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THE BOYS' FRIEND 1^D

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DAD'S FIRST NUMBER-TWENTY-ONE YEARS
AGO!

THE SCOUTS OF THE SCHOOL!

*A Magnificent New Long Complete Tale of School Life
and Adventure,*

INTRODUCING JIMMY SILVER & Co. OF ROOKWOOD SCHOOL.

BY OWEN CONQUEST.



The tramp was running hard. He had crossed a dozen fields, he had dodged up and down muddy lanes, he had jumped over ditches and stumbled in them, but the Modern scouts were not to be shaken off. They hung on his track like hounds on the track of a deer, and slowly but surely they gained.

The 1st Chapter.

Jimmy Silver to the Rescue.

Miss Dolly was crying. Jimmy Silver could scarcely believe his eyes at first.

He paused by the gate of the Head's private garden and looked over. There was no doubt about it.

The headmaster's daughter was crying.

Jimmy Silver looked on, nonplussed. He did not see Miss Dolly very often, but like all the juniors at Rookwood, he admired her very much. Miss Dolly was some few months younger than Jimmy Silver, and, as a rule, she was light-hearted and sunny-tempered. Jimmy wondered what was the matter, and whether he could do anything to help, or whether he had better sneak away quietly and pretend that he hadn't seen anything.

He was greatly concerned. But, though generally equal to any emergency, Jimmy was at a loss at this crisis. In a rag with the Bagshot Bounders, or a raid on the juniors of the Modern Side at Rookwood, in a "jape" upon unpopular seniors, Jimmy Silver was "all there." But feminine tears constituted a problem he did not feel equal to solving.

Before he could decide what to do, Miss Dolly caught sight of him. Then it was too late to retreat, so Jimmy Silver raised his cap and blushed.

"What's the matter, Miss Dolly?" he asked timidly.

Jimmy felt that it must exercise a

depressing effect upon the girl, to live in the same house as that awful personage, the Head. Perhaps the Head had spoken to her in what Lovell of the Fourth called his four-point-seven voice. If so, Jimmy could sympathise. He, too, had listened to the Head's four-point-seven voice, and quaked at the sound.

"Oh dear!" said Miss Dolly, dabbing at her eyes with a little lace handkerchief. "What ever shall I do?"

"I—I shouldn't mind if I were you," ventured Jimmy encouragingly. "He—he isn't so bad as he sounds, you know."

Miss Dolly stared.

"Who isn't?" she asked.

"The Head, you know."

"The—the Head! My father?"

"Yes. His bark's really worse than his bite, you know," encouraged Jimmy.

To his surprise, Miss Dolly looked decidedly wrathful.

"How dare you speak of my father like that?" she exclaimed.

"Oh!" Jimmy Silver was taken aback. He had felt sure that he was on the right track. "Hasn't—hasn't he been ragging you?"

"You ridiculous boy!"

"Oh!" murmured Jimmy, much discouraged. Apparently it was not the Head's four-point-seven voice, after all, that was the cause of the trouble. "Sorry! I—I say, is it your governess? If she's been jawing—"

"What!"

"Nagging, I mean," said Jimmy hastily. "I'll tell you what, Miss Dolly. If she jaws—I mean, nags—that is to say, talks—we'll put some crackers in her handbag."

"You bad boy!"

"Oh, my hat!" Jimmy was on the wrong track again. "I—I say, Miss Dolly, will you have some of this toffee?"

He held up the chunk of toffee temptingly. There were two pennies, and a fragment of sealing-wax, adhering to the toffee, but in the confusion of the moment Jimmy Silver did not observe that. Miss Dolly did. "Thank you, I won't," said Miss Dolly, her face dimpling for a moment in a smile. "Toffee won't bring back Fido."

"Fido!" repeated Jimmy.

"He is lost!" The tears flowed afresh. "Or stolen. My poor little Fido!"

"That little fat, pink-eyed—"

"He wasn't fat!"

"Ahem! I mean the plump little beautiful, white dog," said Jimmy Silver hurriedly.

Miss Dolly nodded.

"Yes, and he is lost. Poor little Fido! I shall never see him again. And there is nobody to find him for me."

"Oh, don't say that!" said Jimmy Silver. "I—I'll find him."

It was a generous offer, made on the spur of the moment. How on earth he was to find the missing Fido

Jimmy Silver hadn't the faintest idea. But beauty in distress touched his heart. Jimmy had never been a squire of dames. But to dry Miss Dolly's tears he would have gone through fire and water.

Miss Dolly brightened up a little.

"Will you really?" she exclaimed.

"Yes, rather!"

"Tommy Dodd said he would find him," said Miss Dolly mournfully.

"But he hasn't found him."

Jimmy Silver sniffed.

"That Modern bounder! You see, those Modern bounders can't do anything. Tommy Dodd couldn't find a lost elephant, not if it was under his nose. I'll tell you what, Miss Dolly. If you won't cry any more, I'll call out the Rookwood scouts this afternoon, and we'll have Fido in next to no time."

"Tommy Dodd's going to call out the Scouts?"

"Tommy Dodd's an ass!"

"How funny!" said Miss Dolly, dimpling again.

"Eh? What's funny?"

"Tommy Dodd said you were an ass."

"Did he?" roared Jimmy Silver, in a voice that strongly resembled the celebrated four-point-seven tones of the Head.

"And he said I was to leave it to him, because if I asked any Classical duffers to find Fido, he would get more lost than ever."

"The—the—the—" Jimmy Silver gasped. "That was only Modern

swank, Miss Dolly. All these Modern bounders ought to be sacked, from the head prefect down to the smallest fag. If the Head had the brains of a bunny rabbit—"

"What!"

"I—I—I mean—that is—ahem!—you know—ah!—yes—I—I—" Jimmy Silver grew a little incoherent. "I—I mean the Head has more brains than—a ton of bunny rabbits. But about that dog—"

"I think—"

"We'll find him, Miss Dolly," said Jimmy Silver confidently. "We'll track him down this afternoon. Where did you lose him?"

"The gate was left open, and he ran into the quadrangle. Then he vanished, so he must have gone out into the road, I suppose. I have asked everybody, and nobody has seen him. I think he must have been stolen," said Miss Dolly tearfully. "And Leggett says—"

"Leggett!" growled Jimmy Silver. Leggett was a youth in the Modern Fourth, and a thorough-paced "rotter," and Jimmy did not like the idea of Leggett talking to Miss Dolly at all.

"Yes, Leggett. He said there was a wicked man near Coombe, who buys dogs for vivisection, and—and he might have bought Fido from some horrid tramp—"

"I'll jolly well punch Leggett's head!" growled Jimmy Silver. "I don't believe there's any such beast in the neighbourhood."

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THE SCOUTS OF

(Continued
from the
previous
page.)

THE SCHOOL!

"Leggett advised me to offer a reward," said Miss Dolly anxiously. "He said a reward of a pound would make any tramp bring him back who had stolen him. He said he would take the advertisement down to the newspaper office for me."

Jimmy Silver nodded. "It isn't a bad idea, Miss Dolly, if some tramp's got him. But a pound's a lot of money."

"I have a pound in the post-office," said Miss Dolly loftily. "I would give it all to get Fido back safe. But I must ask my papa."

"You leave it to us, Miss Dolly!"

"But I've left it to Tommy Dodd."

"Blow Tommy Dodd—I mean, bless Tommy Dodd! These Modern asses wouldn't be able to find him in a month of Sundays. You leave it to us, and we'll find Fido before he's an hour older," said Jimmy Silver recklessly.

"Thank you so much!" said Miss Dolly demurely.

"The end study never gets left," said Jimmy Silver impressively.

And Jimmy scuttled away. Miss Dolly looked after him thoughtfully.

Tommy Dodd, the great chief of the Modern juniors, had offered to find Fido. Jimmy Silver, his rival on the Classical side, had also offered to find the missing bow-wow—before that bow-wow was an hour older, too. And Miss Dolly's conclusion on the subject was:

"I think I shall put that advertisement in."

Which showed that Miss Dolly did not share the complete confidence which those cheery young gentlemen felt in themselves.

The 2nd Chapter.

A Short Way With Slackers.

"Footer this afternoon?" asked Tommy Cook.

Tommy Dodd shook his head.

"Better stick to practice, bedad!" remarked Tommy Doyle.

"No time for footer."

"Phwat's on?"

"Scouting."

The three Tommies of the Modern Fourth had just come out from dinner. It was a Wednesday—a half-holiday at Rookwood. Tommy Dodd had been looking very thoughtful throughout dinner.

Footer occupied a great deal of Tommy Dodd's thoughts, as a rule; but just now he was not thinking of footer.

"Scouting," repeated Doyle. "We had a scout run last Saturday, Tommy darling."

"We'll have another this afternoon."

"What for?" demanded Cook.

"There's a dog lost."

"A—a what?"

"Dog."

Tommy Cook and Tommy Doyle stared at their leader in amazement that was mingled with wrath and disdain.

"Howly mother av Moses!" ejaculated Doyle. "Ye're thinkin' of chucking the footer to look for a lost dog intirely!"

"Are you off your rocker?" demanded Tommy Cook with equal warmth. "Bless the blessed lost dog!"

"It's Miss Dolly's little dog."

"Oh!"

"So, you see, it's important."

"Ye-es."

"Tain't only the dog," said Tommy Dodd confidentially; "but it will be a score over the Classical rotters if we find him. It will show that the Modern scouts can knock the Classics into a cocked hat. It's an honour for a lady to call us in to help her in an emergency, ain't it?"

"Ye-es."

"And Boy Scouts are bound to do a good turn every day."

"Ye-es."

"So call up the fellows, and tell 'em to change into scout rig, and we'll begin," said Tommy Dodd decidedly. "Fido wandered out of the quadrangle somewhere, and he's bound to have left some tracks. Every fellow's got to turn out—the

more the merrier, you know. If any chap wants to slack punch his head!"

"Right-ho!"

Tommy Dodd's word was law. Perhaps his chums would have preferred the footer, but the prospect of a score over the Classics consoled them. There was keen rivalry between Classics and Moderns at scouting, as in everything else. And Tommy Dodd was elated at the idea of getting on the track before the Classics even heard that Miss Dolly's dog was missing at all.

The Modern Fourth turned out at Tommy Dodd's autocratic order.

There were few slackers on the Modern side. Nearly all the Modern Fourth were scouts. They turned out in the quadrangle in scout garb, ready for business, and Tommy Dodd ran his eyes over them.

"Where's Leggett?" he demanded.

"Says he can't come," said Towle.

Tommy Dodd frowned.

"Can't come! Didn't you tell him it was a scout run, by order, Tommy Cook?" he demanded.

"Yes!"

"What did he say?"

"Oh, he said 'Rate'!"

"Where is he?" roared Tommy Dodd, as a chuckle ran through the ranks.

"In his study."

"Wait here!"

Tommy Dodd ran into the House, and mounted to Leggett's study. He was wrathful. He kicked open the study door. A whiff of cigarette-smoke greeted him.

Leggett of the Fourth was sprawled in the armchair, smoking a cigarette. He jumped as Tommy Dodd strode in.

"Smoking!" roared Tommy.

"Mind your own business!" said Leggett, as defiantly as he dared.

"Biff!"

Tommy Dodd's scout staff prodded Leggett on the chest with force.

Leggett yelled, at an unfortunate moment for himself. The cigarette slipped into his mouth. Leggett rolled out of the chair, gasping and spluttering and spluttering wildly.

"Groo-hoo-googh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Tommy Dodd.

"Yurrggh!"

Leggett spat out the cigarette, and gurgled, and rubbed his mouth furiously.

"Yow! You rotter! Gerrout of my study!"

"After you!" said Dodd politely.

"I'm not going!" yelled Leggett.

"Blow your silly scout runs!"

"Prod!"

"Yow! Ow! Keep that staff away, you silly idiot!"

"Miss Dolly has lost her dog, and we're going to find it," said Tommy Dodd severely. "All hands to the mill on an occasion like this! Come on!"

"Hang the dog!"

"Are you coming?"

"You silly ass!" roared Leggett, dodging round the table. "You can't find the dog! You don't know where it is! Wait till there's a reward offered, and then it'll come back fast enough!"

"May have been turned into sausages by then!" said Dodd.

"Come on; we're going to scout for it, and you're going to help!"

"I won't!"

Tommy Dodd did not waste any more time in argument. The Modern leader had a short way with slackers. He brought his staff into the conversation.

"Prod, prod, prod!"

"Yarrah! Stop it! You're puncturing my ribs, you silly duffer! Yow! Ow, ow!"

"Prod, prod, prod!"

Leggett dodged wildly out of the study. After him went Tommy Dodd, lunging from behind with the staff. Leggett was not usually a good runner, but on this occasion he came near breaking a record. He joined the scouts in the quad, panting for breath, and looking like a Hun.

"Here we are," said Tommy Dodd cheerfully. "Now to pick up the trail. If that slacker tries to

muzzle, you're to fetch him down with a clump! Savvy?"

"Yes, rather!"

"Follow your leader!" said Tommy Dodd. "March!"

And the Modern scouts marched, and Leggett marched with them.

He did not like scouting, but he liked still less the prospect of being "fetched down with a clump."

There was no choice for the slacker of the Fourth.

The 3rd Chapter.

Jimmy Silver on the Track.

"Now for the trail!" said Jimmy Silver.

The Classical scouts were already on the warpath.

Jimmy Silver, Lovell, Raby, and Newcome, the Fistical Four of the Fourth, were in the lead. Flynn and Oswald and Jones minor and Hooker, and several other fellows had joined them.

They were not such a numerous lot as the Moderns, for it must be confessed that there were more slackers on the Classical side at Rookwood. But what they lacked in quantity, they made up in quality.

Some of the Classical scouts certainly seemed to be regarding the dog-hunt from a humorous point of view.

But Jimmy Silver was as serious as a judge. Jimmy Silver was determined to succeed, not only to relieve the distress of the headmaster's daughter, but to show that Rookwood Classical scouts were miles ahead of any other scouts, especially the unspeakable Moderns.

The scouts would have preferred, certainly, to be hunting for German spies, for instance. But German spies were at a discount, so to speak. No obliging spy was available for the occasion. If there were any German spies at hand, they were understudying the celebrated Brer Fox, and lying low.

Gorman spies being "off," a hunt for a lost dog was a good opportunity of displaying skill in scoutcraft.

Besides, as Jimmy had impressively told his comrades, Miss Dolly was crying for the loss of her faithful Fido. If that would not spur them on, nothing would.

The facts ascertained amounted to this—that Fido had strayed into the quadrangle that morning. Assuredly he was no longer in the quadrangle, and a search round the school buildings had failed to discover him. It appeared conclusive that he had wandered out of the open gates, and a heartless wide world had swallowed him up.

Probably some unscrupulous tramp had snapped him up, or some kindly person might have taken him in to feed him, or he might have gone off on a voyage of discovery, to learn what new worlds lay beyond the gates of Rookwood. Wherever he was, Jimmy Silver & Co. were going to track him down.

So Jimmy Silver said "Now for the trail!" in determined tones.

He scanned the road for sign.

His chums stood round and watched him. Flynn, who had brought humorous gifts with him from Ireland, suggested making a bee-line for the nearest shop where they sold sausages. Flynn was frowned down.

"The next silly ass who makes fat-headed jokes will get a prod on the ribs!" Jimmy Silver remarked, as a general warning.

And he sought industriously for sign.

"The first thing," said Raby gravely, "is to discover the kind of boots Fido was wearing. Without that, we can't pick up the track—Yaroooooh! Keep that staff away, you silly ass! Yooop!"

"I warned you!" said Jimmy Silver severely.

"Grooh! You fathead!"

"Dry up!"

Raby dried up, and rubbed his ribs. Some of the Classical scouts were grinning, but they did not make any more jokes.

"Got it?" asked Lovell, as Jimmy uttered an exclamation.

Jimmy was considerably muddy, the road being muddy after recent rain, but his face was bright.

"Look here!"

The scouts gathered round and looked.

In the soft mud, close by the side of the road, there was the plain imprint of a dog's paw.

The track led away towards the village of Coombe, but a few steps further on it was obliterated by the heavy rut of a market-cart.

"That's a dog, sure enough!" said Newcome.

"But Fido!" said Lovell dubiously.

"Any dog might have made that mark."

"Perhaps the porter's dog intirely!" remarked Flynn.

Jimmy Silver smiled superiorly.

"You fellows call yourselves scouts?" he asked politely.

"Look here—"

"Mack's dog is twice too big to leave that small track!"

"True enough!"

"Besides, it's Fido's track."

"How do you know?"

"Because I've measured it."

"And how do you know the size of Fido's feet exactly?" demanded Oswald.

Jimmy Silver's reply was crushing: "Because I looked for his tracks in the Head's garden before starting. He had left lots of them there, and he's the only dog allowed in the garden, so there wasn't any doubt!"

"Hurrah!"

"He came out of the gates," said Jimmy victoriously, "and he started for Coombe. Follow your leader, and look out for tracks!"

"Lead on, Macduff!"

Jimmy Silver led on, his eyes scanning the ground. The Classical juniors spread out in a line across the road, scanning every inch as they advanced. Since Fido's adventure there had been traffic on the road. The mud showed the tracks of other dogs, but especially of boots and wheels. But here and there, by dint of careful searching, the juniors found the trail.

The initial success encouraged them.

All the scouts entered heartily into the adventure now. After all, it would be a triumph to recover Miss Dolly's favourite by sheer skill in scoutcraft.

There was a halt as the party reached the stile in the lane.

On the stile a gentleman of the road was resting—a stumpy, stubby, beery gentleman, who looked as if he had done no work for many long years, but had nevertheless found means to quench very frequently an abnormal thirst.

The stumpy gentleman blinked at the schoolboys, evidently wondering what they were searching the muddy lane for.

"Here we are!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver suddenly.

Close by the stile the track showed again, in the soft mud where it had not been disturbed by a later tread.

"He went under the stile into the field," said Lovell, with conviction.

"Hours ago, though," said Newcome doubtfully.

"What price that beery bounder?" whispered Flynn. "Sure, he looks as if he wouldn't be above stealin' a dog!"

The same thought had occurred to several of the scouts, and they eyed the beery gentleman suspiciously. His shifty, beery eyes did not give a great impression of honesty. At his feet, as he rested on the stile, was a large bag of sacking, the top tied. The bag was well packed with something, and the juniors scanned it curiously.

"Good-afternoon!" said Jimmy Silver politely.

The tramp stared at him.

"Afternoon!" he said.

"Have you seen a dog?"

"A dorg?"

"Yes."

"Lots!" said the beery gentleman cheerfully.

"I mean, we've lost a dog—that is, we're looking for one. A little, fat, pink-eyed dog, looks a bit overfed, with a face something like a rabbit," said Jimmy Silver. Miss Dolly certainly wouldn't have recognised her beautiful little white dog by that description. "It's the colour of a washy rag, and has a tail like a banana."

The tramp shook his head.

"Ain't seed it!" he said shortly.

Lovell gripped Jimmy Silver's arm suddenly. His eyes were on the sack that rested at the tramp's feet, and he had distinctly seen a movement. There was something living in the sack.

"It's there!" whispered Lovell excitedly. "He's got it!"

"But—"

"I saw the sack move!"

Jimmy Silver's eyes gleamed. He fixed his eyes on the sack, and noted that it stirred as something moved within.

The tramp saw his glance, and scowled. He moved off the stile, and picked up the sack.

"I reckon I'll be gettin' on!" he said.

"Wait a minute!"

"Got a bob to 'elp a pore cove on his way, young gentleman?"

"That depends!" said Jimmy Silver. "What's in the sack?"

"That's my business!"

"It may be onra, Weary Willie!" said Lovell.

The beery gentleman glared at him.

"Wot's that!" he growled.

"Leave it to me, you fellows," said Jimmy Silver. "We've got no right to interfere with this gentleman on the King's highway! Willie, my man—"

"My name ain't Willie!" growled the tramp. "And I don't want none of your sauce, so you mark my words!"

"You want a bob!"

Weary Willie became more civil at once.

"Thank you kindly, young gentleman! I'm 'ard up—I ain't found no work this 'ere week—"

"Nor for a good many weeks, I should say!" remarked Lovell.

"And I'm that thirsty—I mean 'ungr—"

"I'll give you a bob to show me what's in the sack!" said Jimmy Silver, taking a shilling from his pocket.

Weary Willie scowled.

"Keep yer bob!" he snapped. And he put the sack on his shoulder and started.

At a sign from Jimmy Silver the Classical scouts gathered round him, and nine or ten staves barred the way.

"Halt!" said Jimmy.

"You cheeky young 'ound—"

"Better language, please!" said Jimmy Silver sharply. "There's enough of us here to handle you, my man, and to pitch you into the ditch if you don't behave yourself!"

"Lemme pass, can't yer?"

"What have you got in that sack?"

"Me own property!"

"Then why can't you let us see it?"

"Because I don't choose, blow yer! Lemme pass!"

"We've lost a dog," said Jimmy Silver calmly, "and it's suspected that that dog's been stolen. We want to see into that sack. You've got something alive in it." A sudden thought came into his mind, and he called out "Fido! Fido! Good dog!"

A whine came from the sack.

That settled it. There was a dog in the sack beyond the shadow of a doubt. The tramp made a sudden rush to escape, but the scouts were round him, and half a dozen staves pushed him back.

"Collar him!" shouted Lovell.

"He's got Fido!"

There was a yell down the lane.

"Go for the Classical rotters! They're after Fido!"

The Moderns had arrived.

The 4th Chapter.

Tommy Dodd & Co. Come Up With a Rush.

Tommy Dodd's idea had been to track down the missing Fido, and win the gratitude of Miss Dolly for the Modern scouts, and score a success over his old rivals. So his wrath may be imagined when he found the Classical scouts ahead of him on the track.

Argument, Tommy Dodd felt, was quite out of place.

His preserves were not to be poached on in this flagrant manner.

"Go for 'em!" he roared. "Stick to them!"

"Down with the Classics!"

And the Moderns rushed to the attack.

"Hold on!" shouted Jimmy Silver. "Pax, you duffers! We're looking for Fido!"

"So are we, you Classical fathead!"

"You couldn't find him in a month of Sundays, you Modern duffer!"

"Sack into him!" roared Tommy Doyle. "Kick the spalpeens out!"

"I tell you—"

"Bow-wow!"

"Look here—"

"We'll give you a chance to clear off and leave it to us," said Tommy Dodd considerably. "It's our business, and you Classical chumps would only make a muck of it, anyway! Are you going off?"

"No, you fathead! We've found him!"

"Eh? Where is he?"

"That tramp's got him in that sack!"

"What tramp?"

"My hat! He's sneaking off! After him!"

The tramp had taken advantage of the altercation to make his escape. He had swung himself over the stile, and was hurrying along a muddy footpath across the field.

"He's got him, has he?" said Tommy Dodd. "Well, we can deal with him. You classical duffers have got to sheer off—savvy?"



THE SCOUTS OF

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"Go for the Classical rotters!" "Back up!" yelled Jimmy Silver. In a moment more a battle-royal was in progress. The Rookwood scouts forgot that they were scouts, and that the duty of scouts is to help one another. They only remembered that they were Classics and Moderns, and the old rivalry found vent, as it often did, in a terrific encounter.

They dropped their staves, and closed in combat, tramping and splashing mud to right and left. "Back up, Classics!" "Go it, Moderns!" "Yow! My nose!" "Grooogh!"

"Oh, my hat! Take that, ye spalpeen!" "Yaroooh!" "Go for 'em!"

The pen of a Homer or the type-writer of a Kipling would have been needed to do justice to that battle.

The old battle of Classical and Modern was fought out.

The odds were on the side of the Moderns, and Jimmy Silver & Co., resisting desperately, were driven across the lane, and—still resisting—they were driven through a hedge of willows into a wet and muddy field.

There the Moderns left them.

Tommy Dodd's signal called the scouts back into the road.

"Those Classical duffers are licked enough," said Tommy Dodd, dabbing his crimson nose. "We've got to find Fido. That's what we really came out for!"

"Sure, and I'd forgotten him intirely!" said Tommy Doyle, nursing an eye.

All the Modern youths showed signs of battle.

"After that tramp! He's got him!"

"Right-ho!"

"Where's Leggett?" shouted Tommy Dodd.

Cook chuckled.

"Mizzled!" he said. "He bolted at the start. Leggett ain't a fighting-man by long chalks!"

"The blessed funk!" exclaimed Tommy Dodd angrily. "The rotter! I'll warm him when we get back! Follow me!"

The Modern scouts clambered over the stile. The tramp was running, and he was already small in the distance, three fields away. The fact that he was running to escape was sufficient for the Modern scouts.

They would have doubted whether the Classics had had the brains to discover the right man; but if this tramp was not guilty, what was he fleeing for? It was certain, at least, that the sack held a secret Weary Willie did not wish to come to light.

"Put it on!" rapped out Tommy Dodd.

The scouts broke into a rapid run. They fairly streaked across the field on the track of the dog-stealer. The beery gentleman was not so good a runner as the active juniors, and, in spite of his long start, they gained.

"We'll have him!" grinned Tommy Dodd. "We've beaten the Classics, and we're going to lick that dog-stealing rotter, and rescue Fido! Miss Dolly will know what kind of a scout out to trust after this!"

And the Modern scouts replied enthusiastically:

"What-ho!"

The 5th Chapter.
Leggett's Luck.

"Grooogh!"

"Oh, dear!"

"Yow! Wow! Wow!"

"Oh, my nose!"

"Oh, my eye! Oh, dear!"

Thus the Classical scouts, as they disentangled themselves from grass and reeds and mud, and picked themselves up and sorted themselves out.

Jimmy Silver & Co. were much the worse for wear.

They had done their best, and there was no disgrace in being defeated by odds; but it was very painful.

As good scouts, Jimmy Silver & Co. always presented a clean and natty

appearance. But alas! now for their cleanliness and nattiness.

They were muddy, they were damp, they were disordered, and their faces bore eloquent tokens of the fierceness of the combat.

"Well, this is a go!" mumbled Lovell. "I—I say, is my nose still there? It feels as if it isn't!"

"Look at my eye!" groaned Oswald.

"Look at my clobber!"

"Well, look at mine."

"What a giddy afternoon! Are you fed-up with dog-hunting, Jimmy Silver, you goat?"

"Bless Fido!"

"Those beastly Moderns will bag

Jimmy Silver severely. "Those Modern worms will bag Fido, but they haven't got him home yet. What's to stop us from getting a regular army of Classical chaps, and ambushing them on their way home?"

The Classical juniors brightened up wonderfully at the suggestion. All was not lost.

"We'll bump them over, and have Fido off them before they can say 'Balbus builded a wall,'" said Jimmy Silver confidently. "And we'll take the little beast—I mean, the lovely little dog—back to Miss Dolly!"

"Hooray!"

Greatly cheered up by the prospect, the Classics crawled through the hedge, and set off towards Rookwood. Half-way to the school they caught sight of Leggett of the Fourth. He was sauntering along in a leisurely way, and grinning.

Leggett did not care for scouting, and he had taken the opportunity of making his escape while the rivals of Rookwood were at hand-grips. He was grinning over his success when the Classics came by.

Leggett stared at them, and burst into a roar.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Hallo! What's the cackle about,

You worm, you're not fit to wear a scout's clobber!"

"Where is he, if you've found him?" said Leggett sullenly.

"That tramp's got him in his sack," said Lovell, "and we'd have had him only the Modern cads—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Eh? What are you cackling at?"

"Oh, my hat!" roared Leggett.

"You Classical asses! So you were after that tramp! Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look here, I tell you that tramp had him in his sack, and we know it."

"Ha, ha, ha! Yaroooh!"

Leggett's laughter suddenly changed to a yell of wrath and dismay as the exasperated Classics seized him.

They were fed up with Leggett's merriment, and with Moderns generally. Leggett had called them scarecrows, and it was only just that he should share their state—especially as he was a Modern.

"Bump him!" shouted Flynn.

"Leggo!" roared Leggett. "Oh, crumbs! Yow-ow-ow-ow!"

Bump!

Leggett was not in scouting garb, Tommy Dodd's short way with slackers not having given him time to change. He was in Etons, but his Etons were hardly recognisable the next minute. There was a good deal

There's a book, and a pencil, and—and—and— My only hat! Dog biscuits!"

Jimmy Silver's face was a study as he picked up two large dog-biscuits, which had evidently fallen from Leggett's pockets.

"Dog-biscuits!" ejaculated Lovell.

"What the merry dickens is Leggett carrying dog-biscuits in his pocket for?"

"Even Leggett wouldn't eat them," remarked Raby.

Jimmy Silver whistled softly.

"Fathead!" he exclaimed, addressing himself

"Eh? What's the matter now?"

"Duffer!"

"Who's a duffer?"

"I am!"

"Well, that's no news, intirely," remarked Flynn. "But what—"

"Gentlemen," said Jimmy Silver, "we're not going to lay that ambush for the Moderns. They can catch their tramp, and eat him if they like! We're going to lay it for somebody else."

"Whom?" demanded all the Classics together.

"The dog-stealer!" said Jimmy Silver calmly.

The 6th Chapter.
Not a Success.

"Faith, we've got him!" shouted Tommy Doyle.

"Don't let him get away!"

The Modern juniors gave a whoop, and rushed on.

The tramp was running hard. He had crossed a dozen fields, he had dodged up and down muddy lanes, he had jumped over ditches and stumbled in them but the Modern scouts were not to be shaken off. They hung on his track like hounds on the track of a deer, and slowly, but surely, they gained.

The tramp was spent at last. He halted under a clump of willows, and turned savagely on his pursuers. With a whoop of triumph, the crowd of Moderns closed round him.

"Got him!" chortled Tommy Dodd.

"Run down, be jabbers!" grinned Doyle.

"Hand over that dog, you rascal!"

"I ain't got no dog!" howled the tramp. "Tain't yourn, anyway!" he added, as a howl came from the sack he had dropped.

"We'll satisfy ourselves about that," said Tommy Dodd. "You ought to be run in, you rascal. Here, get out of the way!"

"Don't you touch that sack!"

"Rats!"

"Shove him out!"

It was evident that there was a dog in the sack, and equally evident that it was a stolen dog. The scouts did not stand on ceremony with the thief.

The tramp hit out savagely, and the Rookwooders promptly collared him on all sides, and he was rolled over, and pitched into the wet grass.

"Now you cut off!" said Tommy Dodd severely. "Prod him till he goes, you chaps!"

"What-ho!"

"Prod, prod, prod, prod!"

"Yow-ow-ow!" roared Weary Willy.

The prodding was efficacious. Weary Willy stood not upon the order of his going, but went at once. He stroaked across the field, plunged through a hedge, and vanished.

The scouts chuckled gleefully.

"Now for poor old Fido!" said Tommy Dodd. "Won't Miss Molly be pleased. Fancy those Classical duffers thinking they could beat us!"

"Awful asses!" said Cook.

Tommy Dodd bent over the sack, and began to unfasten the cord that secured the top. A whine came from inside, and then a growl. Tommy Dodd started a little.

"Poor old Fido! He must be awfully cut up to growl like that," he said. "I've never heard him growl before. Sounds like a blessed bulldog."

He dragged the cord away, and tore open the mouth of the sack.

A bull-head and two fiery eyes came out of the opening, and Tommy Dodd jumped back with a gasp of horror.

There was a dog in the sack—a stolen dog!

But it was not fluffy little Fido. It was a young bulldog, and it was evidently in a terrific temper. The animal struggled out of the sack, its jaws red and open. The array of teeth gave Tommy Dodd a cold feeling inside.

"A b-b-bulldog!" he gasped.

"Tain't Fido!"

"Look out!" shrieked Cook.

The bulldog had scrambled out, and he was dashing directly at Tommy



"Mind your own business!" said Leggett as defiantly as he dared. Tommy Dodd's scout staff prodded Leggett in the chest with force, and Leggett yelled at an unfortunate moment for himself. The cigarette slipped into his mouth, and he rolled back into the chair gasping and spluttering.

him now!" groaned Jimmy Silver, for once finding it difficult to live up to his motto of "Keep smiling."

"We tracked him, didn't we? But those Tommies will take him back to Miss Dolly, and she'll think that the Classical scouts are N.G.!"

"Rotten!"

"Can't be helped," said Lovell.

"If we'd had a better leader, he'd have brought a bigger party along, and then we should have mopped up the Moderns!"

"Oh, don't grouse!" said Jimmy Silver. "We came out to find Fido, not to scrap with the Moderns. I suppose there are enough of us to find Fido?"

"Well, the Moderns have found him now."

"We'd better get back and get a wash," said Jimmy Silver thoughtfully. "We're not done yet!"

"What's the good of tackling that gang again, fathead? They're two to one!"

"Keep smiling!"

"Oh, rats!"

"A true scout never says die!" said

you Modern worm!" demanded Jimmy Silver darkly.

"Ha, ha, ha! What a blessed set of scarecrows!" roared Leggett.

"You cheeky ass!"

"You'd better leave Fido alone," chortled Leggett. "He'll turn up all right when there's a reward offered. I'll take it in hand myself then!"

"You!" said Jimmy Silver, with supreme contempt. "You couldn't find a bunny rabbit in a cage!"

"Well, you haven't had much luck!" grinned Leggett.

"We found him!" shouted Lovell indignantly.

Leggett started.

"You've found Fido!" he exclaimed.

"Yes, rather."

"You meddling asses, why couldn't you mind your own business?" exclaimed Leggett furiously.

"It was our business, rather," said Jimmy Silver. "You mean rotter, so you wanted to find him and get a reward! That was why you suggested it to Miss Dolly, was it, and told her that yarn about a vivisection?"

of mud in the road, as the Classics knew to their cost.

Leggett gathered up a good deal of the mud.

Bump, bump!

Leggett struggled wildly in the grasp of the Classics. His jacket came up over his ears, and his waistcoat buttons went. Several articles tumbled out of his pockets into the muddy road.

He sat in a puddle and roared.

"Yah! Ow! Wow-wow-wow!"

"Now then, jump!" shouted Jimmy Silver. "All together, and come down on him at once!"

Jimmy's command was meant in a strictly humorous sense, and was not meant at all to be carried out. But it was enough for Leggett. He bounded to his feet, and fled at top speed. In about three seconds he had vanished down the lane, leaving the Classical juniors roaring with laughter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Hallo! He's been dropping his property round," remarked Jimmy Silver. "Better take it home for him.



THE SCOUTS OF

(Continued
from
the
previous
page.)

THE SCHOOL!

Dodd, his eyes glowing and his teeth parted.

Tommy Dodd gave him one look, and fled.

Gr-r-r-r!

That was what the bulldog said. Doubtless he took the Rookwood juniors for the cause of his imprisonment in the sack. Certainly he was excited, and wanted vengeance, and equally certain his vengeance was going to fall on them.

Gr-r-r-r!

Scout garb was very useful for scouting, but it afforded no protection whatever against the teeth of a bulldog. The scouts ran for it.

They ran their hardest. Fortunately, they were good sprinters. They reached the wide ditch at the side of the field, and leaped across it.

Then they looked back. The bulldog did not essay the jump. He showed his teeth ferociously on the other side.

Tommy Dodd gasped. "Oh, my hat! It's somebody's dog that's been stolen, but 'tain't Fido."

"Oh, crumbs!"

"There's a plank farther along," panted Towie. "He's making for it."

"B-b-better get back to tea, I think," murmured Tommy Dodd. It was really getting near tea-time, and the Modern juniors all agreed with their leader that it was a good idea to get back to tea at once. They made for Rookwood, and the speed with which they went home to tea might have indicated that they were very hungry indeed.

In the main road, however, they slackened down. The bulldog had disappeared from sight.

"What a sell!" said Tommy Dodd. "All the fault of those Classical asses, of course. We might have known that they couldn't get on the right track!"

"Of course we might," agreed Cook. "We'll try again after tea—what!"

"Yes, in a different direction," said Tommy Dodd hastily.

And the Modern scouts went home to tea.

They were not aware that, from the cover of a clump of willows near the school, nine or ten pairs of eyes watched them pass. The Moderns had given up the hunt for the present but Jimmy Silver & Co. were still on the warpath.

The 7th Chapter.

What Jimmy Silver Knew.

"Look here—" began Lovell restively.

"Yes, look here!" growled Flynn.

"What's the game?"

"Tell us what you're driving at, Jimmy Silver, you ass!"

Jimmy Silver smiled serenely.

He had called the Classical scouts to halt in cover. From their cover they had seen the disappointed Moderns tramping homeward. The Classics were puzzled and curious. That some idea was working in their leader's mighty brain they knew. But they were quite in the dark as to what it was.

"It's tea-time, you know," remarked Raby.

"And we're all jolly muddy!" said Jones minor. "We want a wash."

"What are we sticking here for, Jimmy Silver?"

The chief of the Fistical Four condescended to explain.

"We're waiting!" he said.

"Waiting for what?"

"The dog-stealer."

"Is he coming along, and will he give us his visiting-card, intirely?" asked Flynn sarcastically.

"His visiting-card won't be needed," said Jimmy Silver, unmoved. "We know him by sight."

"Phwat!"

"We know him?" ejaculated Lovell.

"Unless I'm wrong," said Jimmy Silver, in a tone implying that that at least was miles outside the border of possibility.

"Well, you're generally wrong, ain't you?" said Flynn.

Jimmy Silver ignored that remark.

"We're on the track!" he said.

"At least, I'm on the track."

"Whose track?"

"Fido's."

Lovell blinked round in amazement.

"Has Fido been in these willows, then?"

"Not that I know of. That's not what I mean."

"What the merry thunder do you mean, then?"

"Listen, my infants, and don't interrupt your Uncle James!" said Jimmy Silver sedately. "Fido was missed this morning. He wandered into the quad and wandered out of gates. A fellow might have happened to see him—"

"Well?"

"I'm reasoning it out. Scouting don't consist entirely in finding signs on trees and spotting tracks and tying knots. A chap has to learn to use his brains."

"When he's got any!" said Flynn.

"That don't apply to you."

This remark was ignored. Jimmy Silver went on rather hastily:

"Leggett, that Modern worm, advised Miss Dolly to offer a reward of a pound for her lost dog, and I think she's going to do it."

"We don't want any reward, I suppose!" grunted Lovell.

"We don't; but Leggett does."

"What on earth's Leggett got to do with it?"

"Lots!" said Jimmy Silver cheerfully. "You noticed that Leggett admitted that he was thinking of the reward, and even said that he'd take a hand in finding Fido when one was offered."

"He's that kind of mean beast!"

"Exactly! And he was tickled to death at the idea of Fido being found in that tramp's sack. You noticed it?"

"That's why we bumped him."

"Just so! And when Lovell first said that we'd found Fido, Leggett was very startled—"

"He thought he'd lost his chance of the reward, I suppose."

"Quite so! We've just seen the Moderns go home, and we know they didn't find Fido in the sack. They must have run down that beery boulder, but he hadn't got Fido. We thought he had, but Leggett knew he hadn't."

"He seemed to," said Lovell.

"But I don't see how Leggett could have known, all the same."

"He knew," said Jimmy Silver calmly. "Because he knows where Fido is."

"Eh?"

"We found that Leggett was carrying dog-biscuits in his pocket. What was he doing that for?"

"Blessed if I know."

"Ask us another, old chap!"

"What are dog-biscuits used for?" demanded Jimmy Silver.

"Eh? To feed dogs, I suppose."

"Does Leggett keep a dog?"

"You know he doesn't. What are you driving at?"

"Then what dog was he going to feed?"

"Give it up. It's a giddy puzzle!"

"Not to a good scout!" said Jimmy Silver coolly. "I work it out like this. Leggett knows where Fido is, and he was going to feed Fido."

"Wha-a-a!"

"It's as clear as daylight!" said Jimmy Silver impatiently. "Leggett saw Fido wander out, and he followed. He may have thought at first of bringing the little beast back. But then second thoughts came. Leggett is mean enough for anything, as you all know; and he's awfully keen after money. It all fits together. He followed Fido, and he shut him up somewhere safe—"

"Great pip!"

"Then he went to Miss Dolly, and found her worried over the loss of the little beast, and advised her to offer a reward—"

"Oh!"

"And scared her with a yarn about a beastly vivisectionist buying dogs from tramps, so that she'd be sure to do it—"

"The awful cad!"

"So he knew Fido wasn't in that tramp's sack, because he knew where Fido really was. He was startled when Lovell said we'd found it, but he cackled when he found what we really thought."

"This Book is from the collection of GRAYVILLE T. WAINE."

"The rotter!"

"But the biscuits!" exclaimed Raby.

"That's the clincher!" said Jimmy Silver. "That's what showed me the whole game. Leggett had those biscuits for a dog. What dog? He hasn't a dog; and he wouldn't carry biscuits about to feed strange dogs, I suppose. But if he's got Fido shut up somewhere till the reward is offered, he can't let the poor little beast starve to death. He's bound to visit him at least once every day to feed him. That's what he had the biscuits in his pockets for. He couldn't have had dog-biscuits about him for anything else. Most likely he was going to the place when he came out with the scouts. I don't suppose he came with them willingly, as he hates scouting; and he hadn't got into the clobber, either. So that's why we're here, my sons—because from this clump we can watch the gates of the school and spot Leggett when he comes out."

"Great Scott!"

"Like a giddy Sherlock Holmes!" said Raby admiringly.

"Every scout ought to be able to beat Sherlock Holmes at his own game," said Jimmy Silver modestly. "I may be wrong, but I think I'm right. Anyway, we shall soon see."

"Suppose Leggett don't go to feed Fido to-day?" suggested Oswald.

"He intends to."

"How do you know?"

"Because he wouldn't put the biscuits in his pocket to-day, intending to go to-morrow."

"Right on the wicket!" said Lovell. "But I should have thought that a cad like Leggett wouldn't mind much if a dog went hungry."

"Hungry dogs howl and whine!" said Jimmy Silver sententiously. "Leggett doesn't want Fido to advertise the place he's shut up in."

"Right again! Don't he beat the whole giddy band!" exclaimed Lovell. "It's all right, you fellows; the end study never gets left."

And the Classical scouts agreed that Jimmy Silver had at least strong probabilities on his side.

"But how the merry dickens long are we going to wait here?" said Hooker.

"Not very long now."

"And how do you know that, Sherlock Holmes Baden-Powell Silver?"

"Because the gates are locked at dusk, and it will be dusk in half an hour."

"Right again, Jimmy!" said Lovell. "You shut up, young Hooker! Don't I keep on telling you that the end study never gets left?"

"Well, when I see Leggett coming I'll—"

Jimmy Silver raised his hand and pointed through the willows towards the distant school gates.

"Look!" he said.

Leggett of the Fourth was coming out of the old gateway.

The 8th Chapter.

The Scouts' Victory.

"Careful!" murmured Jimmy. But the Classical scouts hardly needed the caution.

Keeping under cover, they were tracking the cad of the Fourth. The winter dusk was gathering, and it was not difficult. Leggett was walking quickly down the lane. Under the high hedges and trees the scouts followed—silent, cautious, and determined.

Leggett stopped at the stile where Fido's track had ended. It was not surprising that it had ended there, in the light of Jimmy Silver's astute reasoning. At that spot, probably, the dog-thief had picked him up.

Leggett glanced back, and the scouts flattened themselves in the hedges. That suspicious glance showed plainly enough that the cad of the Fourth was nervous. But he saw nothing to alarm him, and he crossed the stile and started along the inner side of the hedge. In a corner of the field there was a disused barn, a shabby old building that was never visited. Creeping in the cover of the hedge, the scouts followed. Again they sank out of sight as Leggett, at the door of the barn, cast another glance backward.

Then the Modern junior disappeared into the building.

"Run to earth!" grinned Lovell. "That speaks plainly enough, you fellows. Come on!"

"Follow on!" said Jimmy Silver.

Silently in the wet grass the scouts stole on through the dusk. They reached the shabby old barn. The lower apartment was open to the four winds, but a creaky old ladder led to a loft above. Leggett had disappeared. They could hear the

crunching of boots over the old rafters, and the whine of a dog.

Leggett's voice came in a whisper: "Good dog—doggie! Quiet, Fido!"

The scouts grinned.

There was a munching sound, as Fido's teeth started on a biscuit.

Then Leggett's form appeared in the opening of the loft, and he swung himself down the ladder. He gave a yell of startled affright as he dropped fairly into the arms of the Boy Scouts.

"Caught!" grinned Lovell.

"Who—what— Jimmy Silver!" panted Leggett.

"Yours truly!" smiled the captain of the Fourth.

"I—I was startled. I—I've been—er—exploring the loft."

"Not seen a dog there?" asked Jimmy blandly.

Leggett turned white.

"A—a dog! Certainly not!"

"Fido!" yelled Jimmy. "Fido, Fido!"

There was a whine from above.

Jimmy Silver clambered up the ladder. In the dusty loft a little white fluffy dog was secured by a chain fastened to one of the beams. Jimmy Silver patted the little animal, who rubbed his wet nose joyfully against the junior. He dragged the chain loose, and led Fido to the opening.

"Got him?" sang out Lovell.

"Here he is!"

"Hooraay for us!"

Down the ladder came Jimmy Silver with the missing Fido in his arms. The dog was curling up comfortably on his chest. Leggett cast a longing glance towards the door. It was evident that he feared a ragging at the hands of the disgusted juniors.

"Bring that cad along!" said Jimmy Silver.

Lovell and Raby took either arm of the cad of the Fourth. Jimmy Silver carried Fido in his arms as the scouts marched back triumphantly to Rookwood. The dusk was thickening, and old Mack had come out to lock the gates as they arrived. Inside, Tommy Dodd & Co. were waiting, curious to discover what luck the Classics had had.

"Here they come!" said Doyle.

"Bet you they haven't—why—what— My hat!"

"Fido!" yelled Tommy Dodd.

"The end study never gets left," said Jimmy Silver sweetly. "We've got him. And we've got Leggett for you."

"Leggett?"

"Yes. Leggett had Fido hidden in the old barn, and he was keeping him there till Miss Dolly should offer a reward. As he's a Modern, we leave him to you, Tommy Dodd. We caught him there, feeding Fido. Plenty of witnesses."

Jimmy Silver & Co. marched on towards the Head's house. The Modern juniors gathered round Leggett, with deadly looks. The next ten minutes was decidedly painful for that enterprising youth, and by the time Tommy Dodd & Co. considered him sufficiently punished Leggett had reason to repent his little venture in dog-stealing.

Meanwhile, Jimmy Silver rang an impressive peal at the door of the Head's house. The maid who answered it stared at the muddy, begrimed juniors in astonishment.

"Please tell Miss Dolly we've found Fido," said Jimmy Silver loftily.

"Fido!" Miss Dolly rushed into the hall. "Fido! And isn't he hurt? Old Fido! Jimmy Silver, you dear boy!"

Jimmy blushed.

"We—we all did it," he murmured.

"But where was he? How did you find him? How clever of you!" said Miss Dolly, taking her favourite into her arms and caressing him.

"Ahem! A—a beast had shut him up in the old barn, to—to claim a reward for finding him, you see," said Jimmy Silver.

"We spotted him. Scouts have to be able to spot things, you know, Miss Dolly. It's really nothing."

"Thank you so, so much!" said Miss Dolly. "It was very, very clever of you. And please tell Dodd not to trouble to look for Fido any more, as he's found, won't you?"

"Yes, rather!" grinned Jimmy.

And with a great deal of pleasure he delivered that message to Tommy Dodd. Tommy Dodd only snorted. Even the Moderns could not deny that Jimmy Silver & Co. had scored, and that, for the present at least, they had won first place among the scouts of the school.

THE END.

(Next Monday's grand long complete tale of Jimmy Silver & Co. is entitled "In Honour Bound!" Don't miss it.)

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FOUGHT FOR AND WON!

A Magnificent Tale of School Life and Adventure, introducing
Harry Wharton & Co. of Greyfriars School.

By FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

A Stormy Meeting.

"CHEEKY fag!" said Hobson of the Shell, with a sniff.

"Awf'ly cheeky fag, by Jove!" said Cecil Reginald Temple of the Fourth.

"Calling a junior meeting—a Remove fag!" continued Hobson, with rising wrath and indignation. "What's Greyfriars coming to?"

"Echo answers what?" concurred Temple.

Hobson of the Shell and Temple of the Fourth had stopped before the notice-board in the school hall. A good many fellows had collected before the board, to read the latest notice pinned thereon.

It was a surprising notice.

It was written in the well-known hand of Harry Wharton, the captain of the Remove, the Lower Fourth Form at Greyfriars. But Harry Wharton might have been captain of the school instead of captain of the Remove, by the way the notice was worded.

It was not surprising, therefore, that Hobson of the Shell sniffed with indignation, and that Temple of the Fourth echoed his sniff.

For the paper ran:

"IMPORTANT NOTICE!"

"A meeting will be held in the Rag at six o'clock precisely. All junior Forms are requested to attend without fail. An important announcement will be made concerning the Shell, the Fourth, the Remove, and the Third. It is expected that all footballing members of the four junior Forms will be present.
(Signed) HARRY WHARTON."

Hobson snorted.

"I'll jolly well go!" he exclaimed. "I'll take a crowd of the Shell with me, and mob the meeting. We'll show that cheeky fag whether he can call Lower School meetings or not!"

"And I'll come along with the Fourth!" grinned Temple. "We'll mop up the Rag with the cheeky little beasts!"

And with those benevolent intentions, Hobson and Temple walked off, to call their comrades together.

Wharton and Nugent and Bob Cherry sauntered into the Rag. A crowd of Remove fellows followed them there, asking questions. Johnny Bull and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh were already in the room. All the Famous Five were evidently in the secret, whatever it was. A shower of questions poured upon them. The notice on the board had made the juniors very curious.

"We want to know what that meeting's about!" shouted Bolsover major.

Wharton looked at his watch.

"It's about due!" he replied.

"Oh, don't be funny!"

"What's the blessed mystery about?" demanded Bulstrode.

"About the meeting," grinned Bob Cherry.

"Listen to the funny asses!" hooted Bolsover major. "Keep all that for the 'Herald,' and talk sense, if you can."

"It's some blessed rot, of course!" said Skinner.

"Well, you'd think it rot, of course," agreed Wharton. "You're not interested in footer."

It was close upon six now, and more fellows were coming into the Rag. Tubb and Paget and Bolsover minor of the Third came in with a horde of fags. Evidently they had seen the notice on the board. Tubb & Co. were looking pleased with themselves.

The fags of the Third did not often enjoy the distinction of being called to junior football meetings.

There was a trampling of feet as a crowd of Shell fellows poured in, with Hobson and Hoskins at their head. The Shell looked ripe for mischief. They had not come to attend the meeting in an orderly spirit. Some of them had knotted their handkerchiefs, in anticipation of a row. Temple, Dabney, & Co. followed them in. Six o'clock boomed out from the clock-tower.

Harry Wharton mounted upon a chair.

"Gentlemen—"

"Yah!" shouted the Shell and the Fourth with one voice.

"Order!" shouted Bob Cherry, rapping on the table with a cricket-stump. "Silence for the chair! Order!"

"Rats!"

"Go home!"

Hobson of the Shell jumped on a chair in his turn.

"Gentlemen—" he roared.

"Hear, hear!"

"Gentlemen—" shrieked Wharton.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Gentlemen," bellowed Hobson, while the gentlemen roared with laughter, "this meeting has been called by a cheeky fag in the Lower Fourth—"

"Gentlemen—"

"And I hereby put the resolution to the meeting, that the Remove fags are a set of cheeky little beggars, who ought to be turned out on their necks!"

"Hurrah!"

"Passed nem con.!" chuckled Temple.

"Turn 'em out!"

"Gentlemen," roared Wharton, "this meeting has been called—"

"Rush 'em!"

"Turn 'em out!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Back up, Remove!" yelled Bob Cherry.

"Kick out those cheeky fags!"

"Order!"

There was a rush of the Fourth-Formers and the Shell. The Removites rallied at once round their captain, and Tubb & Co. of the Third backed them up. In a moment more the meeting had resolved itself into a wild and whirling scramble. Fists and twisted handkerchiefs did great execution. In the midst of the uproar the door of the Rag was flung open, and Mr. Hacker, the master of the Shell, stepped into the room.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

The Cup Competition!

"BOYS!"

Mr. Hacker's voice penetrated the din.

The conflict ceased, excepting for a few pairs of combatants who were rolling on the floor.

"Oh, my hat, it's Hacker!" murmured Hobson.

"Order!" mumbled Bob Cherry.

Mr. Hacker surveyed the crowd of juniors with a frowning brow. Mr. Hacker was a stern-featured and severe-tempered gentleman, and he did not approve in the least of Form rows and rags. The playful manners and customs of the Greyfriars juniors were regarded by him as horseplay, if not hooliganism.

"Boys!" he thundered.

"Ye-es, sir?" stammered Hobson.

"What is this unseemly disturbance about?"

The juniors blinked at each other. Hobson dabbed his handkerchief on his nose, which had come into violent contact with Harry Wharton's knuckles.

"Juniors," resumed Mr. Hacker, "are allowed to hold meetings in this apartment on the distinct understanding that order is kept."

"Ahem!"

"Hobson, as the eldest boy present, you are more responsible than anyone else for this state of affairs."

"I—I—" stammered Hobson.

"If you please, sir—" began Temple.

"Silence! This disturbance is disgraceful! Hobson, you will take two hundred lines! I shall report Temple and Wharton to their Form-masters. If there is any further disturbance in this room I shall request the Head to close it to juniors."

And with that crushing statement Mr. Hacker stalked out of the Rag, with his gown rustling behind him.

Hobson shook his fist at the door when it was closed. Mr. Hacker was not popular in his Form.

"Isn't that just like the beast!" growled Hobson. "Didn't give us a chance to explain that we were only keeping these fags in order!"

Wharton mounted on his chair again.

"Gentlemen—"

"My hat, he's beginning again!" exclaimed the exasperated Hobson. "Look here, this meeting is at an end!"

"Fathead, it's only beginning."

"We'll jolly well—"

"Trot out the cup, Johnny!" said Wharton hastily, as there were very visible signs of further trouble.

"Right-ho!"

Johnny Bull opened a box under the table, and there was a general exclamation of astonishment as he handed up a tall, handsome silver cup—evidently a football cup.

"What the merry dickens—" exclaimed Hobson, in amazement.

"By gad!" ejaculated Temple. "That's a toppin' cup! Where on earth did you kids get that cup?"

Johnny Bull set the silver cup on the table, and the juniors crowded round to examine it. There were exclamations of great admiration on all sides. It was certainly a very handsome and expensive cup—as handsome a trophy as any within the walls of Greyfriars.

"Gentlemen—" re-commenced Wharton victoriously.

The sight of the cup had quelled the storm. Every fellow there was too curious to know what it meant to think of interrupting the speaker now.

"Go ahead!" said Hobson.

"Gentlemen, this meeting has been called to announce a new football competition in the Lower School. Colonel Wharton has presented this handsome cup to be competed for by the junior elevens of Greyfriars—the Shell, Remove, Fourth, and Third Forms."

"My hat!"

"Bravo!"

"Good old sport!"

"Well, my only chapeau!" exclaimed Cecil Reginald Temple. "What a ripping wheeze! What an old sport! That cup must have cost him a pretty penny!"

"Colonel Wharton sent us this cup while on leave from the Front," continued Harry Wharton. "It was sent in a box, and some silly asses, under the impression that it was a box of tuck, tried to raid it."

"Oh!" ejaculated Temple.

He was the leader of the "silly asses" in question.

"Some of the Highcliffe bounders got it away from them," resumed Wharton. "They thought it was a box of tuck, too. We licked the Highcliffe rotters—"

"Bravo!"

"And got it back. It turned out to be a footer cup presented by the colonel, to be competed for by the junior Forms of Greyfriars."

"Why the dickens couldn't you tell us so?" demanded Hobson indignantly.

"Did you give me a chance, you fathead?"

"Well, it's a jolly good wheeze. We'll have that cup for the Shell," said Hobson confidently.

Order had been completely restored now. The junior meeting was in the best of humours.

"Gentlemen, the ties will be played as soon as possible on half-holidays which are not already booked up for other fixtures," continued Wharton. "There will be two rounds, as there are four teams to compete, and the draw for the first round will take place here and now."

"Hurrah!"

"That is, of course, if the various Forms decide to enter the competition."

"Not much doubt about that!" grinned Hoskins. "We're after that cup!"

"What-ho!"

"The conditions are that the cup be played for in regular ties. In the event of a draw, the tie to be replayed at the earliest opportunity. The cup will remain in the permanent possession of the winning team, who will not put it up again for competition unless they choose to do so. The captains of the various Forms are requested to step forward to take part in the draw."

"Go it, Hobby!"

"Go it, Temple!"

"Go it, Tubby!"

Wharton descended from the chair. There was not a sign of "ragging" in the Rag now. All was good humour.

There was a chuckle as Tubb of the Third came forward, strutting a little, to take his part in the draw. It was pretty certain that, whomever the cup went to, it would not go to the Third. But Tubb evidently had high hopes of bagging the trophy.

"Let's hope we'll be drawn against the Third!" grinned Dabney. "That'll make us sure of the first round, anyway!"

"Don't you be so jolly sure!" snorted Tubb. "I don't think much of your footer in the Fourth!"

"It won't make much difference, anyway," remarked Hobson. "The cup's bound to come to the Shell."

"Bow-wow!"

"Order!" rapped out Wharton. "We're ready for the draw."

The slips were placed in a hat, and the draw proceeded for the first round of the competition for the colonel's cup. Tubb looked a little blue as he drew with the Remove. He knew that he would have had more chance against the Fourth.

"We'll give you a tussle, anyhow," he remarked.

"And we'll give you one, Hobby," said Temple.

Hobson grinned.

"I'll get a corner ready in my study for that cup," he remarked.

"Gentlemen, if agreeable to all parties, the first ties will be played on Saturday afternoon, and the final on the following Wednesday."

"Done!"

And the meeting, which had begun so stormily, broke up in high good-humour on all sides.

(Read all about the thrilling encounters for Colonel Wharton's cup in the conclusion of this magnificent story of Harry Wharton & Co. in to-day's issue of the "Magnet" Library, on sale at all newsagents, price one penny.)