

LIVE STORIES & ARTICLES *for*  
the ADVENTURE-LOVING BOY!

# The POPULAR

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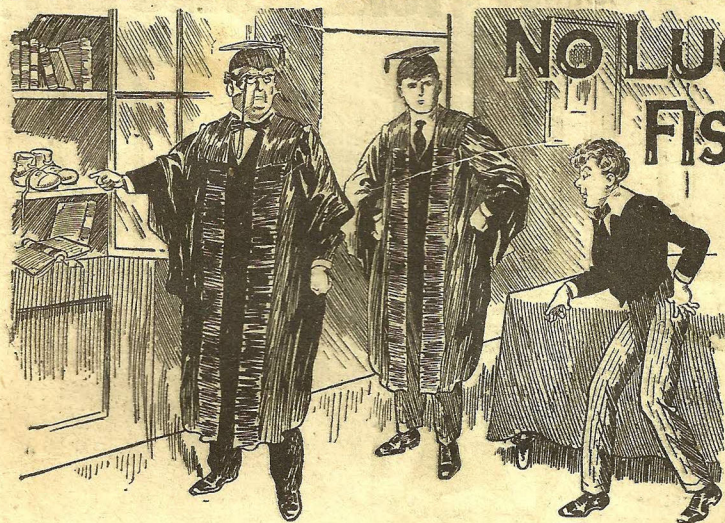


**"IS THIS THE STATE IN WHICH YOU KEEP YOUR STUDY?"**

*The Head's Surprise Visit proves  
disastrous for the Rookwood Chums.*



YOU'LL ALL ENJOY THIS ROUSING TALE OF THE HEROES OF ROOKWOOD!



# NO LUCK for the FISTICAL FOUR!

by OWEN CONQUEST

## THE FIRST CHAPTER. The Head Looks In!

"CLEAR!"

"What?"

"No ingress!" said Bulkeley of the Sixth, with a smile.

Jimmy Silver & Co. stared at the captain of Rookwood. They were surprised.

George Bulkeley, of the Sixth Form, was stationed at the end of the Classical Fourth passage—the staircase end. He leaned on the wall, with his official ashplant under his arm.

As the Fistical Four came upstairs after classes Bulkeley slipped the ashplant from under his arm and held it across the passage, barring the way of the chums of the Fourth.

Jimmy Silver & Co. halted on the landing. Bulkeley's action was quite mystifying to them. Why they could not walk along their own passage to their own study they simply could not guess.

"Look here, Bulkeley—" began Arthur Edward Lovell warmly.

"Clear!" said the prefect tersely.

"Can't we go along to our own study?" asked Raby.

"No!"

"We've come up for tea!" said Newcome.

"Sorry!" said Bulkeley politely. "But orders are orders. I'm here to keep the passage clear. Cut!"

"But—" said Jimmy Silver.

"Hook it!"

"Well, my hat!"

Argument with a prefect of the Sixth, and a captain of the school, was not feasible. The official ashplant that barred the passage would have furnished the effective and somewhat painful answers to any arguments advanced by bags of the Fourth Form.

Besides, it was fairly plain, after a moment's reflection, that Bulkeley of the Sixth was acting on instructions. It could not have been simply for his own entertainment that he was doing sentry-go at the entrance of the Classical Fourth Passage.

The Fistical Four retired across the landing to the stairs, where they waited. Valentine Mornington came up, passed them, and was about to walk along the passage, when Bulkeley stopped him.

"What on earth's the name of this game, Bulkeley?" asked Morny.

"Cut!" was Bulkeley's reply.

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"Can't a chap go to his study?"

"No."

"Oh, gad!"

Mornington shrugged his shoulders and joined the Fistical Four on the staircase.

"Anythin' up?" he asked.

"Looks like it!" said Jimmy Silver.

"All the fellows are being kept out of their studies, it seems."

"Is it a Head's inspection, then?"

"Oh! Very likely."

Two or three more of the Classical Fourth came up. Bulkeley stopped them, and the little crowd at the head of the stairs grew and grew. Bulkeley, standing on guard, gave no explanation, and all sorts of surmises were started by the crowd of juniors. Lovell called out to Cyril Peele of the Fourth as that youth came up the staircase:

"Better mind your eye, Peele!"

Peele gave him a rather inimical look. The black sheep of Rookwood was on the worst of terms with the Fistical Four. Only that morning, in fact, Arthur Edward Lovell had held Peele's head under a flowing tap as a punishment for having given a cigarette to Lovell's minor, Teddy. Arthur Edward Lovell had almost forgotten that incident already; but, naturally, it lingered longer in Cyril Peele's memory.

"What do you mean?" grunted Peele.

"Looks like a Head's inspection," grinned Lovell. "If you've got any smokes in your study, look out for squalls!"

Peele sneered.

"Thank you for nothin'!" he answered. "I'm not afraid of a Head's inspection."

More and more fellows came up, and the crowd on the stairs grew and grew. It was agreed now that it was a "Head's inspection" that was toward, and some of the fellows were rather uneasy. Once or twice in the term it was the custom of Dr. Chisholm to make an official and stately round of the junior quarters, and these visits were always paid by surprise. Had notice been given in advance, doubtless the Head would have discovered every study in spick-and-span condition, and plenty of evidence that every fellow in the Form was a model character.

Surprise visits, on the other hand, enabled the Head to see things as they actually were, which meant trouble to untidy fellows who kept their football boots in the bookcase and Latin gram-

mar's inside out on the floor. It meant still more trouble to fellows who were foolish enough to transgress the strict rule against smoking at Rookwood, and who had cigarettes in their rooms to meet the awful glance of the Head. Once the Head had actually discovered a pipe in a Shell study, and the censor had had great difficulty in convincing Dr. Chisholm that he used it only to blow bubbles with.

"This is all very well," approved Cynny of the Fourth, "but a fellow wants his tea after faster practice—what?"

"It's too thick!" agreed Lovell. "But we're in luck—our study is all right."

"Right as rain!" said Jimmy Silver, feeling quite relieved as he thought of it.

Undoubtedly there were times when the end study was not right as rain. Sometimes it was untidy. There had been occasions when it had been very untidy.

Fortunately, on this especial day, the Fistical Four had nothing to feel uneasy about.

They had not been in their study at all that day—or only for a few minutes—and it was still in the state in which the "boys' maid" had left it early in the morning. At least, the chums of the Fourth naturally supposed that it was.

Other fellows had some grounds for uneasiness; few were in the happy state of satisfaction of the Fistical Four, and, apparently, Peele.

"Here he comes!" murmured Oswald at last.

The majestic figure of Dr. Chisholm was sighted on the lower stairs. He was accompanied by Mr. Dalton, the master of the Fourth.

The juniors backed away respectfully for the Head to pass, and Dr. Chisholm and Mr. Dalton moved on into the Fourth Form passage, and the inspection had begun.

## THE SECOND CHAPTER. Awful Luck!

JIMMY SILVER & CO. waited. With all due respect to the Head of Rookwood, they wished that the stately old gentleman would "buck up," so that they could get to the end study to tea. Footer practice had made them hungry.

But "bucking up" was the last thought that was likely to enter Dr. Chisholm's mind. All his movements were slow and stately.



From the end of the passage—still barred off by Bulkeley—the juniors watched him enter the first study.

They watched him almost with bated breath, for that study belonged to Peele, Gower, and Lattery, and Peele & Co. were the black sheep of the Form. If any unpleasant discovery was made in the quarters of the Classical Fourth it was almost certain to be in Peele's study. But Peele and Gower and Lattery seemed quite at ease.

"No smokes there this time—what?" murmured Lovell.

Apparently there were none, for Dr. Chisholm's face was quite unmoved when he came out of the study.

"You fellows are in luck," grinned Raby. "What have you done with your latest copy of 'Racing Tips,' Peele?" "I haven't left it for the Head to find, anyhow," answered Peele, coolly.

And the juniors grinned. Study No. 2 belonged to Higgs, Jones minor, Putty of the Fourth, and Tubby Muffin. Mr. Dalton entered with the Head, and looked out again.

"Higgs!" "Here, sir!" said Alfred Higgs, in dismay.

"Please come here!" "Yes, sir!"

Higgs passed Bulkeley, and went to Study No. 2. He almost cringed in the doorway as he met the glance of the Head.

Dr. Chisholm pointed to the bookcase.

"Are these your boots, Higgs?" "Oh! Yes, sir!" gasped Higgs. "Is it your custom to keep football boots in the bookcase, among your books?"

"Oh, no, sir!" "Do you generally leave your boots lying about in such an extremely muddy state?"

"Nunno, sir!" "You will take five hundred lines of Virgil, Higgs."

"Oh! Yes, sir!" stuttered Higgs. "Perhaps you will kindly make a note of it, Mr. Dalton?"

"Certainly, sir!" The Head made a stately motion to the doorway, and Alfred Higgs jumped away as if the headmaster had been a steam-roller rolling down on him.

Dr. Chisholm progressed to Study No. 3.

That study belonged to Pons, Van Ryn, and Conroy, the three Colonials. Mr. Dalton glanced out of the doorway.

"Is Van Ryn there?" "No, sir," answered Jimmy Silver. "I left him in the changing-room."

"Shall I send for Van Ryn, sir?" asked Mr. Dalton, turning back into the study.

"It is not necessary, Mr. Dalton," said the Head. "You will see that he writes out two hundred lines for leaving his dictionary on the floor."

"Certainly, sir!"

Progress proceeded to No. 4, the study of Mornington and Erroll. This study passed muster, and so did Study No. 5, which belonged to Townsend, and Topham, and Rawson. Study No. 6, the quarters of Oswald, Flynn, and Hooker, escaped criticism, but in Study No. 7 the Head halted in the doorway with a frown.

"This is a very untidy room," he said. "To whom does this room belong, Mr. Dalton?"

"Gunner and Dickinson minor, sir."

"I have seldom seen even a junior room in so untidy a state," said the Head. "Perhaps you will cane both Gunner and Dickinson minor, Mr. Dalton?"

"Certainly, sir!" said the Fourth Form master.

"I like that!" murmured Gunner indignantly. "All through that young ass Dickinson minor being cheeky. He said I couldn't play footer for toffee, and, of course, I had to wallop him."

The juniors chuckled.

Peter Cuthbert Gunner's drastic methods with his study-mate were well known, and most of the fellows considered that a caning from Mr. Dalton was exactly what Gunner wanted.

Dr. Chisholm and Mr. Dalton progressed now to the end study. The visit of inspection was almost over.

The Head stopped in the doorway. To the surprise of the Fistical Four, who were watching him along the passage, thunder gathered on his stately brow.

"Bless my soul!" ejaculated the Head.

"Upon my word!" said Mr. Dalton. Both masters stared into the study, apparently surprised and shocked by what they saw there.

"What on earth's the matter now?" murmured Raby. "Our study's all right, isn't it?"

"Something's up!" said Newcome. Dr. Chisholm turned to the Fourth Form master.

"Whose study is this?" "Silver, Lovell, Raby, and Newcome," said Mr. Dalton.

"Kindly call them here." Jimmy Silver & Co. passed Bulkeley and walked up the passage in a state of great astonishment. What fault the Head had to find with their study was a mystery to them.

Dr. Chisholm eyed them sternly as they came up.

"This is your study?" he asked, in a deep voice.

"Yes, sir," said Jimmy. "You are head boy of the Fourth Form, I think, Silver?"

"Yes, sir." "And this is the state in which you keep your study?"

"Yes, sir," repeated Jimmy, in surprise. "Is—there anything the matter with it?"

"How dare you ask such a question, Silver? I have never seen a room in such a state! In all my experience as a headmaster I have never seen such untidiness, such slovenliness, such—such—"

Dr. Chisholm paused, apparently at a loss for a word that would express his feelings.

The Fistical Four could only blink. From where they stood, facing the two masters, they could not see into the study, but they naturally supposed that it was as they had left it. Dr. Chisholm stepped back and pointed into the doorway of the end study.

"That," he said, "that is the state in which you, the head boy of your Form, keep your study?"

Then the chums of the Fourth looked in.

They jumped. It was really difficult to believe the evidence of their own eyes for a minute or two.

The end study, which they had seen last in an unusually tidy state, was now in a state that almost beggared description.

If half the Form had been engaged in a free fight within its walls it could hardly have looked more wrecked and havoocked. Gunner's study had been order itself in comparison.

The table was up-ended in a corner. The chairs were lying about on their backs. Books were scattered over the floor, an upset inkpot had streamed

ink over the carpet in a long black stream. Three or four jam tarts were sticking to the carpet or the mantel-piece. The glass pane of the bookcase was broken, and a sooty kettle had been shoved in among the books. There were ginger-beer bottles in the fender, and two or three lying about the room; torn paper was scattered all over the place. In the grate was a Latin grammar, torn in several places, as if for the purpose of lighting a fire. There was more disorder than could be taken in at a single glance.

"Oh!" gasped Jimmy Silver, as he stared dazedly into the wrecked study.

"Oh!" stuttered Lovell.

Raby and Newcome were dumb with amazement and dismay.

What on earth had happened to their study during their absence at football practice, after class? It looked as if an earthquake had struck it.

"Mr. Dalton?"

"Sir?"

"Will you kindly send someone for a cane? I will punish these juniors myself."

"Very good, sir!"

Mr. Dalton went along the passage and returned with Bulkeley's cane. He handed it to Dr. Chisholm.

"Silver, I am shocked at this! I am shocked and surprised," said the Head. "I have no alternative but to punish you severely for keeping your study in such a state—such a revolting state—such a disgusting state! Bend over that chair!"

"But, sir—" gasped Jimmy.

"Not a word!"

"But—"

"Bend over that chair!" exclaimed the Head, in a terrifying voice.

And Jimmy Silver bent over the chair.

The cane rose and fell six times.

"Six" was a punishment at Rookwood of varying severity. It depended on the degree of vigour with which the "six" was laid on.

On this occasion there was no fault to be found with it, so far as the vigour was concerned.

Indeed, the hapless captain of the Fourth might have supposed that the Head had been doing "physical jerks" specially to get his muscle up for the occasion.

Never had any fellow at Rookwood received so severe a "six"!

Jimmy Silver was quite pale and breathless when the last stroke had fallen.

Lovell, and Raby, and Newcome stood in a dismayed group. Their turn was coming.

They realised dimly that some japer must have ragged their study in their absence. At the most unfortunate moment possible—just before a surprise visit from the headmaster.

They realised, too, that it was useless to attempt to make that clear to the Head. Dr. Chisholm judged by what he saw, and he was in no mood to listen to explanations.

"Lovell!"

"We never—" gasped Lovel hopelessly.

"Bend over that chair!"

Arthur Edward Lovell bent over, and received four hefty strokes. Jimmy, as head of the Fourth, had the distinction of receiving the severest punishment. Four each was deemed sufficient for his study-mates.

"Raby!"

"Somebody has—" began Raby.

"Bend over that chair!"

Four more hefty swipes were administered.



"Newcome!"

Arthur Newcome did not attempt to explain. He knew that it was futile, and he bent over the chair without a word.

Four times the cane rose and fell. Then the Head handed it back to Mr. Dalton, who handed it back to Bulkeley of the Sixth. Justice had been done!

Dr. Chisholm eyed the Fistical Four sternly as they stood wriggling with anguish.

"I am surprised and shocked!" he told them again. "I am disgusted with you! Put this study in order at once. Mr. Dalton, I recommend you to keep an eye upon this study. I should never have dreamed that such slovenly and disorderly boys existed at Rookwood at all. I have been very much surprised and shocked."

And the majestic Head sailed away, followed by Mr. Dalton and Bulkeley. The inspection was over.

### THE THIRD CHAPTER. Lovell Leads!

"OH!"

"Ow!"

"Wow!"

"Mmmmmmmmmmm!"

There were sounds of woe and lamentation in the end study when the Head was gone.

Four voices were raised in anguish. Classical Fourth fellows came along the passage and looked in. The Classical Fourth had hardly expected the Head's visit to pass off without trouble for somebody. But it was rather a surprise that the trouble had fallen chiefly on the Fistical Four.

Nobody would have been surprised by a flogging for Peele & Co., for having smokes or cards in their study. But Peele's study had been drawn quite blank, and it was upon Jimmy Silver & Co. that the vials of wrath had been poured.

"Well, by gad, you fellows asked for it," said Valentine Mornington as he glanced at the suffering four. "What on earth's been going on here? Dog fight—what?"

"Ow! Wow! Wow!"

"Must be silly asses!" said Putty of the Fourth. "A man never knows when to look for a Head's inspection. But it's asking for trouble to keep your quarters in this state. Any prefect who looked in would have given you lines, at least."

"Isn't this study supposed to set an example to the rest of the passage?" grinned Peele. "Isn't Silver head of the Fourth? Is our shinin' example lettin' us down?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You silly owls!" said Arthur Edward Lovell, savagely. "We never left the study like this. It's a rag!"

"Well, it looks a bit untidy, even for you, Lovell!" grinned Oswald. "Why didn't you tell the Beak it was a rag?"

Arthur Edward Lovell groaned.

"I tried to, but can a fellow ever tell the Head anything? Does he ever listen to a chap?"

"It's a rotten, sneaking rag!" said Jimmy. "Somebody came in here while we were at footer and mucked up the study. I don't mind a bit of a rag, but this is too thick. Spilling ink and breaking glass is outside the limit."

"I suppose the fellow never knew that a Head's inspection was impending," said Putty of the Fourth.

"It was a rotten thing to do, all the same. The silly chump who mucked up this study is going to squirm for it!" said the captain of the Fourth.

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"Was it you, Putty?" demanded Arthur Edward Lovell.

"No, fathead! If I ragged a man's study I shouldn't muck it up like this."

"Might have been a Modern raid," suggested Peele.

"Oh, very likely!" said Oswald.

"Likely enough!" groaned Lovell.

"My hat, if it was Tommy Dodd and his mob we'll jolly well raid Manders' House in return, and make the cads sorry for themselves."

"Ow!" mumbled Raby.

"Wow!" murmured Newcome.

The Classical fellows went to their studies to tea, some of them sympathetic, some of them grinning. Jimmy Silver & Co. were left to groan till their feelings had been relieved by a sufficiency of groans. It was quite a long time before they ceased to moan and mumble. The Head had not spared the rod.

"Keep smiling," said Jimmy Silver, at last. "Not much good squealing. After all, we can stand a licking."

"It's unjust!" growled Lovell.

"My dear man, if you're going to howl over all the injustices you ever butt up against you'll be busy howling all your life," said Jimmy. "The Head doesn't know any better. How's a headmaster to know anything?"

"Something in that," said Raby, with a faint grin.

"O! Wow!" said Newcome.

"That's all very well," said Lovell hotly, "but a headmaster ought to look into a thing before he hands out the whackings. Ow!"

"Well, he did look in. I wish he hadn't! How was he going to guess that some brute had ragged the study? Never mind grousing about the Head. He's not a bad old scout, according to his lights," said Jimmy Silver tolerantly. "What we want to find out is the merry merchant who ragged the study, and we want to make him tired of life."

"Yes, rather! But who was it?" growled Lovell. "Looks to me like a raid of the Modern cads."

"I hardly think that Tommy Dodd and his pals would muck up a man's study like this," said Jimmy Silver thoughtfully. "You see, this isn't just a little rag; it's thorough-going hooliganism. The Modern fellows are cheeky outsiders, if you like, but—"

There was a sudden whoop from Arthur Edward Lovell.

He pounced on a book that lay on the floor, grabbed it up, and held it aloft in triumph.

"Didn't I say it was the Modern cads?" he exclaimed.

"What's that?"

"Rotten chemistry manual. Some Modern cad had it in his pocket, or under his silly arm, and dropped it here," said Lovell triumphantly. "Nobody in this House studies chemistry. They study 'stinks' over on the Modern side. Why, look here! Here's Dodd's name written in it!"

The chums of the Fourth looked. There it was, "T. Dodd," written in the hand of Tommy Dodd of the Modern Fourth, on the flyleaf of the chemistry manual.

"That settles it!" said Jimmy Silver.

"Didn't I tell you so?" hooted Lovell.

"You did, old man. Even you are right sometimes," said Jimmy Silver. "Not often. But accidents will happen."

"I'm going to rag those Modern cads, and I'm not going to lose a single minute about it!" bawled Lovell. "You fellows can stick here if you like. I'm going!"

And Arthur Edward Lovell went.

His three chums exchanged glances, and then they followed him. Arthur Edward was hot-headed, but he could not be allowed to venture into the lion's den alone, and the Co. were very keen on vengeance, too, and did not want to wait. Mr. Manders' House was like unto a lions' den for Classics on the warpath. But it was evident that Arthur Edward Lovell dared to be a Daniel, and there was no stopping him. So his comrades followed on.

They left the House and walked across the quad to the block of buildings which constituted the Modern side of Rookwood, and which went by the name of Manders' House.

"Hallo, Classical cads!" remarked Towle of the Modern Fourth, as the Fistical Four walked into the enemy's quarters.

Towle of the Modern Fourth was up-ended the next moment, and left, roaring indignantly, and Jimmy Silver & Co. hurried on towards Tommy Dodd's study.

### THE FOURTH CHAPTER. A Slight Mistake!

THE three Tommies of the Modern Fourth—Dodd, and Cooke, and Doyle—had finished tea in their study, and Tommy Dodd was going through his pockets.

"Anybody seen my blinking chemistry?" he asked.

"Lost it?" asked Tommy Cooke.

"Sure, you're always losing something," remarked Doyle. "You'll be losing your head next. Luckily, there's nothing in it of any value."

"Fathead! Where's the blessed thing? I remember sticking it in my pocket when we were kicking Peele to-day. I want it after tea. You know we've got chemistry with Manders. The dashed thing's gone!"

"Dropped it when you were kicking Peele, perhaps?" suggested Cook.

"Perhaps. I'll kick him again when I see him. I thought at the time that I hadn't kicked him enough."

There was a sound of hurried footsteps outside the study. The door flew open.

The three Moderns stared at the open doorway. Four Classics, in a rather breathless state, appeared there.

"Hallo! What—" began Tommy Dodd.

"Here they are!" shouted Lovell.

"We've found the cads at home!"

"Go for them!"

There was a rush into the study. Before the Modern trio quite knew what was happening the rush of the Fistical Four overwhelmed them.

Dodd and Cook and Doyle went sprawling about the study, with the Classics sprawling over them.

Jimmy Silver hastily jumped to the door, slammed it, and turned the key in the lock. The Classical raiders were in the heart of the enemy's territory now, with any amount of reinforcements for the enemy close at hand. Jimmy Silver & Co. did not desire to see those reinforcements, howsoever much the three Tommies might have desired to do so.

"Now rag the cads!" panted Jimmy.

"You bet!"

"What-ho!"

"You potty Classical duffers!" roared Tommy Dodd. "What the thump do you mean? Oh, my hat!"

"Yaroooooh!"

"Rescue!"

There was a terrific struggle in Tommy Dodd's study.

The odds were four to three; but the three were first-class fighting-men, and



they put up a hefty resistance. Jimmy Silver & Co. found their hands very nearly full.

Jimmy, in close embrace with Tommy Dodd, crashed on the study table, and the table reeled into the fender. The crockery it bore went in a crashing stream into the grate.

Crash, crash—smash!

"Oh, crumbs! You Classical rotter! You—"

"You Modern cad—"

"Take that!"

"Ow! Take that!"

Crash! Bump!

The combatants rolled over, fighting furiously.

Newcome was down, with Tommy Cook sitting on him; but Raby sprang to the rescue, and Cook was dragged over, and Raby took a seat on his chest. Then Tommy Cook was reduced to impotence.

if two or three cyclones had struck it all at once. The three Tommies looked little better, as Lovell lathered ink and jam and gum over them.

Towle & Co., outside the study, hammered on the door, and hissed ferocious threats through the keyhole.

But the avengers did not heed.

The locked door was between them and the Modern reinforcements, and there was no one to say them nay.

"That will do, Lovell!" said Jimmy Silver at last. "We'd better get clear now."

"You won't get clear in a hurry!" gasped Tommy Dodd. "We'll jolly well scrag you for this! We'll lynch you! What sort of rotten hooligans do you call yourselves?"

"Sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander!" grinned Lovell. "If you don't like your own medicine, that's your look-out."

"Don't be an ass, Lovell," said Jimmy Silver. Tommy wouldn't tell lies about it. If he says he didn't, he didn't."

"Then who did?" hooted Lovell.

"Honour bright, Tommy Dodd?" asked Jimmy Silver. "Didn't you fellows rag our study?"

"No," yelled Dodd. "We've been out since classes, you chump, and only came back in time for tea, you frabjous ass, and we haven't been on the Classical side at all, you born idiot!"

"Oh, dear! Then we're sorry—"

"I'll give you sorry!" gasped Tommy Dodd.

"We found his 'stinks' book there!" howled Lovell. "If they hadn't been there, how did Dodd's 'stinks' book get there?"

"My chemistry book, you ass! I lost it when I was kicking Peele this morning."



**THE STUDY RAGGERS!** Whilst his three chums held down Tommy Dodd & Co., Arthur Edward Lovell went to work with great thoroughness. He took everything he could find from the cupboard, broke everything he could break, and knocked over anything which was standing up. When he had finished the Tommies' study was indeed a total wreck. (See Chapter 4.)

"Rag the cads!" roared Lovell, as he went down struggling with Tommy Doyle. "Here, sit on him, Newcome!"

Newcome sat on Doyle and pinned him down to the floor.

There was a buzz of voices outside the study now. The handle of the door was turned and shaken and the panels thumped.

"It's a Classical raid!" came Towle's voice. "Four of the cads—they're ragging in the study. They've locked the door."

"Let us in, you Classical worms!"

"We'll jolly well scrag them when they come out."

Heedless of the uproar outside, Arthur Edward Lovell proceeded with his task of ragging the study, in retaliation for the ill-usage of the end study on the Classical side.

Lovell's methods were not gentle. Indeed, they might almost have been called methods of barbarism.

Everything he saw he knocked over, everything that was breakable he smashed. Tommy Dodd's study soon presented an aspect compared with which the end study was orderliness itself.

The three Tommies were still struggling furiously; but they were well held, and they could not interrupt Lovell's reprisals.

"I fancy we've done a bit more damage than they did on our side," chuckled Raby.

"I jolly well meant to," said Lovell. "Who's done any damage on your side, you silly idiots?" bawled Cook.

"You have, you cheeky Modern rotters, and got us a Head's licking for the state our study was left in," said Lovell. "But you've got something a bit thicker than a Head's licking."

"We haven't touched your study, you fathead!" hooted Tommy Doyle.

"Gammon!"

"I'll give you gammon when I get loose!" gasped Doyle.

"Oh, cheese it!" snapped Lovell. "Do you want to make out that you didn't rag our study this afternoon?"

"You frabjous ass, no!"

"Rot!"

"We didn't, but we jolly well will, after this!" roared Cook.

"You didn't?" exclaimed Jimmy Silver, in dismay.

"No, you ass!"

"Gammon!" said Lovell. "Of course, they did! I'm surprised at even you Modern cads telling lies about it."

"Peele!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver, and a flash of understanding came to him at once.

### THE FIFTH CHAPTER. Not a Lucky Day!

**J**IMMY SILVER jumped up. Raby and Newcome followed his example.

The three Tommies, dusty, dishevelled, jammy, inky, breathless, staggered to their feet.

Lovell's destructive hand was stayed. Even Arthur Edward Lovell was doubtful now, and realised dimly that his "bull-at-a-gate" methods were a little liable to lead him on a false scent.

The two parties stared at one another, while Towle & Co. still raged in the corridor outside.

"I—I say, we're sorry!" stammered Jimmy Silver, at last. "What were we to think? We found the study ragged—and bagged a Head's licking for it—and picked up your book there, Dodd."

"You frumptions idiot, I suppose it was put there for you to pick up and make you make fools of yourselves, just as you have done!" snorted Tommy Dodd.

"Oh, my hat! Somebody pulling our leg, you know!" exclaimed Lovell.



"Easy enough to pull a Classical dummy's leg!" said Tommy Cook.

"Look here——"  
"Peele!" groaned Raby. "Peele, of course! Lovell held his napper under a tap this afternoon, and Doddy says he's kicked him. And Peele wasn't afraid of a Head's inspection. Of course, he had nosed it out that the Head was coming, and had his own study all ready. I remember Morny thought so."  
"And ours ready, too!" mumbled Newcome.

"We've been taken in," said Lovell.  
"You silly chumps, you've been taken in, and now you're going to be kicked out!" snorted Tommy Dodd.

"Well, we're sorry for the mistake, but——"  
"Will that set our study to rights again?" roared Cook.

"Nunno! I suppose not. But then you——"

"Will that get the jam and ink off me?" shrieked Tommy Doyle.

"N-no. But——"  
Doyle made a sudden rush to the door and turned back the key. The door flew open.

"Collar the Classical rotters!" shouted Doyle.

Towle of the Fourth rushed in, with six or seven Modern juniors at his heels.

"Back up!" shouted Lovell.  
It had been a ghastly mistake. But it was natural, in the circumstances, that the three Tommies were disinclined to make allowances for that mistake. They had been handled severely, their study had been wrecked, and they were excited and wrathful.

Lovell had not given much thought to a retreat after vengeance on the Modern enemy. The Classics had hoped to escape by a sudden rush from the study.

But that hope was frustrated now by

the inrush of a crowd of vengeful Moderns.

All that the Fistical Four could do was to stand shoulder to shoulder and attempt to fight their way out.

The attempt was quite hopeless.  
Great fighting-men as the Fistical Four were, they were of no use against odds of two or three to one.

They resisted gallantly, but they were fairly overwhelmed by the Moderns and strewn on the floor.

Fortunately, there was no jam or ink left—Lovell had used it all on the three Tommies. But the four unhappy Classics were ragged till they hardly knew what was happening to them.

Then they were booted out of the study.

Arthur Edward Lovell went first, with five or six boots to help him go, and he sprawled, roaring, in the passage.

Jimmy Silver followed, and then Raby, and then Newcome. After them the Moderns swarmed, still booting.

The hapless raiders picked themselves up somehow and fled for the stairs.

Fortunately, the Modern juniors did not follow them down the staircase, where an uproar would have drawn prefects to the spot. But, really, Jimmy Silver & Co. had had enough.

They scudded out of Manders' House breathlessly, and did not stop till they were half-way across Big Quad. Knowles of the Sixth, a Modern prefect, sighted them as they went, and shouted to them, but they did not heed.

The juniors tramped into the House. A sharp voice called to them—the voice of their Form master, Richard Dalton, in much sharper tones than they usually heard from him.

"Silver! Raby! Newcome! Lovell!"

"Oh! Yes, sir!"

"You are in a disgraceful state!"

Your clothes are dusty—dirty; your collars torn! Upon my word, I have never seen Rookwood juniors in such a state! Only this afternoon the Head punished you for having the most slovenly study in the Fourth Form. And now I see you——"

"We—we——" stammered Jimmy Silver.

The chums of the Fourth realised that it would have been wise to repair damages a little before showing up in the House. But they had hoped to slip in unnoticed. Their luck was out. This was most emphatically not Jimmy Silver & Co.'s lucky day.

Mr. Dalton raised his hand.  
"I am greatly surprised at this, Silver! You have, I suppose, been fighting—that is the only explanation."

"We—we——"

"I warn you, Silver, that you must be more careful!" said the master of the Fourth sternly. "Each of you will take five hundred lines of Virgil, and bring them to my study to-morrow."

"Oh, sir!" gasped the hapless four. Five hundred lines was a very heavy implot.

"If the Head had not already caned you I should do so now," said Mr. Dalton. "Go!"

Jimmy Silver & Co. scudded up the stairs and vanished from the severe gaze of Richard Dalton. They passed Cyril Peele on the landing, but they did not even kick him as they passed. They scudded on to the end study—still in a state of wrecked untidiness.

"We're up against it to-day!" groaned Newcome.

Lovell rubbed his knuckles.  
"I fancy I know who did this," he said.

"Peele!" said Jimmy Silver. "I'm fairly certain now that it was Peele. But we're going to make jolly sure!"

"Smythe of the Shell," said Lovell. "He grinned at me as I came in, and I hit him on the nose. Depend on it, it was Smythe. I've tapped his nose; but that's not enough. Let's go and rag his study."

"What?"  
"Come on!" said Lovell. "No good slacking about. Let's jolly well go and wreck Smythe's study, and if he's there we'll wreck him, too!"

Lovell started to lead the way.  
Jimmy Silver, and Raby, and Newcome jumped up, seized Arthur Edward Lovell, and whirled him back into the study. Lovell sat down with a bump. Jimmy slammed the door. The chums of the Fourth had had enough of Arthur Edward's leadership—a little too much, in fact.

"Now chuck it!" said Jimmy Silver wrathfully. "We'll make a little more certain before we rag any fellow's study, you frabjous chump."

"I'm going——"

"You're not!" said Raby.

"I jolly well am!"

Lovell jumped up and rushed for the door.

Bump!

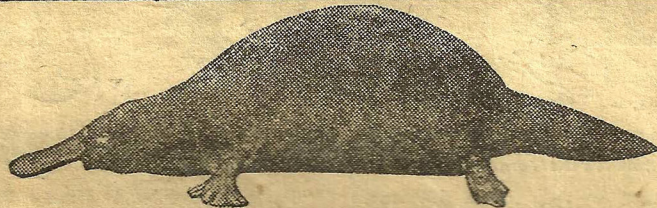
Arthur Edward Lovell sat down again.

"Have some more?"

Fortunately, Arthur Edward did not want any more. And Jimmy Silver & Co. set to work to put the end study to rights, postponing, for the present, reprisals upon the unknown study-ragger.

THE END.

*(But Jimmy Silver & Co. get on the track of the mysterious study-ragger. How, you will discover in next week's rollicking long story of Rookwood, entitled: "GIVING THE GAME AWAY!")*



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