himself away completely by having to call to be let out. But Jimmy Silver thought of an improvement on that little scheme now.

He moved about the box-room as if looking for something, humming a tune. He made quite sure that Carthew must be hidden in the packing-case by observing quietly that he was nowhere else.

Then he left the box-room and returned to his study.

There was a hurried whispered consultation in the end study, punctuated by many chuckles. Then Raby scudded along the passage and called in Mornington and Putty Grace, and there was a further consultation, with many more chuckles.

Meanwhile, Carthew of the Sixth was waiting and watching.

It was close on half-past five, and the hidden prefect sat quite at his ease in the big case, with his eye to an opening that gave him a view of the box-room. What he was going to discover by spying on the meeting he did not know, but he hoped fervently that he was going to discover something to the disadvantage of Jimmy Silver & Co.

At half-past five the door of the box-room opened again, and a little crowd of juniors came in. To the astonishment of Carthew, Sergeant Kettle came in with them, and old Mack, the porter. Carthew could scarcely believe his eyes.

Obviously, this could not be a smoking-party, or a party for nap or banker. The school sergeant and the porter could scarcely have been included in any such party—that was certain.

"Here you are, Mack," said Mornington. "This is the case."

Carthew's heart stood still as the whole party came across to the packing-case.

Carthew was not particular in his methods; but he was almost frozen at the thought of being discovered in such a situation. He was ashamed to have known what he was not ashamed to do.

To be discovered crouching in the packing-case for the obvious purpose of playing the spy, was too terrible an exposure and humiliation for Carthew to face it with equanimity.

He scarcely breathed as the packing-case was surrounded, and he almost prayed that it would not be looked into.

But there was no danger of that. Jimmy Silver & Co. did not need to

look into the case to see that Carthew was there. They knew that he was there. And it was their little game to appear to be completely ignorant of the fact.

Mornington, indeed, sat on the closed lid of the packing-case, to make sure that it would not be lifted by Mack or the sergeant.

Old Mack produced a hammer and nails.

"Ardly necessary to nail it up, Master Mornington," said the sergeant. "Better," said Morny. "There's a lot of rubbish in it, and the lid might come off while you're getting it downstairs. It's rather a heavy article to handle."

"Won't take a minute," said old Mack.

Carthew scarcely breathed.

Old Mack was driving nails into the wooden slats of the packing-case lid, fastening it down all round.

The wretched Carthew sat in it dumb-founded. Not for a moment did it occur to him that the juniors knew that he was there. He could only suppose that Mornington, to whom the old case belonged, had decided to have it removed at this unlucky moment—this most unfortunate moment for the spy of the Sixth.

As the strokes of the hammer echoed through the box-room, and the nails were driven home, Carthew sat fairly dazed.

He was tempted to show himself, but he could not make up his mind to it. Certainly the sergeant and the porter would have been astounded to see a Sixth Form prefect rise from the packing-case like a Jack-in-the-box. The affair would have become the talk of Rookwood; Carthew would never have heard the end of it, he knew that. Hoping against hope, he sat tight.

After all, there would be a chance of slipping out later; it would not be difficult to burst up the nailed lid, once the packing-case was no longer under observation. Possibly it was going to be placed in the wood-shed, or perhaps in the porter's lodge to be sent away. There was a chance for Carthew yet.

So he remained still and silent, almost choking with dismay and rage.

The sound of hammering in the box-room drew a good many of the Fourth along the passage to look in.

"What are you fellows up to?" asked Topham.

"Only gettin' rid of this old packin'-case," yawned Mornington. "It won't be wanted again, and I can get five shillin's for it for firewood."

"Oh, gad!" said Townsend. "Fancy you botherin' about five shillin's."

"Hard times, you know," said Mornington gravely. "Five shillin's is five shillin's."

"That's done, sir," said old Mack, slipping the hammer back into his pocket. "Take the huther hend, sergeant."

And the sergeant and the porter grasped the packing-case to carry it out of the box-room. Carthew made no sound.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Something Like a Show-up!

JIMMY SILVER & CO. stood round watching with smiling faces. Chingachgook had been fairly caught at last. They wondered how long it would be before Carthew decided to "show up." They wondered, too, what his feelings were like, as the packing-case was nailed up and lifted from the floor. Certainly his feelings could not have been envious.

"My word! This 'ere is 'eavy for a hempty case!" gasped old Mack.

"Eavy it is!" said the sergeant. "There ain't nothing in this 'ere case, is there, Master Mornington?"

"Only some rubbish," said Morny. "Then it's fairly 'eavy rubbish, I do say," gasped old Mack. "Howsumdever, we'll manage it."

"We'll lend you a hand," said Lovell. There was no sound from the "rubbish" in the case. With the sergeant holding one end, the porter the other, and Jimmy Silver & Co. lending their aid, the packing-case was carried out of the box-room.

"Eavy rubbish, and no mistake!" said old Mack. "It seems to be shifting about inside, too, Master Mornington."

"Nothing to damage?" asked Mr. Kettle.

"Not at all. It doesn't matter in the least if you damage the rubbish in that case."

As a matter of fact, the "rubbish" in the case was getting a little damaged. Carthew was pitched to and fro, half suffocated by the loose straw as the case was borne away. His head knocked several times on the sides, and when the bearers bumped the case down in the passage to rest for a few minutes Carthew felt as if an earthquake were happening to him.

"Careful on the stairs," grinned Jimmy Silver.

The packing-case was carried down the stairs. By that time whispers had apprised most of the Fourth of what was inside the case, and a crowd followed the sergeant and the porter.

"This way!" called out Mornington, at the foot of the staircase.

Sergeant Kettle shook his head.

"Can't carry this 'ere out through the quadrangle, Master Mornington. The 'Ead wouldn't ave it. We'll get it out at the back."

"Oh, nonsense!" said Mornington. "It's a shorter way."

"Can't be done, sir; the 'Ead wouldn't like it. Bring it along the passage 'ere, Mack."

Mornington held on to the case.

"Bring it out into the quad!" he insisted. "It's all right, sergeant, I take the responsibility."

"Look 'ere, sir—"

"This way!" exclaimed Lovell.

With half a dozen juniors pulling on the heavy case, Mr. Kettle and Mack had very little choice about the matter. They bore the packing-case onward to the big door on the quadrangle, in the midst of a grinning crowd of juniors. As they carried it down the steps into the quad Bulkeley of the Sixth came up from one direction and Mr. Dalton approached from another.

"You shouldn't bring that thing out by this door, Mack," said Bulkeley.

"You see, sir—"

Mr. Dalton interposed.

"What does this mean, Mack? If it is necessary to move this packing-case it should be taken out at the back door."

"I know, sir, but Master Mornington—"

"My fault, sir," said Mornington meekly. "It's a short cut this way, sir."

"You will take a hundred lines, Mornington. Now that the case is here you may carry it away, Mack."

"Yessir."

The packing-case moved onward with its escort. Fairly in the middle of the quad, with the eyes of half Rookwood upon it, it was set down. The helping juniors let go, and it bumped down, with the sergeant and the porter still holding it.

"You can chuck it now, you chaps," said Mornington. "No need to carry it any farther."

"Not at all!" chuckled Lovell. "Ha, ha, ha!" roared the juniors. "We can't leave it 'ere, sir," gasped the sergeant. "Why, there'll be no end of a row!"

"That's all right. Leave it alone. Lend me your hammer, Mack."

"My—my 'ammer?"

"Yes; buck up!"

"You ain't opening the packing-case 'ere, sir?"

"I jolly well am!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

With the claw-back of the hammer Mornington proceeded to rip up the slat lid of the packing-case. Jimmy Silver & Co. helped to rip off the slats.

Carthew, half suffocated, bumped and bruised, panted and gasped in the loose straw inside. He knew that the case had been set down in the quad, and he could hear a score of voices round him, and roars of laughter. It dawned upon him at last that Jimmy Silver & Co. must have known all the time that he was concealed inside.

"Hallo!" yelled Lovell. "There's somebody inside."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Somebody inside the packin'-case!" yelled Smythe of the Shell. "Oh gad! who is it?"

"What is this?" exclaimed Mr. Dalton, hurrying up.

"How dare you open this packing-case here? Why, what—what—what is—"

The master of the Fourth fairly stuttered, as the loose straw was dragged aside and Carthew of the Sixth was revealed.

Carthew staggered up.

"Carthew!" shouted Bulkeley.

"What—what—"

"M-m-master Carthew," stammered the sergeant. "I never knowed he was inside. Is he mad?"

Carthew, breathless, panting, crimson with rage and shame, stood in the open packing-case, with straw clinging all over him.

Fellows of all Forms, from the Sixth to the Second, crowded round, staring at him, and yelling with laughter.

Mr. Dalton could scarcely believe his eyes.

"What does this mean, Carthew?" he gasped. "Are you out of your senses?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

yelled Jimmy Silver & Co.

"Carthew, answer me! What—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Silence!" rapped out Mr. Dalton angrily.

But the juniors roared; they could not help it. They roared and roared again.

Carthew did not speak. He cast one furious glance round him, and then leaped from the packing-case and ran for the House. Yells of merriment followed him. Jimmy Silver wiped his streaming eyes.

"It's too good!" he gasped. "Oh, my hat! I think even Carthew will be fed-up after this. It's jolly old Chingachgook's last trail."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

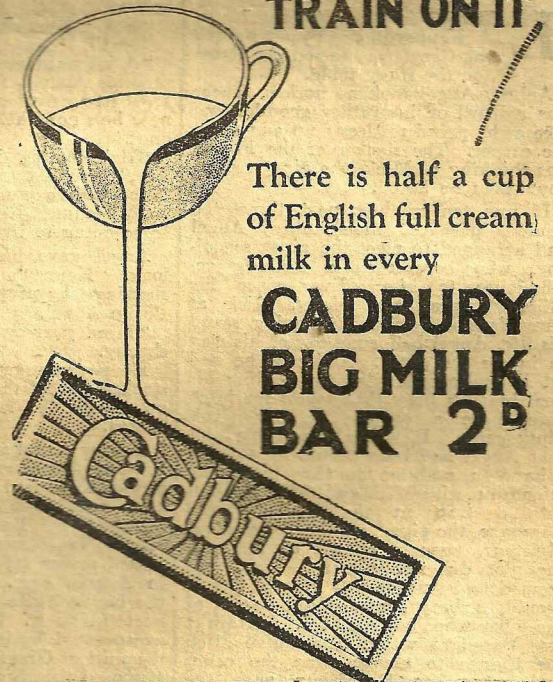
Jimmy Silver was right. Afterwards Carthew of the Sixth had a painful interview with Mr. Dalton and a still more painful interview with the Head. And for days and days all Rookwood chuckled and chortled over the episode.

And after that Carthew wisely decided to leave the end study severely alone, much to their relief and satisfaction. It was, in fact, Chingachgook's last trail!

THE END.

(Don't miss next Tuesday's splendid long complete story of Jimmy Silver & Co., of Rookwood, entitled: "TRUE OR FALSE?")

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