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# The POPULAR

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"The  
**RIVER of FIRE!**"  
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**SENSATION AT ROOKWOOD!**

Great sensation is caused at Rookwood when Mr. Greely, the majestic master of the Fifth, exhibits a damaged nose in public. Never before in the history of the school, has such a thing happened!



**THE FIRST CHAPTER.**  
**Not a Laughing Matter!**

**J**IMMY SILVER & CO. smiled. Mr. Greely, the master of the Fifth Form, frowned. The chums of the Fourth were adorning the steps of the School House, when Mr. Greely came out to take his accustomed stroll in the quad in morning "quarter."

Perhaps it was not quite respectful to smile. It was Mr Greely's nose that did it.

Mr. Greely's nose, like Marian's in the ballad, was red and raw. It was also swollen beyond its usual size. It was always a prominent feature in Mr. Greely's face. Now it was more than prominent; it was striking—it caught the most casual glance. Mr. Greely looked as if he had had the worst of a fistical encounter, if so majestic and ponderous a gentleman as the Fifth Form master could have been supposed to have engaged in a fistical encounter with anyone.

General attention at Rookwood had been drawn to Mr. Greely's nose that morning. It was very unusual to see a Form master with a nose that looked as if it had been badly punched.

The explanation was quite simple.

Mr. Greely was accustomed to punching the ball for exercise before breakfast. On this particular morning he had punched not wisely but too well; and the rebounding ball had fairly crashed on his nose before the Fifth Form master could elude it.

Hence the highly-tinted and blossoming aspect of Mr. Greely's nose. It was perfectly simple; an accident that might have happened to anybody. But there was no doubt that it looked a little odd, and that it drew general attention.

All over Rookwood, fellows were making their little jests about Greely's beautiful boko and Greely's prize proboscis. Some of the fellows shook their heads and said that they had heard that punch-ball story before. Peele of

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the Fourth, indeed, declared that he knew, as a positive fact, that Mr. Greely had captured that nose overnight, in a personal encounter with the chucker-out at the Bird-in-Hand.

There was no doubt that Mr. Greely was sensitive about the state of his nose. He comprehended the misconceptions to which it might give rise.

In the Fifth Form room that morning he had been very tart and irritable; he had suspected that the Fifth were thinking more of his prize nose than of their lessons—as probably they were. If two fellows exchanged a whisper, Mr. Greely felt certain that they were commenting on his nose.

Generally, Mr. Greely's plump and chubby face was quite good-tempered in expression; now it was quite cross. He wondered incessantly what Dr. Chisholm would think of his nose when he saw it. So far he had kept it out of the Head's view, but the Head was bound to see it sooner or later. And Mr. Greely felt deeply perturbed at the anticipation of the Head's glance of cold surprise.

So when he emerged from the House, and four Fourth-Formers on the steps smiled, it was really the last straw—it put the lid on it, as it were.

Jimmy Silver & Co. meant no offence. But the Fifth Form master was in a mood to take offence where none was intended.

Instead of passing the Fistical Four with his usual lofty and pompous stride, Mr. Greely turned on them, frowning darkly.

The chums of the Fourth became grave at once.

"Well?" said Mr. Greely in his deep and fruity voice.

"Hem! Good-morning, sir!" said Jimmy Silver.

"Nice morning, sir!" murmured Arthur Edward Lovell.

But the soft answer did not turn away wrath.

"You are disrespectful!" said Mr. Greely.

# Mr Greely Again!

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

By  
**Owen Conquest.**

"Oh, sir!" murmured Raby.

"Not at all, sir!" said Newcome.

"The manners of some of the Lower boys in this school are simply shocking!" said Mr. Greely. "You, I think, are the very worst!"

"Oh, sir!" murmured Jimmy.

Really this was a lot of fuss to make over an involuntary smile. If Mr. Greely did not want fellows to smile he should not have taken such a nose about in public. That was how the Fistical Four looked at it.

"If you were in my Form," continued Mr. Greely, "I should cane you severely for your bad manners!"

"Hem!"

Jimmy Silver & Co. were rather glad that they had not the privilege of belonging to Mr. Greely's Form.

"As you are not in my Form," went on Mr. Greely in his ponderous way, "I shall report you to your own Form master."

"What have we done, sir?" asked Jimmy Silver.

Mr. Greely did not answer that question.

He rolled ponderously down the steps and approached Mr. Dalton, the master of the Fourth, who was taking the air in the quad.

The chums of the Fourth exchanged glances.

"Poor old Greely!" murmured Lovell. "It's his own fault; he shouldn't spring a nose like that on fellows suddenly."

"He shouldn't!" agreed Jimmy Silver.

"I wonder how he got it?" remarked Raby. "Peele says he was scrapping at an inn last night. Of course, that's rot!"

"Muffin says there was a row in Masters' Common-room, and Greely and Mr. Bohun came to punching," said Newcome.

Jimmy Silver laughed.

"Bosh! It was a punch-ball accident, of course—"

"Well, that's a pretty old story, isn't it?" said Lovell. "I've heard that more than once."

"Hallo! There's Dicky wanting us!" groaned Raby.

Mr. Richard Dalton, the master of the Fourth, was beckoning to the four cheery members of his Form. He had listened to Mr. Greely's complaint, and



was obviously going to take official notice of it.

Reluctantly, Jimmy Silver & Co. approached their Form master. Mr. Dalton looked very grave; and Mr. Greely stood frowning portentously, his damaged nose glowing in the sunshine.

"Mr. Greely complains that you four boys have treated him with disrespect," said Mr. Dalton severely.

"Not at all, sir," said Lovell. "We didn't mean to, anyway, sir."

"If laughing in a Form master's face is not disrespect, sir, I do not know the meaning of the word!" said Mr. Greely. "I repeat, sir, that I do not know the meaning of the word!"

Mr. Dalton's lips twitched a little.

His own opinion was that Mr. Greely was making an absurd fuss over a mere trifle, which it would have been more judicious to pass over unnoticed. In fact, he found it rather difficult not to smile himself when his eyes rested on Mr. Greely's blossoming nose—that damaged feature looking so extremely odd upon a ponderous gentleman like Mr. Greely.

But discipline was discipline; and it was clear that the thoughtless junior had smiled if they had not laughed. And Mr. Greely was too majestic a gentleman to be even smiled at with impunity.

"I regret that any of my boys should have given offence by thoughtless want of manners," said Mr. Dalton. "You will take fifty lines each, and you will hand them to Mr. Greely personally by three o'clock. You may go!"

"Oh!"

"Yes, sir!"

The Fistical Four went. Mr. Greely grunted; he considered this punishment absurdly lenient. It was not as if any other member of Dr. Chisholm's staff had been smiled at. It was Mr. Horace Greely who had been smiled at. That made the incident a serious one.

However, Mr. Dalton was turning away, evidently regarding the matter as closed.

Mr. Greely departed on his stately promenade under the beeches, feeling more cross than ever. And as he sighted Dr. Chisholm in the distance, coming away from the library, Mr. Greely hastily changed his course to avoid him—anxious to keep his nose out of the Head's sight as long as possible. And passing Snooks of the Second he saw, or fancied he saw, a disrespectful smirk on Snooks' face, and astonished the fag by boxing his ears as he passed.

Then he rolled on, leaving Snooks of the Second rubbing his ear and staring after him with an expression that was really almost homicidal.

**THE SECOND CHAPTER.**

**Lovell's Wheeze:**

"I've got it!"

Arthur Edward Lovell whispered the words to Jimmy Silver at the dinner-table.

Lovell had been thinking; and, to judge by the grin on his face, his thoughts were of a humorous nature.

Jimmy had asked him to pass the salt; but Lovell, deeply occupied by his own reflections, had not even heard him.

"I've got it!" he breathed, in Jimmy's ear.

"You've got it?" asked Jimmy, a little puzzled.

"Yes, rather!"

"Pass it along, then."

"Eh? Pass what along?"

"The salt."

"Salt!" repeated Lovell. "Salt! Who's talking at out salt?"

"I am. You said you'd got it."

"You silly ass! Blow the salt! Look here, I've got it—a wheeze—a tip-top wheeze to dish old Greely! I'll tell you—"

"Not quite so much talking at the table, please!" came in Mr. Dalton's quiet voice.

Lovell checked himself. It was no time or place to inform his chums of the great wheeze he had thought of. Certainly, it would not have done to allow Mr. Dalton to catch a whisper of it.

Lovell was eager for dinner to be over. As soon as the Rookwood fellows went out he caught Jimmy by the arm.

"Come up to the study."

"Well, we may as well get on with the lines now," agreed Jimmy Silver.

"That's it, the jolly old lines!" grinned Lovell.

Lovell dragged his comrades away to the end study in the Fourth. There he shut the door in quite a mysterious way, before he imparted his wonderful wheeze. He was grinning widely. His comrades, on the other hand, were quite serious. As a matter of fact, they had had some experience of Arthur Edward's wheezes and did not think much of them, as a rule.

"I've got it," said Lovell. "We're going to do those lines—fifty each. But it wasn't specified what lines we were to do."

"Eh? It's always Virgil, unless it's specified otherwise," said Jimmy Silver. "Fifty lines of Virgil, of course."

"I know that ass. Still, we can make it fifty lines of something else, if we like."

"I—I suppose we could," assented Jimmy dubiously. "Blessed if I see why we should, though."

"What about Shakespeare?"

"Shakespeare?"

"Yes, Shakespeare!"

"Shakespeare isn't Latin."

"Mr. Dalton didn't say Latin," rejoined Lovell.

"No; it's understood."

"We needn't understand it for once, if we choose."

"Blessed if I see what you're driving at, Lovell," said Raby, in wonder. "I'd rather write out Virgil than Shakespeare myself. We're more used to it."

"You don't seem to see the point yet."

"Oh, you're coming to a point?" asked Raby innocently.

"Yes!" roared Lovell.

"Oh, all right! Get on to it, then."

"We're going to write our lines from 'Love's Labour's Lost,'" said Lovell.

"You remember we had an act of it in class one day?"

"I remember. But why—"

"I've got it here," said Lovell, sorting over the bookshelf. "Here it is! Wait a minute. Listen!"

And Arthur Edward read out from the ballad at the end of that Shakespearean play:

"When all aloud the wind doth blow,  
And coughing drowns the parsons' saw,  
And birds sit brooding in the snow,  
And Marian's nose looks red and raw!"

Lovell closed the volume with a snap. "Got it?" he asked.

"Nunno! Not quite. What—"

"That's the line; 'And Marian's nose looks red and raw!'" Lovell chuckled.

"We've got fifty lines to do, and if we like to write the same line over and over again that's our business. We're going to write out that line fifty times."

"My hat!"

"Got it now?" grinned Lovell.

"Phew!"

Lovell's chums stared at him.

They had "got it" now, certainly. They had fifty lines each to write, and fifty lines from Shakespeare might, perhaps, pass muster instead of fifty Latin verses. It might possibly be conceded that the same line might be written over fifty times, instead of fifty distinct lines—possibly, though not probably.

But that particular line—

"We're not bound to guess that Dicky Dalton meant Latin lines, or that he meant fifty different lines," said Lovell argumentatively. "That line's good enough. Shakespeare is good enough for Greely, I suppose. That's the line I'm going to write; you fellows can please yourselves."

"But—" gasped Jimmy Silver.

"But—"

"Greely will know it's an allusion to his jolly old boko!" exclaimed Raby.

"Of course he will. If he didn't it wouldn't be a wheeze!"

"He will be frightfully wild," said Newcome.

"That's what I want."

"Hem! But—"

"What can he do?" demanded Lovell. "If he makes a fuss, it will be all over the school; he will be chortled to death. If he's got any sense, he'll just shove the impots in the fire and say nothing. We shall score over him, and—and there you are."

"But has he got any sense?" murmured Newcome.

"Anyhow, we score! Look here, it's no end of a wheeze. Fancy his face when he looks at the impots!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

There was a sound of merriment in the end study. The thought of Mr. Greely's face, when he looked at those unusual impots, made the chums of the Fourth roar.

But—there was a but!—it might be a feast of honour, but after the feast came the reckoning!

But, though his chums felt doubtful, Arthur Edward Lovell was not to be deterred. Indeed, dubiety on the part of his comrades had its usual effect of confirming him in his determination. Lovell sat down at the study table with a pen and a sheaf of impot paper, and began. His pen raced over the paper, and the Co. watched his impot grow.

"And Marian's nose looks red and raw!"

"And Marian's nose looks red and raw!"

"And Marian's nose looks red and raw!"

"And Marian's nose looks red and raw!"

"And Marian's nose looks red and raw!"

That was how Lovell's impot started, and that was how it continued. Jimmy Silver looked at it and chuckled.

After all, it was worth a little risk. It was really a great jest, and was certain to be howled over by all Rookwood if Mr. Greely made a fuss about it. Even in Masters' Common-room there would be chuckles over that extraordinary impot. Besides, that line from Shakespeare referred, distinctly, to Marian's nose—not to Mr. Greely's nose. Mr. Greely would have no real right to suppose that there was any reference to his own nose. If he was touchy, at present, on the subject of noses, that was his own look-out.

Jimmy Silver and Raby and Newcome sat round the table and started writing. And all the lines they wrote referred to the redness and rawness of Marian's nose.

Putty of the Fourth looked into the study while the four were going strong. "You fellows busy?"

"Yes, rather! Lines for Greely," said Jimmy Silver, without looking up. "They've got to go in at three."

"Take a squint at 'em," said Lovell. Putty of the Fourth took a "squint" and uttered a yell.

"That's for Greely?"

"Yes."  
"Oh, my hat! Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Putty.

And Putty of the Fourth rushed away to tell the news along the passage. Before those impots were finished Jimmy Silver & Co. had received at least a dozen visitors from the Classical Fourth who stared at the growing impots and chuckled explosively. It was agreed on all hands that it was a great jest, and this unanimity of opinion greatly bucked Arthur Edward Lovell. It was not always that his wheezes caught on like this. It was agreed, also, that the Fistical Four were asking for a licking if they handed in those impots to Horace Greely; but that could not be helped. Now that the thing was public, Jimmy Silver & Co. felt that it was up to them.

And when the lines were done the four juniors started for Mr. Greely's study, to deliver their impositions as commanded by their Form master.

### THE THIRD CHAPTER.

#### On the Carpet!

"COME in!" snapped Mr. Greely. It was close on three o'clock, and as a tap came at his study door, Mr. Greely supposed that it heralded the arrival of the four delinquents of the Fourth with the impositions.

As a matter of fact, it did not. Jimmy Silver & Co. had not arrived yet. Dr. Chisholm, the Head of Rookwood, had arrived.

The Head opened Mr. Greely's door and entered. Mr. Greely had a lofty frown on his lofty face, all ready for the juniors, to impress upon them that it was their duty to enter his impressive presence in fear and trembling. The headmaster had the full benefit of the majestic frown as he entered.

"Oh!" ejaculated Mr. Greely.

He jumped up in confusion.

"Dr. Chisholm!"

The visit was entirely unexpected. Like a flash it passed through Mr. Greely's mind that, when he had avoided the Head in the quad that morning he had not, as he had supposed, quite succeeded in keeping his flaming nose from observation. Dr. Chisholm's eyes were very keen; that nose had struck him, even in the distance, and Mr. Greely knew, he felt, that the Head had dropped into his study for a closer inspection.

Mr. Greely stood blinking at the Head, his cheeks almost as crimson as his nose.

"Pray excuse my interrupting you, Mr. Greely," said Dr. Chisholm, in his politest and coldest tone.

"Not at all, sir!" gasped Mr. Greely. He was conscious that the cold, icy gaze of the Head was fairly boring into his swollen and inflamed nose, almost like a gimlet. "Will you—hem—pray be seated, sir. This is—hem—an unexpected pleasure, sir. May I offer you—hem—a chair?"

The Head remained standing, grimly regardless of Mr. Greely's anxious and confused courtesy.

"I could not help observing you this

morning, Mr. Greely, when I passed you at a distance in the quadrangle."

"Oh! Yes! Quite so! An accident—"

"You cannot fail to be aware, Mr. Greely, that your present—hem—aspect is very—very unusual in a member of my staff. I have no desire, no right to interfere in the slightest degree with your private concerns. But certain things—a certain regard to appearances—are naturally expected of a gentleman holding such a position as that of master to a senior Form at Rookwood School."

Mr. Greely's face might have been a freshly-boiled beetroot, to judge by its complexion.

"Yes, sir. An accident—"

"Boxing," said the Head, ruthlessly interrupting Mr. Greely, "is a very healthy form of exercise, I believe. Among the boys, I think it should be encouraged to every reasonable extent. In a middle-aged gentleman, Mr. Greely, a certain restraint is advisable."

"I—I was not—it was not—that is—you will see—"

Mr. Greely was a little incoherent.

"A bruised and swollen nose on a Form master is likely—I may say certain—to cause something in the nature of risibility among the boys, Mr. Greely."

Mr. Greely was only too painfully aware that it had already caused a good deal in the nature of risibility among the Rookwood fellows.

"I should not like to use the word ludicrous," said the Head, and immediately proceeded to use it. "If you will take the trouble to glance into your mirror, Mr. Greely, you will see for yourself that such an aspect, in a gentleman of your years, can only be described as ludicrous."

"Sir! I—I—"

"It may give rise to an impression—doubtless unfounded, I trust quite unfounded—that you, a Rookwood master, have engaged in some kind of an encounter at fisticuffs," said the Head.

"An accident—"

"Quite so—quite so!" With a wave of his hand the Head waved aside all explanations. "I understand, quite so. But you do not need me to tell you, Mr. Greely, that such accidents should be carefully avoided by a gentleman of your years and in your position. Such accidents are liable to cause the most unfavourable and disrespectful comment."

Mr. Greely gasped.

He wondered whether the Head actually suspected that he had been fighting somebody, like a fag of the Lower School.

"That is all!" said the Head. "I felt compelled to mention the matter, Mr. Greely. I—"

Knock.

The door opened again, and four juniors of the Fourth Form—marched in with impots in their hands, little dreaming that they were marching into the presence of their headmaster.

At the sight of Dr. Chisholm the four stopped dead.

The Head glanced at them.

Jimmy Silver & Co. stood in a silent row, impots in hand. It was within a minute or two of three o'clock, but certainly they would have postponed their visit had they known that the Head was with Mr. Greely. But it was too late now.

Mr. Greely gave them an unhappy glare.

"Place your lines on the table!" he articulated.

"Yes, sir."

"One moment." The Head's voice interposed, cold as steel and as hard. "Have these Fourth Form boys brought impositions to you, Mr. Greely?"

"Yes—as you see, sir."

"I fail to understand. It is a rigid and unbroken rule at Rookwood that no Form master interferes with the duties of another. Am I to understand that you have imposed lines upon boys in Mr. Dalton's Form, Mr. Greely?"

The Fistical Four stood red and uncomfortable. Mr. Greely had annoyed them extremely, but they could feel for him now.

"You are to understand nothing of the kind, sir!" said Mr. Greely, goaded, as it were, into resistance.

"What?"

"These boys were guilty of disrespect to me, sir, and Mr. Dalton imposed the lines, and ordered them to bring the lines to me."

"A very unusual proceeding," said the Head coldly, "and a very unusual imposition. Give me the paper, Silver."

"I see nothing unusual in the imposition, sir," said Mr. Greely. "Fifty lines is not unusual."

Mr. Greely had not seen those lines yet; but the Head had had a glimpse of the papers.

"Do you hear me, Silver?"

"Oh! Yes, sir!" gasped Jimmy.

Lovell's wonderful wheeze was not working out as per programme. Even Lovell would scarcely have dreamed of writing out that line from "Love's Labour's Lost" had he been able to guess that the impots would be handed over to the headmaster.

Dr. Chisholm took the paper from Jimmy, and fixed his eyes upon it. The juniors stood quite still.

"Upon my word!"

Dr. Chisholm looked at the juniors. At a sign from him, Lovell and Raby and Newcome handed over their impots. The Head scanned them in a terrible silence.

Still silent, but with thunder in his brow, he placed the sheets on the table before Mr. Greely.

The Fifth Form master looked at them. He looked, and stared, and blinked. He had expected to see Virgilian verses, probably beginning with "Arma virumque cano." Instead of which he saw:

"And Marian's nose looks red and raw.

"And Marian's nose looks red and raw.

"And Marian's nose looks red and raw.

"And Marian's nose looks red and raw.

"And Marian's nose looks red and raw.

"And Marian's nose looks red and raw."

And so on, and so on, covering the sheets in four varieties of handwriting.

Mr. Greely gazed and gazed, his plump face growing more and more crimson till it was purple as a ripe grape. The silence in the Fifth Form master's study could almost have been cut with a knife.

"Bless my soul!" said Mr. Greely at last, in a faint voice.

"Silver!"

"Yes, sir!" murmured Jimmy.

"Were these the lines set you by Mr. Dalton?"

"Mr. Dalton did not specify what lines we were to write, sir!" gasped Jimmy. "We—we decided on a—a—a line from—from Shakespeare, sir!"

Jimmy Silver made that explanation,

as the only possible one, painfully aware at the time that it was, so to speak, a chicken that would not fight.

"Is it customary, in writing impositions for your Form master to repeat the same line ad infinitum?"

"No-n-no, sir."

"I thought not! Have you selected this line from a play of Shakespeare's as an impertinent reference to—hem—Mr. Greely's present state, the result of an accident?"

The juniors did not answer. No answer, in fact, was needed. They waited for the thunderbolt.

"Very well," said the Head, very quietly. "I shall speak of this to your Form master. You may go."

The juniors were glad to escape from the study.

Mr. Greely wiped perspiration from his purple brow.

"This is—this is unheard-of insolence, sir!" he said gasping. "This is—is an occasion for severe punishment!"

"I do not agree with you, Mr. Greely," said the Head coldly. "The boys have been impertinent. By appearing in public, sir, with the aspect of a—I cannot say less—the aspect of a prize-fighter—"

"Sir!"

"The aspect of a prize-fighter, you have provoked this impertinence. You

standing before an incensed Form master—he, whose deep, fruity voice dominated Masters' Common-room; he, who in his heart of hearts felt entitled to the succession of the headmastership, when Dr. Chisholm should retire—a date which, in the best interests of Rookwood might well have been hastened, Mr. Greely considered. And he had stood all this because a punch-ball had rebounded on his nose.

The Head had not even allowed him

visit to Mr. Greely's study, and were surrounded by a dozen of the Classical Fourth.

They did not look as if they had, after all, scored a victory. They were looking rather worried.

The presence of the headmaster had spoiled everything. Mr. Greely had been on the carpet, they realised; and their little jape had made matters worse for him.

That was not what they had wanted



**AVOIDING THE HEAD!** Mr. Greely sighted Dr. Chisholm in the distance and hastily changed his course to avoid him— anxious to keep his damaged nose out of the Head's sight as long as possible. (See Chapter 1.)

have only yourself to thank, Mr. Greely!"

"Dr. Chisholm!"

"I make no inquiry into the cause of the injury you have received, Mr. Greely. That does not concern me. But I beg of you, sir, to bear in mind that such accidents are to be avoided. The impertinence of these juniors should be warning to you on that point."

"Sir! I—"

"That is all, Mr. Greely."

Dr. Chisholm sailed out of the study. He swept past four rather troubled juniors in the corridor. Mr. Greely, perspiring, wiped his brow, and stared at the door that had closed after the Head! He respected the Head, but he had sometimes been intensely exasperated by him. Now he was exasperated to such an extent that he trembled with resentment.

He had been called over the coals—really rated, as if he had been a boy

to mention the punch-ball—the Head, doubtless, would have regarded punch-ball exercise as frivolous. Certainly it was difficult to imagine the Head himself punching the ball.

"I will not endure this!" gasped Mr. Greely.

With glowing cheeks, and a still more glowing nose, the perturbed master of the Fifth left his study at last, with the fixed determination to follow the Head to his room, and there, with lofty and dignified front, to hurl his resignation—metaphorically, of course—at the feet of the headmaster of Rookwood.

**THE FOURTH CHAPTER.**

**Just Like Lovell!**

"**H**OW did it go?"  
 "Licked?"  
 "What did Greely say?"  
 "What did Greely do?"

There was a rain of questions as Jimmy Silver & Co. returned from their

at all. They had wanted to pull Mr. Greely's leg in return for his pompous interference with their noble selves. But making the poor gentleman look a complete fool in the presence of his chief was quite another matter. They had not wanted that, and they were sorry for it.

"It was rather a fizzle," said Jimmy Silver. "The Beak was there—that spoiled it all."

"The Head!" exclaimed Putty of the Fourth.

"Yes. Of course, we never knew he was there when we butted in—"

"My hat! Greely must have felt an ass!"

"I know he looked one!"

"Was the Head ragging him about his boko?" chuckled Oswald.

"I fancy so! Poor old Don Pomposo!"

"Well, a Form master shouldn't"



gather up a nose like that!" grinned Peelo. "We should get lined if we took a boko like that into class! Form masters ought to know better."

"Ha ha, ha!"

The Fistical Four walked away not feeling at all easy or satisfied in their minds. Arthur Edward Lovell was almost shamefaced.

His great jest had fallen rather flat, he felt. They had scored over Mr. Greely—more than they had intended or desired. The Head had been "ragging" him, that was clear; and they felt sorry for any man who was up before those steady, icy eyes, and that cool, incisive voice.

Mr. Greely had annoyed them, but they had not wanted really to hurt or pain him and they knew that he had fairly writhed.

Arthur Edward Lovell waited for his comrades to speak. He was prepared to hear them say that it was a rotten wheeze, and that he ought to be kicked for having thought of it. Then Lovell was prepared to maintain that it was a first-class wheeze, and if it had happened to give a sharper edge to the Head's "ragging" of Mr. Greely—why, that couldn't be helped, and, anyhow, it served Don Pomposo right!

But as his comrades did not speak, Lovell, not being driven into obstinacy by criticism, realised that he was sorry himself that he had ever evolved that masterly stunt.

"It's rather rotten!" said Lovell. "Poor old Greely looked fairly on toast! Do you know, I rather believe that the Beak was glad we butted in with that rag; it gave him a chance to rub it in harder!"

"Shouldn't wonder," said Jimmy. "The—the fact is—" Lovell hesitated.

"Go it!"

"Well, the fact is, I wish it hadn't happened, and—and Greely is a pompous old ass; but—but I—I—I think we owe him an apology."

Jimmy Silver smiled. That was his own idea; and he had expected Lovell to arrive at that conclusion if undeterred by hostile criticism.

"Think so?" he asked.

"Well, yes! The old boy was fairly sweating," said Lovell. "You heard what the Head said, after we left the study; he didn't care if we heard! Bit thick, ragging a master with fellows hanging about to hear! The fact is, the Head's a bit of a Tartar at times, and he was grilling Greely. I—I've a jolly good mind to apologise to Don Pomposo."

"Good idea!" said Raby.

"After all, he's not a bad sort—only an old ass!" argued Lovell. "It's jolly bad form cheeking a master, too; though you fellows don't seem to realise it."

That was Arthur Edward Lovell all over, so to speak. His three comrades glared at him.

"Whose wheeze was it, you cheeky fathead?" hooted Raby.

"Didn't you drag us into it, ass?" demanded Newcome.

"Well, I can't do more than tell you that I think it's bad form to—"

"Oh, bump him!" exclaimed Newcome. "It's no good talking sense to Lovell—give him a bumping."

"I'd be glad to hear you talk sense, old chap; it would be a new experience, and a pleasant one," said Lovell calmly.

"But never mind that now; I'm going to see Greely, and make it all right."

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with him. When a chap's in the wrong, there's nothing undignified in offering an apology, so far as I can see. You fellows may not think so."

"Haven't we said we think so?" shrieked Raby.

"Don't shout!"

"Look here, Lovell—"

"Don't yell!"

"By Jove! I'll—"

"You fellows wait for me in the study," said Lovell. "I'll come there and tell you after I've spoken to Greely. Leave it to me to calm the old boy."

And Arthur Edward Lovell walked away—none too soon, for his chums were getting into an extremely exasperated frame of mind, and Arthur Edward had a narrow escape of being clutched hold of and bumped on the floor.

"The cheeky ass!" breathed Raby. "I shall punch Lovell's nose one of these days. He's always asking for it."

"Keep smiling," said Jimmy Silver cheerily; and the three repaired to the end study in the Fourth, to wait for Arthur Edward.

Lovell headed for Mr. Greely's study.

Arthur Edward Lovell was a good, hearted fellow, and he was really sorry for what he had done amiss. He felt that a handsome apology would meet the case, and he was prepared to offer it. But he was not in time to catch Mr. Greely in his study. He was in time to see the portly figure of the Fifth Form master turn the corner at the other end of the corridor.

That was the direction of the Head's study; and Lovell wondered whether Mr. Greely was going to speak to the Head. If so, the apology would have to be postponed for a little while.

He followed on Mr. Greely's track, to wait for him and speak to him when he came out of the Head's room.

Mr. Greely was striding on at a rapid rate, fuming almost at bursting point with resentment and outraged dignity.

He was going to let Dr. Chisholm see and clearly understand that he, Mr. Horace Greely, was not to be talked to in this manner. Headmaster as he was, Dr. Chisholm had to be made aware that there were other gentlemen at Rookwood with a sense of dignity—dignity that had to be respected, even if slightly marred by a blossoming nose that looked like the relic of a prize-fight.

And yet—

Somehow or other, Mr. Greely's determined stride dropped into a slower walk, and the walk became a very slow one. The nearer he drew to the headmaster's study, the less, somehow, he seemed to relish the interview; and the more clearly it was borne in upon his mind that he did not want to leave Rookwood. He wanted to hurl his resignation at the Head in crushing commanding tones; but he did not want to go—very, very much indeed he did not want to go! It became clear to Mr. Greely that he was torn between two incompatible desires, and—

The portly gentleman slowed down still more. A few yards from the door of the Head's study he stopped.

For a full minute he stood irresolute. Then he turned round.

Mr. Greely's resignation was not to be handed in that afternoon. That lofty, dignified speech was not to be delivered in the Head's study.

The time would come, perhaps. But it had not yet come. Obviously, from the direction Mr. Greely was now taking, it had not yet come. It would be wiser, perhaps, to take counsel with

his colleagues in Masters' Common-room.

He was still simmering with resentment, and as he came back along the corridor, portly and ponderous, he almost ran into Arthur Edward Lovell at the corner.

Mr. Greely breathed hard. He had spared the Head. But he was seriously in want of a victim. The unhappy Lovell came along in the very nick of time.

This was one of the impertinent young rascals—one of the authors of that insolent, absurd reference to a nose that was red and raw—doubtless even at this moment thinking of some new impertinence.

"Mr. Greely—" began Lovell. He got no further. He was interrupted by a grip on his collar.

Shake, shake, shake!  
Lovell spluttered.

"I—I say—yoooogh—groogh—leggo—I say—oh, my hat—leggo!"

"Impertinent young rascal!" boomed Mr. Greely.

"I—I say—grooogh—"  
Shake, shake, shake!  
"Leggo! I say—oh crumbs! Yoooop!"  
Smack!

Mr. Greely, having shaken Lovell till his teeth were almost rattling in his head, released him and boxed his ear! It was a hefty smack that rang like a pistol-shot.

Lovell staggered.  
Smack!  
A box on the other ear set him upright again.

"Yarooogh!" roared Lovell. "Look here—oh, my hat—" he spun away and fled.

Mr. Greely was not finished yet. His smacking hand—a heavy hand—just missed Lovell as the junior fled—the apology unuttered, not even mentioned. Mr. Greely never knew that Lovell had come there to apologise. Perhaps he would not have cared, anyhow. He strode after the fleeing junior, in Olympian wrath.

"Lovell! Stop! I order you to stop at—"

Arthur Edward Lovell did not stop. He fairly flew up the staircase; Mr. Greely fortunately remained at the bottom. Lovell did not halt till he was in the end study—breathless, furious, with singing head.

Jimmy Silver & Co. stared at him. "Hallo! How did the apology go off?" asked Jimmy. "Greely all right?"

"Ow!"  
Lovell rubbed his burning ears.

"Wow! The cheeky beast—the pompous old ass! The Head didn't give him half enough! You silly owls can apologise to the priceless old dummy if you like—I'm jolly well not going to! Ow! Wow—wow!" spluttered Lovell. "Pitching into a chap before he could get out a word! Yow—ow—ow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the Co.  
"You cackling asses—"  
"Ha, ha, ha!"

"There's nothing to cackle at, is there?" shrieked Lovell.

But his comrades evidently thought that there was, for they cackled almost hysterically, till Lovell grabbed up a cricket bat and drove them, still yelling, from the study.

THE END.

*(Mr. Greely is having a full share of the limelight, and next week he has even more. Look out for: "GEEELY, THE GALLANT!" a rollicking long story of Jimmy Silver & Co., of Rookwood.)*