

OWEN
CONQUEST.ARTHUR
S. HARDY.MAURICE
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EDITOR.DUNCAN
STORM.The **BOYS' FRIEND** 1d

OUR MOTTO IS: "PLAY THE GAME!"

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ONE PENNY.

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THE ROOKWOOD REDSKINS SCALP THE CLASSICAL CAPTAIN!

(An amazing scene in our remarkable long complete school story in this issue.)

THE ROOKWOOD REDSKINS!

A Magnificent New Long Complete Story, dealing with the Adventures of Jimmy Silver & Co. at Rookwood School.

By OWEN CONQUEST.

The 1st Chapter.
Scalped!

"Ugh!"
"Ugh!"
"Ugh!"

Jimmy Silver jumped as he heard those three remarkable ejaculations from Tommy Dodd's study.

The Classical junior had come over to Mr. Manders' house to interview Tommy Dodd & Co. of the Modern Side on the subject of cricket.

He was about to tap at Tommy Dodd's door, when those three deep

and expressive grunts came from within the study.

Jimmy paused, in astonishment.

Why Tommy Dodd and Tommy Cook and Tommy Doyle should be ejaculating "Ugh!" in chorus was a great mystery, unless the three Tommies had suddenly gone off their "rockers."

"Ugh!" came Tommy Dodd's voice again.

"Ugh!" replied Tommy Cook.

"Sure, ye can't hold a whole conversation on 'ugh!' " said Tommy

Doyle. "Don't ye know any more Comanche, Tommy Dodd?"

"Comanche!" murmured Jimmy Silver. "Mad as hatters, by Jove!"

"Ugh! I have spoken!" came Tommy Dodd's voice. "The tommy-hock of the Comanches is ready to—"

"Tomahawk," said Cook.

"Tommyhock, you ass!"

"Tomahawk, I tell you."

"Tommyrot, more likely," murmured Jimmy Silver.

"Look here, Cook, who's the chief

of the giddy Comanches?" demanded Tommy Dodd warmly.

Jimmy Silver thumped at the door and sent it open. He stared into the study, and gave another jump.

He had expected to see three Modern juniors of Rookwood clothed, if not in their right minds.

What he did see was startling.

Three Red Indians stood in the study, in blankets, war-paint, and feathers complete.

Jimmy Silver stared at them blankly.

"What the merry dickens—" he began.

There was a yell from the three Tommies at once.

"Seize the paleface!"

"Scalp him!"

"Tommyhock him!"

Before Jimmy Silver could retreat, the three Redskins had collared him, and yanked him into the study. Two Redskins plumped him down in the armchair, and the third flourished a tomahawk over his head. Jimmy Silver simply gasped.

"You dotty asses! What's the little game?"

Tommy Dodd chuckled.

"Redskins!" he said proudly.

"Something a bit above the weight of you Classical duffers. We're the giddy warriors of the Comanche tribe, and we're on the warpath, and you're the first victim."

"Leggo, you chumps!"

"Scalp him!" said Tommy Doyle.

"Where's me carving-knife—I mean scalp-knife? Scalp the giddy paleface!"

"Look here—"

"Silence, prisoner!" said the Comanche chief sternly. "You have ventured into the lodgings of the Comanches—I mean lodges. Tremble!"

"You thumping ass!" gasped Jimmy Silver. "Look here, I've come over about the cricket—"

"Never mind the cricket now. Hold the paleface while I scalp him!" said Tommy Dodd. "Ugh!"

"Ugh!" said Cook and Doyle together. Apparently their knowledge of the language of the Redskins was limited to that monosyllable.

"What's the little game, you chumps?" growled Jimmy Silver.

"Redskins is the little game," said Tommy Dodd. "We're rehearsing for our Redskin play. Rather an improvement on your piffing Shakespeare, what? 'The Comanche Scalp-Hunters, or the Lily of the Prairie'—"

"Oh, my hat!" said Jimmy Silver. "Who's the giddy Lily of the Prairie?"

"We're going to ask Miss Dolly to play the 'Lily of the Prairie,'" said Tommy Dodd, "and I rather think it will knock anything you Classical duffers have done in the theatrical line."

"Ugh!" said Cook.

"And we're going to scalp you, to get our hand in," said Tommy Dodd. "I've never scalped a paleface before. Pin him down while I scalp him."

"Look here— Oh!"

Jimmy Silver began to struggle. But Cook and Doyle had his arms in a tight grip, and he was pinned down in the chair. Tommy Dodd bent his head forward forcibly, with a grasp on his thick hair.

"How do you scalp a chap?" said Tommy Dodd thoughtfully. "Do you mind where it comes off, Silver?"

"Groogh! Leggo!"

"If you wriggle you may get it in the neck instead of the napper. I wonder if my pocket-knife's sharp enough."

"Thry it," said Tommy Doyle.

"You never know till you thry."

"Don't spill his gore over my sleeve," said Cook anxiously.

"That's all right—it will run down the back of his neck," said Tommy Dodd.

"Look here," roared Jimmy Silver, "don't play the giddy ox! I know you're spoofing, but you'll do some damage with that knife."

"Your fault, if you wriggle."

"Yaroooh!" yelled the Classical junior, as a sharp edge came into contact with his neck. "Keep off!"

"Keep still, then. I don't want

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THE ROOKWOOD

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from the
previous
page.)

REDSKINS!

to take your head off by mistake. Of course, it wouldn't really matter—there's nothing in it."

"Yow-ow-ow!" Jimmy Silver did not cease to wriggle. A sharp edge was sawing at the back of his head; and if it was a Modern joke, it felt as if the joke were going too far. He wriggled desperately in the clutch of the Moderns. But the Redskins of Rookwood held him fast, and Tommy Dodd continued to saw.

"It's coming!" announced Tommy Dodd triumphantly.

"Yaroooh!" It really felt as if Jimmy's scalp was coming off. He made a tremendous effort, and hurled Cook and Doyle away, and leaped to his feet. He crashed into Tommy Dodd, and Tommy staggered back.

Jimmy's hand went up to his head. He more than half-expected to find it come away covered with blood.

But there was no blood. And the next moment he observed that the instrument in Tommy Dodd's hand was not a pocket-knife but a paper-knife.

"Oh!" he ejaculated.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the three Tommies in chorus.

"You silly asses!" gasped Jimmy Silver, growing crimson. "I—I thought—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" He thought we were taking his silly scalp off!" gasped Tommy Dodd. "Classical funk! Ha, ha, ha!"

"Sure we wouldn't muck-up a decent study wid scalping ye," chortled Doyle.

Jimmy Silver glared at the three merry Moderns. The humorous chief of the Rookwood Comanches had been pulling his leg. As the three Tommies doubled up in merriment, the incensed Classical made a sudden charge at them. Three merry youths ceased laughing all of a sudden, and roared instead, as they were hurled to the floor. Blankets and feathers and Moderns were mixed up on the hearth-rug.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Jimmy Silver in his turn.

Then he tore open the study-door and fled.

The 2nd Chapter.

Knocked on the Head.

"After him!"

"Collar him!"

"Slaughter him!"

The three Redskins of Rookwood scrambled to their feet. The tumble had sadly disarranged their warlike head-dresses, and Tommy Dodd's wampum belt had burst, and Doyle had sat violently on his tomahawk—fortunately a wooden one.

The enraged Redskins dashed after Jimmy Silver, quite forgetting in the excitement of the moment that their attire was not exactly suitable for appearing in public.

They sped along the passage and rushed down the staircase in hot pursuit of the fleeing Classical.

Meanwhile Jimmy Silver was going down the stairs three at a time. It was sheer ill-luck that Knowles of the Sixth should have been coming up the stairs at the same moment.

The Modern prefect had no time to get out of the way, and Jimmy Silver did not even see him before he crashed into him.

It was a terrific crash.

Jimmy was going at full speed.

Knowles gave a yelp, spun round, clutching at the banisters to save himself. Jimmy sat down hard on the stairs.

"Oh!" he gasped.

But he did not pause. It was not safe to remain near the bully of the Sixth at that moment. He was on his feet again in a twinkling, and he vanished out of Mr. Manders' House at lightning speed.

Knowles clung to the banisters and gasped.

He had just released his hold of the banisters, to follow the fleeing junior, when three rushing Redskins came pelting down the stairs.

Knowles was right in the way.

This time he hadn't time to clutch at the banisters. He was knocked spinning. Down the stairs he rolled, with the three Redskins rolling and

sprawling over him. They arrived on the mat in a heap.

There was a chorus of howls and groans.

Tommy Dodd sat up dazedly.

He was sitting on something. He did not notice what for the moment. As a matter of fact, it was Knowles' face.

"Oh, dear!" gasped Tommy Dodd. "Wh-what was that? We—we ran into something, I think!"

"Faith, we did!" gasped Tommy Doyle. "And, by the same token, it was that baste Knowles! Yaroooh!"

"Gerroff me neck!" mumbled Cook.

"Gerrooogh!" came in stifled accents from the Sixth Form prefect.

"Wooooop! Gerroff! Wow-ow-ow!"

"My hat! What— Oh, great pin! I'm sitting on Knowles!"

Tommy Dodd jumped up as if he had been sitting on a red-hot iron.

The three dishevelled Redskins stared at Knowles in dismay.

Knowles sat up.

"I—I say, we're awfully sorry, Knowles!" stuttered Tommy Dodd.

The prefect gasped for breath. He was dazed.

"Sure, we're sorry intirely, Knowles, darling! We didn't see ye coming," said Doyle.

"You young scoundrels!" The breathless prefect glared at them.

"Ahem!"

"Grooh! I'll teach you to bump a prefect downstairs!" spluttered Knowles.

"Oh, my head! Ow, my leg! Yow, my back! Oh—oh—oh!"

"Are you hurt, Knowles?" asked Tommy Dodd meekly.

It was really a superfluous question. Knowles of the Sixth looked as if he were hurt, and his temper, never good, had suffered more severely than his limbs.

He staggered to his feet, gasping for breath and crimson with rage.

"You young rascals, you did that on purpose!"

"Oh, no, Knowles!"

"Sure, we—"

"What are you got up like that for?" roared Knowles.

"We—we—we're Red Indians," stammered Tommy Dodd. "It's our play, you know—the 'Lily of the Prairie.'"

"You silly young idiots! I'll teach you to play Red Indians on the staircase!" hooted Knowles.

"We—we weren't really—"

"Come to my study!"

Knowles strode away savagely, and the three hapless Comanches followed him, rubbing their hands in glum anticipation.

In his study the prefect selected a cane.

"Now, you silly young dummies!"

"I—I say, Knowles—"

"Hold out your hand, Dodd!"

Swish! Swish!

"Yaroooh!" roared Tommy Dodd, in really a lifelike manner as a Red Indian.

"Now, Doyle! Now, Cook!"

Swish! Swish! Swish! Swish!

There was a chorus of groans in Knowles' study. The three Comanches were almost doubled up.

"And now," said Knowles savagely, "you can go and take that foolery off! You were going to play a Red Indian play—what?"

"Ow! Yes, Wow!"

"Well, you're forbidden to do anything of the sort! You'll put that rubbish away, and if you ever put it on again I'll warm you!"

"Oh, dear!"

"Now, get out!"

"I—I say, Knowles, we—we want to do our play, you know," said Tommy Dodd, in dismay. "We—we've spent a good bit of tin on the costumes—"

"Get out!"

"But—but can't we go ahead with the play?" demanded Tommy Dodd.

"You've licked us, haven't you? Isn't that enough?"

Knowles did not reply in words. He lashed out with the cane, and the three Red Indians beat a hasty retreat, with the cane stinging behind. The Comanche warriors stood not upon the order of their going, but went at once, and they did not stop till they were safe in their own study.

"Oh, crumbs!" said Tommy Dodd dismally as he sank into a chair. "What a go! The play's knocked on the head, after all our trouble!"

"Oh, rotten! All through that Classical baste coming here and getting scalped!"

"I'd like to scalp Knowles!"

"Oh, what rotten luck!"

And the three Tommies rubbed their hands and bemoaned their misfortunes. They knew that there was no appeal from the prefect's sentence. After all their preparations, and after all their rehearsals, the "Lily of the Prairie" was destined never to appear.

The 3rd Chapter.
Jimmy, Too!

Jimmy Silver came rather breathlessly into the end study on the Classical side of Rookwood. Lovell and Raby and Newcome stared at him. Jimmy looked a little untidy, and there were smears of Red Indian war-paint upon him—rubbed off the Comanches in the tussle.

"Hallo! You look a merry picture!" said Lovell. "Have you been rowing with the Moderns instead of fixing up about the cricket on Saturday?"

"Yes. The asses!" gasped Jimmy Silver. "They're getting up a Red Indian play, the duffers! They're going to cut out the Classical players, you know."

"Silly chumps!" said Raby. "They can't touch us in that line! Rather a good idea, though—Red Indians."

"Oh, Redskins are out of date," said Jimmy. "If you want a play about savages, what's the matter with Prussians? But that isn't all. I bumped Knowles over coming away."

"My hat! Didn't he skin you?"

"I didn't give him time," grinned Jimmy Silver, "and I left him mixed up with the Redskins on the floor."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Now, the worry is, will he be satisfied with taking it out of Tommy Dodd, or will he come over here grousing?" said Jimmy. "You know what a beast Knowles is, and he's down on this study, too."

"Looks to me as if you're in for it," said Newcome comfortingly. "Prefects don't like being bumped over by chaps in the Fourth."

"He'll come over and jaw Bulkeley," said Raby.

Jimmy Silver was of the same opinion.

Even a good-tempered prefect might have been annoyed by being floored on the stairs, and Knowles was not in the least good-tempered. Moreover, he had old scores against the end study. That celebrated study never would be lectured or ragged by a prefect of the Modern side, and when Knowles overstepped his authority in that direction he found the Fistic Four a hard nut to crack. So it was not likely that Knowles would lose this chance.

About a quarter of an hour later, Rawson of the Fourth looked into the end study. He gave Jimmy Silver a sympathetic look.

"Bulkeley's sent me for you, Jimmy," he said.

Jimmy groaned.

"Is Knowles with him, Rawson?"

"Yes; looking like a Hun."

"Go and tell him to eat coke, and tell Bulkeley I'll give him a call another time, old chap."

Rawson grinned. He was not likely to take either of those messages.

"Now I've got to go through it, all through those howling asses playing silly Red Indians!" growled Jimmy Silver. "Blow them, and blow Knowles, and blow everybody!"

And with that comprehensive remark, Jimmy Silver left the end study and took his way dismally to the Sixth Form quarters.

He found Bulkeley, the head prefect of the Classical side, in his study, and Knowles with him.

"Here I am, Bulkeley," said Jimmy Silver meekly.

The captain of Rookwood looked at him frowningly.

"Knowles tells me that you bumped him over on the Modern side, Silver."

"Yes; awfully sorry. It was an accident, of course," said Jimmy.

"Knowles thinks you did it on purpose."

"I know he did!" said Knowles savagely.

Jimmy looked steadily at the Modern prefect.

"You don't know anything of the sort, Knowles," he said, "and I don't believe you think so, either. I didn't see you when I rushed into you."

"Silver!" rapped out Bulkeley.

"Well, Knowles is calling me a liar!" said Jimmy resentfully. "I say it was an accident!"

"And I say you are lying!" snapped Knowles.

"Liar!" said Jimmy promptly.

"What!" yelled Knowles.

"Same to you, and many of them!" said Jimmy.

"Hold your tongue, Silver!" said Bulkeley, with a worried look.

Knowles glared at the Classical prefect.

"Is that the way you allow juniors on this side to talk to a prefect?" he shouted. "Look here, Bulkeley—"

"You had no right to call Silver a liar, Knowles. I believe it was an accident."

"It was nothing of the sort, and if that means that you're going to let the young rascal off—"

"Oh, choose it!" exclaimed Bulkeley angrily. "Look here, Silver, I believe it was an accident, as you say so, but you've no business to be racing downstairs on the Modern side, and you know it!"

"All right, Bulkeley!"

"As Knowles complains, I shall lick you. Hold out your hand!"

Jimmy held out his hand, with a grimace.

Swish!

"Oh, crumbs!"

"Now the other!"

"I—I say, Bulkeley, ain't one enough?" ventured Jimmy.

"Hold out your hand!" thundered Bulkeley.

Swish!

"Grooogh!"

"Now you can clear out!" said Bulkeley, throwing the cane on the table.

Jimmy Silver willingly made for the door. He had had quite enough. Cecil Knowles uttered an angry exclamation.

"Is that all he's going to get, Bulkeley?"

"Isn't that enough?" growled Bulkeley.

"No, I don't think so, considering what he's done."

"Well, I do think so, considering it was an accident!"

"I've told you I don't believe anything of the kind. Cut off, Silver! The matter's ended, Knowles!"

Jimmy Silver scuttled out of the study. Knowles strode away with a frowning brow. Jimmy returned to the end study, rubbing his hands dolorously.

"That was a close one," he confided to his chums. "He wants boiling in oil. He wants garrotting! Yow-ow-ow!"

"Had it bad?" asked Lovell sympathetically.

"Yow! Yes. And that isn't all. Knowles called me a liar!" said Jimmy Silver sulphurously. "And—and I couldn't very well punch a prefect, could I, with old Bulkeley looking on?"

"Ha, ha! No."

"But I'll make him sit up somehow!" said Jimmy savagely.

"Tain't the licking so much. I did bump the beast over, after all. But for the cad to call me a liar, just because he's in the Sixth, and I can't lick him—"

"Just like Knowles!"

"This study is going to make him sit up!" said Jimmy resolutely.

"Ahem!" said Raby doubtfully. "It's rather—ahem!—risky, bucking up against a prefect—especially Knowles."

"Especially Knowles," agreed Newcome.

Jimmy Silver sniffed.

"He's not going to insult this study. I tell you he's going to sit up. He's only a Modern cad, anyway. Yow-ow-ow!"

And as Jimmy Silver was quite determined on that point, the Co. loyally assented, and agreed to back him up. But it was not quite clear how a prefect of the Sixth was to be made to "sit up," and even Jimmy Silver had to confess that, so far, he did not see exactly how it was to be done.

The 4th Chapter.

Tommy Dodd is Equal to the Occasion.

The three Tommies were looking lugubrious when Jimmy Silver encountered them the next day. He found Tommy Dodd sparring in the air, in the quadrangle, at an imaginary face. Jimmy had quite forgiven the "scalping" of the previous day, and he asked the Modern trio amicably what was the matter.

"If I could only give him one in the eye!" said Tommy Dodd, with another energetic drive into space.

"Who? Not Bootles?"

"No, ass! Knowles."

"Licked?" asked Jimmy. "The beast came over yesterday, and got me a licking!"

"Oh, we got that, of course," said

Tommy Dodd. "But that isn't it. The utter cad has stopped our play!"

"The giddy 'Lily of the Prairie'!" grinned Jimmy Silver.

"Yes, the rotter! It was a splen did play. We wrote it ourselves—"

"Then it must have been a regular corker!" chuckled Jimmy.

"Oh, don't cackle, you ass! We'd got the costumes all ready," sighed Tommy Dodd. "I was going to ask Miss Dolly to take the part of the 'Lily of the Prairie.' She'd have done it like a shot. Lots of us have been rehearsing. It was coming off next week, and now that awful beast has put his foot down on it!"

Jimmy Silver whistled.

"Dash it all, that's rather thick, even for Knowles!" he said. "He hasn't any right to do that!"

"Of course he hasn't, the rotter! But he's done it."

"You could appeal—"

"Oh, old Manders always backs up Knowles. That's no good."

"Blessed if I wouldn't go to the Head!" said Jimmy.

"What's the good? The Head would only refer us back to Manders."

"H'm! I suppose he would."

"It's knocked on the head," said Tommy Dodd savagely. "All our trouble for nothing, and a ripping play wasted! Costumes and war-paint all wasted, too. Isn't it simply sickening?"

"Horrid!" agreed Jimmy Silver.

"I'll tell you what could be done, though. Suppose you hand the play and the costumes over to us—"

"Eh?"

"We'll give the play instead. Knowles can't interfere with Classical chaps. The Classical players, of course, would turn the thing out over so much better."

"You silly ass!"

"You could form the audience, instead of the actors. See? Then it would be a success. I should say. The acting would be good."

"You thumping idiot!"

"Of course, I should rewrite the play."

"What!"

"It would want improving, of course. But you could leave that to me."

The three Moderns simply glared at Jimmy Silver. The kind and generous Jimmy, thinking them out of a fix, but the Modern trio did not look very grateful for his suggestion.

"Oh, bump him!" said Tommy Dodd. "Collar the silly Classical ass!"

"Hallo! Hands off!" roared Jimmy. "I'm only trying to help you out of a difficulty, you asses— Oh!"

Bump!

The three Tommies stalked away, leaving the captain of the Fourth sitting on the ground. They were fed-up with Jimmy's kind suggestions.

"Look here," said Tommy Dodd, as the three hapless amateur dramatists halted in Little Quad—"look here, you chaps, we're not going to stand it!"

"Don't see phwat's to be done, intirely," said Doyle. "We can't play the play with Knowles against it."

"We're going to play it all the same."

"Oh, bedad!"

"Without his knowing, of course," said Tommy Dodd hastily. "Of course, we can't exactly bump up against Knowles—the beast. Look here, we can do the rehearsals in the wood-shed; Knowles won't know anything about that."

"He's a spying baste," said Doyle doubtfully.

"We shall have to chance that. I suppose you're game!" growled Tommy Dodd.

"Oh, we're game!" said Cook.

"But—but what about the performance. We can't perform the play in the wood-shed and get an audience."

"Nunno! What price making it a pastoral play?"

"What!"

"Perform it in the open air, you know," said Tommy Dodd. "The weather looks like keeping fine; we could choose a fine evening, anyway. The fellows would all come. We could perform it in the field, and use the old barn for a dressing-room. Better than a stuffy Form-room, these warm evenings, come to think of it."

"Faith, it's a jewel of an idea!" exclaimed Tommy Doyle enthusiastically. "The Classics have never had a pastoral play."

"It will rather take the

it's because we can't perform it indoors. Only—only if Knowles gets to know—

"He won't."
"He's jolly sharp, and the fellows may talk afterwards."
"Well, if he finds it out afterwards, it can't be helped—it will only mean a licking. If he doesn't find it out before, that's all right."

"Good!"
"Only we can't ask Miss Dolly to take a part, under the circumstances. But young Lacy can do the 'Lily of the Prairie.' He's got a soft-soapy chivvy."

"Right-ho!"
Much comforted by this really ripping scheme, the three Tommies proceeded to inform the rest of the Modern dramatists of the new "wheeze." And that evening there was a full-dress rehearsal of the "Lily of the Prairie," in the wood-shed—quite unknown to Knowles of the Sixth.

The 5th Chapter.

An Interrupted Performance.

"As Shakespeare says—"
"Oh, bother Shakespeare!"
"As Shakespeare says," repeated Jimmy Silver serenely, "to rag or not to rag, that is the question."
"Did Shakespeare say that, you ass?"

"Well, something like it. That's the question, anyway. It's a glorious opportunity of ragging those Modern bounders. But there's a but—"

It was Saturday afternoon. There was no match that afternoon, and Tommy Dodd & Co. had devoted the half-holiday to a matinee performance of that great Red Indian play, the "Lily of the Prairie."

The matter was being kept very dark from Knowles. Rehearsals had been gone through successfully, and all was ready. The idea of an open-air performance had caught on, and the Comanches of Rookwood were certain of a good audience, both Modern and Classical.

The Fistical Four were going; but then Jimmy Silver propounded the query, in semi-Shakespearean language—to rag or not to rag.

"It's like their cheek, giving a play at all," Raby remarked. "We're really the Rookwood players, ain't we?"

"We are! We are!"
"Well, it wouldn't be a bad idea to rush them, and take some stumps and ink-squirts with us," said Raby.

Jimmy Silver nodded.
"That's the question," he said. "But there's a but—"

"I don't see it. We could make the Modern bounders fairly hop."

"We could!" said Jimmy Silver regretfully. "It's a chance wasted if we don't! But we're not going to."

"Look here—"
"Under the circumstances, as it's up against Knowles, we're bound to back them up," said Jimmy.

"That cad Knowles has squashed the play—or thinks he has. So it's up to this study to make it a success if possible."

"Something in that," agreed Lovell, upon reflection.

"It won't be much of a success, anyway, the way those Modern duffers act," objected Newcome.

"Not likely. But we'll help all we can," said Jimmy Silver generously. "We haven't made Knowles sit up yet, you know. This is up against Knowles, so we're backing them up."

"Oh, all right!"

The Fistical Four started for the rendezvous, therefore, in peaceable mood. They did not take stumps or ink-squirts. The pastoral play was to come off amid thunders of applause, so far as Jimmy Silver & Co. were concerned.

The Classical Fourth followed Jimmy Silver's lead, with the exception of Higgs, the bully of the Form. Higgs announced that he was going to "buzz in," and muck up the play. He made the announcement in a loud voice as the Classical crowd were making their way to the field.

Jimmy Silver turned on him.

"It's agreed that the Moderns are to be given their head this time, Higgs," he said politely.

"Rats!" said Higgs.

"So you're not going to keep the peace?"

"No, I'm not!"

"Then we'll keep it for you. Collar him," said Jimmy Silver.

Higgs of the Fourth was promptly collared, and half a dozen pairs of hands held him over the ditch. Higgs struggled furiously as his face was mirrored in the muddy waters.

"Now are you going to keep the giddy peace?" asked Jimmy Silver.

"No!" roared Higgs.

Splash!
Higgs' head went into the ditch. He was dragged out again, streaming

with water and mud, and sputtering wildly.

"Now you can go home and wash," said Jimmy Silver severely. "Buzz off!"

"Gerroooooogh!"

Higgs made a wild rush at Jimmy Silver. The Fistical Four closed on him again, and for a second time Higgs' head was dipped in the ditch.

Then the grinning Classicals marched on, leaving Higgs sitting in the grass, clawing wildly at his muddy hair. Higgs did not attend the performance.

Quite a little army arrived in the field where the Modern players were making their preparations.

The "stage" had been chalked off on the greensward, and the cast were in the barn making up. Crowds of juniors sprawled or sat in the grass, and there was a cheer when three Comanche warriors came out of the barn and the play began.

The "Lily of the Prairie" had been specially written by Tommy Dodd, with the aid of his two chums, and they were satisfied that it was a first-rate play. It seemed to consist chiefly of rushing, charging, yelling, and brandishing tomahawks. There was not much dialogue, but there was plenty of action.

"Knowles!" stuttered Tommy Dodd.

"Oh, crumbs!"

Knowles shoved his way roughly through the audience, and came on the greensward stage, his brows contracted and his eyes glittering.

There was a buzz of indignation from the audience.

"Get off the stage, Knowles!"

"Clear off, you beastly bully!"

"Kick him out!"

Knowles took no notice of those remarks. He fixed his eyes upon the dismayed Comanches.

"So you're playing the fool, after what I told you?" he rapped out.

"Look here, Knowles, you've no right to interfere with our play," mumbled the chief of the Comanches.

"Which are you—Dodd, I suppose?" said Knowles.

The juniors were quite unrecognisable in their war-paint and feathers.

"I—I—I'm Thundering Bull, the chief of the Comanches."

"I'll give you Thundering Bull, you young idiot! I distinctly told you you were not to play this nonsense!"

"Mind your own business, Knowles!" yelled Sitting Tiger, otherwise Tommy Cook.

"Turn the baste out, prefect or no

ing and gnashing of teeth among the braves of the Comanche tribe.

The 6th Chapter.

Jimmy Silver's Great Wheeze!

"Rotten!"

"Better luck next time."

"Can't be helped."

Thus said Jimmy Silver & Co. comfortingly.

The Fistical Four were entertaining Tommy Dodd & Co. to tea in the end study, after that ignominious conclusion of the great Redskin drama. The three Tommies were in a state of fury and exasperation that could hardly be expressed in words. Their feelings towards Knowles of the Sixth were simply Hunnish.

Jimmy Silver & Co. were comforting them with saveloys and ham and tongue, and jam and cake. They were deeply sympathetic, and they agreed that Knowles of the Sixth ought to be hanged, drawn, quartered, boiled in oil, and scragged and bumped. The unfortunate thing was that none of these richly-merited punishments could be bestowed on the iniquitous Knowles.

"The beast was actually laughing over it!" said Tommy Dodd, with breathless wrath and indignation. "I

Jimmy modestly. "Knowles didn't know which was which when he tackled you to-day in your war-paint and stuff, and if you hadn't spoken he couldn't have told. Well, of course, it wouldn't do for three chaps to go for Knowles and wallop him, as he's a prefect. But suppose—Thundering Bull and Sitting Tiger and Black Buffalo dropped into his study—"

"Eh?"

"And larruped him."

"Great Scott!"

"Then he wouldn't know who'd done it, and everything in the garden would be lovely," concluded Jimmy Silver.

Tommy Dodd gave him a withering look.

"You howling ass! You crass Classical duffer! Wouldn't he know it was us at once from the costumes? Do you think he'd fancy that Rookwood had been invaded by real Comanches?"

"That's the idea," said Jimmy Silver. "Of course, Knowles would know at once that it was you three."

"Well, you howlin' ass," said Doyle, "if he'd know at once it was us three, what's the good of puttin' on the war-paint to disguise us?"

"But suppose you three were detained by Mr. Manders at the same time—"

"Eh?"

"Then you could prove an alibi."

"Wha-a-at?"

"You could prove that you were under detention, doing maths, or some rot. That would see you through."

"You cackling duffer! How could we raid Knowles in his study if we were doing mathematics in the Form-room?" shrieked Tommy Dodd.

"Your poor old Modern brain can't work it out," said Jimmy Silver compassionately. "Can't any other chap put on war-paint?"

"Oh!"

"That's the wheeze. When three Red Indians collar him in his study and mop him up, Knowles will know it's you three. But if you prove you were under detention at the time, it will be all right for you. And as for the chaps it really was, Knowles won't know them from Adam."

"Oh, my hat!"

"You leave the Redskin rig in your study. Some young rascals sneak in and collar it and put it on. You can't possibly prevent that, if you're under detention in the Form-room at the time."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Lovell rubbed his hands.

"What a thumping wheeze! Why, it's as safe as houses! I'm going to be one of the party. I'll take a cricket-stump!"

"Better make it a tomahawk," grinned Tommy Dodd. "You can lick a fellow with a tomahawk."

"Well, what do you think of the idea?" asked Jimmy Silver.

"Ripping!"

"Topping!"

"Sure it's a broth av a boy ye are, Jimmy darling!"

There was a howl of merriment in the end study. Oswald and Rawson looked in to inquire what was the matter. They joined in the howl when they were told.

"Better not let it go any further, though," said Oswald. "You don't want it to leak out. It means a flogging at least."

"Mum's the word," agreed Jimmy Silver.

Amid many chuckles the juniors proceeded to discuss the plan. And when the three Tommies left the end study after tea they departed in great spirits and on the best of terms with their old rivals, the Classicals.

The 7th Chapter.

On the Warpath.

On Monday afternoon, in the Fourth Form-room, Tommy Dodd & Co. succeeded in surprising most of the Form. The second lesson that afternoon was French, which the Moderns shared with the Classicals. Monsieur Monceau was very popular at Rookwood, but that afternoon the three Tommies amused themselves by pulling his leg in the most exasperating manner.

Mossoo was a patient gentleman, but his patience had limits. When an ink-ball caught him behind the ear Mossoso's anger boiled over.

"Dodd, Doyle, Cook!" he snapped.

"Yes, Mossoso!"

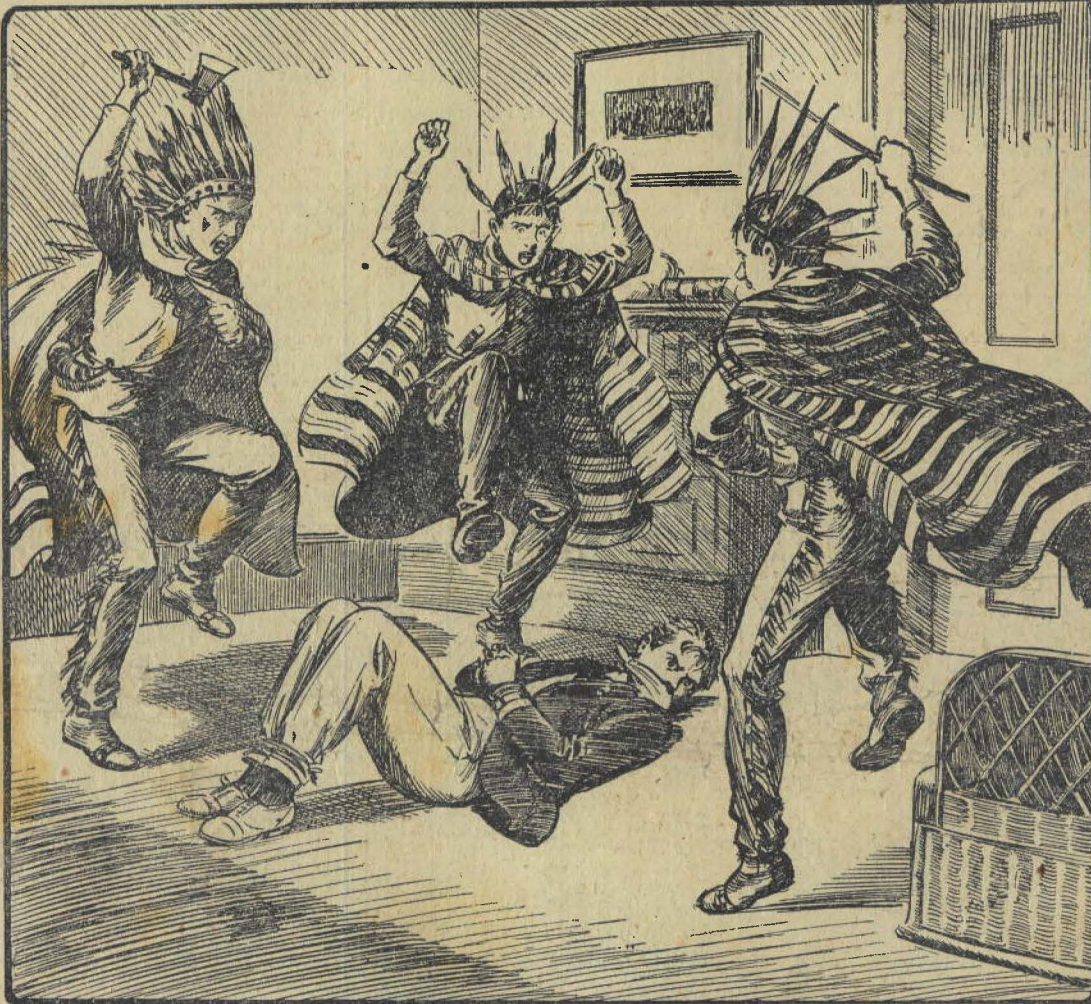
"You trow zem sings about, isn't it?"

"Ahem! Sorry, sir!"

"I zink zat you sall learn to keep ze ordair in ze class, isn't it?" said Monsieur Monceau. "You are three bad boys. You vill stay in for two hours affair ze class, and write out French verbs viz you."

"Oh, sir!"

"I speaks to your Form-master, and he see zat you sall be detained, n'est-ce-pas. Perhaps zat lesson will be good for you."



The prefect's hands secured, Thundering Bull fastened a second cord round his ankles, knotting it securely. Then the three Redskins rose, panting a little, and executed a war-dance of triumph round the prefect as he lay gurgling on his back.

"Awful rot, begad!" Townsend of the Fourth remarked to Peele with a yawn.

"Rotten!" agreed Peele.

"Bravo!" shouted Jimmy Silver.

Tommy Dodd was holding the stage, and his voice boomed out in a telling speech.

"Bind the trembling paleface to the torture-stake! Let him die the death of a dog! Ugh! I have spoken!"

"Bravo!"

"Oh, my hat!" exclaimed Lovell suddenly, as he glanced round.

"Knowles!"

"What?"

"Look!"

Jimmy Silver looked round.

Knowles of the Sixth, with Catesby, was crossing the field by a footpath in the distance. Jimmy Silver saw the bully of the Sixth glance round towards the crowd gathered about the barn.

"What rotten luck for Tommy!" murmured Jimmy. "The beast has spotted them."

"He's coming!" said Oswald.

Knowles was striding towards the scene. He had a walking-cane under his arm, and he let it slip into his hand. Catesby followed him, grinning.

The Redskins sighted him suddenly, and the ferocious Comanches, who were binding Towle of the Fourth to the torture-stake, ceased and stared at him in dismay.

prefect!" howled Black Buffalo, alias Tommy Doyle.

Knowles scowled.

"Stop this at once!" he said. "All of you clear off immediately. I'll help you to start!"

"Yow-ow-ow! Yaroooooh!"

Knowles brought his cane into action.

Lash, lash, lash!

The Redskins dodged wildly. Never had a war-party of Comanches been put to such sudden and ignominious rout.

There were indignant hoots, mingled with yells of laughter, from the audience. Redskins were fleeing in all directions, and Knowles of the Sixth was left master of the field.

"Now, you clear off, you young rascals!" exclaimed Knowles, waving his cane at the audience.

"We'll suit ourselves about that!" said Jimmy Silver independently.

"We're not under your rotten orders, you Prussian!"

Knowles gritted his teeth, and looked inclined to begin on the Fistical Four. But he refrained. They were quite ready for trouble. The Modern part of the audience cleared off at his order; they had no choice. The Classicals stood their ground to show their independence. There was nothing else to stand their ground for, for the play was at an end.

The "Lily of the Prairie" had come to a sudden and unexpected conclusion. There was weeping and wail-

heard him—laughing over it with Catesby and Frampton! Laughing, the beast!"

"We'll give him something else to laugh about if—if if we get a chance," mumbled Tommy Cook.

"I feel jolly well inclined to go for him, and chance it!" growled Doyle.

"Why don't a Zeppelin drop a bomb on him? That's what I want to know. I'd pay for the bomb, with pleasure!"

Jimmy Silver was thinking deeply. It was clear that the bully of the Sixth had fairly overstepped the line, and that his latest tyranny was not to be stood. True, it was the Modern juniors who were his victims. But Jimmy was deeply indignant on their account, and he had still his own score against Knowles unpaid. Jimmy was thinking hard.

"What price giving him a jolly good hiding?" he asked at last.

"Nothing I'd like better!" snapped Dodd. "But I don't want to be expelled from Rookwood, thanks all the same."

"Suppose he didn't know who did it?"

"Eh? Hasn't he eyes, fathead?"

"I've got an idea!"

"Oh, your Classical ideas!" said Tommy Dodd disparagingly.

"Faith, and let's hear it intirely," said Doyle. "Sure, I'd do anythin' to get even with the baste. Go ahead, Jimmy darling."

"It came into my head," said



THE ROOKWOOD

(Continued
from the
previous
page.)

REDSKINS!

The three Tommies looked submissively sorrowful.

They were not specially keen on French verbs; but if Mossoo had only known it, they had been planning to get detained that afternoon.

When the Fourth Form marched out after lessons, the three Tommies remained behind, with lugubrious looks, to grind at French verbs. Mr. Bootles came in and spoke to them severely.

"Monsieur Monceau complains of your conduct very seriously," said Mr. Bootles, with a frown. "I am surprised at you!"

"Oh, sir!" murmured the three. "You are detained for two hours. I shall expect you to write out the whole of the four conjugations, in every mood and tense."

"Tare an' 'ouns!" murmured Tommy Doyle.

"Don't utter ridiculous ejaculations, Doyle! And if you quit this room before your detention expires, I shall punish you severely."

"Oh, sir, we wouldn't!" said Tommy Dodd meekly. Certainly the three young rascals had no intention of doing that.

"Mind you do not!" said Mr. Bootles severely. "I shall, in fact, keep an eye on the Form-room, and if I find that you have broken detention—"

Mr. Bootles did not finish. He left it to the imagination of the detained juniors what awful things would happen in that case.

The Form-master went out, and closed the door hard; and the three Moderns grinned at one another.

"Not a giddy suspish!" said Tommy Dodd. "I wonder what Bootles would think if he knew he's helping us to prove an alibi?"

"Ha, ha! Poor old Mossoo! It was rather a shame to worry him!" grinned Cook.

"Never mind. We'll please him with the way we do these rotten verbs, and butter him up afterwards," said Tommy Dodd.

And the detained juniors started industriously upon the four conjugations.

Meanwhile Jimmy Silver & Co. were not idle.

Having seen Knowles of the Sixth on the cricket-field, they strolled over to the Modern side, and slipped into

Tommy Dodd's study. Knowles was pretty certain to remain half an hour at the cricket, so they had plenty of time.

The costumes of Thundering Bull, Sitting Tiger, and Black Buffalo were ready in the study, with the necessary grease-paints.

Jimmy Silver locked the door. Then Jimmy, Lovell, and Raby proceeded to don the Redskin costumes.

Newcome helped them to make up. It was not so necessary to look like Redskins as to conceal every trace of their own identity, and Newcome laid the paint on thick.

With coppery complexions, and darkened eyebrows, and war-paint of red and yellow in bars across their faces, the merry Classics were not likely to be recognised.

When the transformation was complete, they surveyed themselves in the glass with many chuckles.

"My only hat!" said Jimmy Silver. "My only Aunt Sempronia wouldn't know me now, I fancy."

"Knowles won't, that's a cert!" grinned Lovell.

"About time Knowles came in, I should say. Cut off and get an eye on the cad, Newcome!"

Newcome hurried out to scout.

He returned in a few minutes, grinning.

"Knowles is coming in. He'll be in a couple of ticks."

"Good!"

"We've got to catch him alone," said Raby.

"Keep an eye open, Newcome, and let's have the news."

Newcome stationed himself on the stairs overlooking the senior passage below. Most of the fellows were on the playing-fields, and the passages were deserted. The avengers had chosen their time well.

Knowles of the Sixth came in, stopped a few minutes chatting with Catesby in the passage, and then went to his study.

As soon as the door had closed on him Newcome hurried back to Tommy Dodd's quarters with the news.

"Good egg!" said Jimmy Silver. "Now get down to the lower stairs, and whistle when the coast's quite clear. We're ready."

Jimmy and Lovell and Raby waited anxiously for Newcome's whistle. It was heard in a few minutes.

"Come on!" said Thundering Bull breathlessly.

The three amateur Redskins hurried out of the study, and scuttled down the stairs to the senior passage. In a few seconds they were at Knowles' door.

Jimmy did not pause to knock.

He hurled the door open, and with a rush the three Redskins entered the study, Jimmy slamming the door behind him.

Newcome grinned, and strolled away to the cricket-field. He was finished on the Modern side. The rest remained in the hands of Jimmy Silver & Co.

The 8th Chapter.

In the Hands of the Redskins.

Cecil Knowles was seated in his armchair, smoking a cigarette after his cricket practise—one of the pleasant little customs of the cad of the Sixth.

He started to his feet as his door was hurled open, hastily concealing the cigarettes in the palm of his hand.

He stared blankly at three raging Redskins bundled in, and one of them slammed the door and locked it.

The bully of the Sixth could scarcely believe his eyes.

He had licked Tommy Dodd & Co., and sternly forbidden any more Redskin business, and here were the Redskins invading his own study as truculently as real Comanches on the war-path!

"You cheeky young sweeps!" roared Knowles, greatly incensed. "What the thunder do you mean?"

"Ugh!" grunted the three Comanche braves.

"Dodd, you young scoundrel! My hat! Hands off! Are you mad? Why—what—Yah! Oh!" stuttered Knowles, as the three Redskins simply hurled themselves upon him.

The astounded prefect went to the floor with a crash.

He gave a wild howl as the cigarette slipped up his sleeve. It was painful. But the Redskins did not even notice it. They sprawled over Knowles, pinning him down on his back on the study carpet.

Knowles was too astounded to struggle for a moment. Then he began to resist violently.

"You young hounds!" he panted. "You'll be flogged for this—sacked, you young villains! Dodd—Doyle—Cook—Grooh! Gerrooh! Will you get off, you young demons? I'll report this to the Head! Yaroooh! Gurrirrrgh!"

Knowles' voice died away, as a rag was shoved into his mouth, choking his utterance.

He struggled furiously, but the three sturdy juniors were too much even for the big Sixth-Former—much too much.

Thundering Bull had a knee planted on his chest, Black Buffalo was grasping his wrists and holding them together, and Sitting Tiger was trampling recklessly on his legs.

The three Redskins did not speak.

They did not intend to give the prefect a chance of recognising their voices. But the astounded and enraged Knowles had no doubt at all about their identity. He did not doubt for a moment that the three Tommies were taking vengeance for the "mucked-up" play in this reckless manner.

"Ugh!" grunted Thundering Bull. And that was all he said. The three Comanches wisely confined their remarks to that guttural ejaculation.

Knowles resisted, striving to spit the gag out of his mouth and yell for help. But a coppery fist drove the gag further in, and he could only splutter and gurgle.

Thundering Bull jerked a cord from under his blanket, and fastened it round the prefect's wrists as Black Buffalo held them together.

The cord was knotted tightly, and then Knowles was helpless.

His hands secured, Thundering Bull fastened a second cord round his ankles with deft fingers, knotting it very securely.

Then the three Redskins rose, panting a little, and executed a war-dance of triumph round the prefect as he lay gurgling on his back.

Knowles' face was black with fury. That any juniors should venture to handle a prefect of the Sixth in this outrageous manner was astounding!

Knowles could hardly believe that it was not a fearsome nightmare. But he soon had painful proof that it was real.

The war-dance over, the Redskins collared him and turned him over on his face. Then Sitting Tiger sat on his head, and Black Buffalo on his legs, and Thundering Bull picked up a cane from the table.

Knowles heard the swish of the cane in the air, and thrilled and shuddered with apprehension.

Often enough he had bestowed that cane upon hapless juniors. Knowles was much given to the use of the cane, stretching his authority as a prefect to its utmost limits in that direction. Now his own turn had come, though he could scarcely believe that the juniors would have the audacity to thrash him. But he soon discovered that they had.

The cane rose in the air, and came down with a tremendous cut.

Lash!

Knowles wriggled and gurgled. But he could do nothing more. Gurgling, and wriggling, and writhing were all he had a chance to do.

Swish! Swish! Swish! Swish!

Thundering Bull was evidently a vengeful Redskin. He laid on the lashes as if he were beating carpet.

Swish! Swish! Swish!

The struggling, wriggling, writhing, gurgling prefect had to take his medicine—and he took it.

Twenty times the cane descended, with all the force of Thundering Bull's strong arm, and by that time Knowles, Sixth-Former as he was, was almost reduced to tears.

Then the Redskin broke the cane into halves, and tossed them into the fender. That cane, at all events, was to administer no further castigations to hapless Modern fags.

Knowles, white with pain and rage, wriggled over and glared at the avengers. But the Comanches were not finished yet.

Knowles tried to dodge as Thundering Bull picked up the inkpot from the table. But he could not escape. The ink swamped down over his head and face, and ran down inside his collar. Knowles' white, furious face was suddenly transformed into Central African blackness.

Then Thundering Bull opened the study cupboard, and took out a pot of jam and a dish of butter.

Butter and jam were mixed with a merciless hand.

Knowles gurgled faintly under the infliction.

The three Redskins exchanged grins as they looked at the bound Sixth-Former, writhing in ink and butter and jam.

Thundering Bull unlocked the door, and opened it a few inches, and peered into the passage. Then he made a sign to his braves, and the three of them slipped from the study, closing the door behind them.

Knowles remained on the floor of his study, wriggling, unable to speak or call out, and with feelings too deep for utterance, even if he could have spoken.

The 9th Chapter.
Not Guilty!

"Great pip!"

Catesby of the Sixth uttered that astounded exclamation as he looked into Knowles' study about twenty minutes later. Catesby had been expecting Knowles to tea; and as he had not come, Catesby had come to look for him. He stared at the wriggling, buttery, inky, and jammy figure on the floor in amazement and consternation.

"M-m-my only hat!" gasped Catesby.

"Gerroooh!" came in a faint mumble from the fearsome form.

"Is—is that you, Knowles?"

"Grooh!"

"What's the matter? What's happened? Why don't you speak?"

"Gr-r-r-r!"

Catesby discerned at last that the unhappy prefect was gagged, and he stooped over him, and removed the rag from his mouth. Knowles gasped and choked.

"Cut me loose! Cut me loose! I'll half kill them! I'll—I'll—Don't stand staring there, you dummy! Get me loose!" Knowles' voice rose to a shriek. "Will you get these cords off, you fool?"

"Who did this?" gasped Catesby.

"Dodd and Doyle and Cook. I'll make them pay for it. Get me loose!"

"Oh, great Scott!"

Catesby found a knife, and cut the cords. Knowles staggered to his feet. He made a rush to the door.

"I—I say, are you going out like that?" stuttered Catesby. "I shouldn't."

Knowles paused. He made for his washstand instead. Certainly he was in no state to appear in public.

With savage haste, he swamped water into the basin, and began to wash away the ink, the butter, and the jam. Catesby watched him with a lurking grin. From his point of view, the matter had its humorous side.

Knowles towelled away savagely, when most of the mixture was off. He did not stay to get it all off. His hair was still very greasy and inky. But he could not wait for vengeance.

"Well, this takes the cake!" said Catesby. "Do you mean to say that three kids in the Fourth handled you like that?"

"I'll make them suffer for it!"

"Blessed if I can understand it! It means a flogging for them, if you go to the Head."

"They may have thought I shouldn't know them, as they were in that Red Indian foolery. But, of course, I knew them."

"Silly young asses! It wasn't hard to guess, as that rubbish belongs to them," said Catesby. "Better go to the Head."

Knowles paused a moment. He was longing to thrash the three delinquents with a cricket-stump. But Catesby's advice was good. A public flogging for the offenders was more severe; indeed, it was possible that Dr. Chisholm would expel them for such an attack on a prefect. He nodded.

"I'll go to the Head!" he said. "I'll take the young scoundrels with me."

He ran out of the study, and up to Tommy Dodd's room. In the armchair in Tommy Dodd's study lay the Redskin costumes, and a large tin basin showed where the juniors had washed off their complexions. But there was no one in the study.

Knowles left it again, and ran downstairs and out of the house. He caught Leggett by the ear in the quad.

"Have you seen Dodd and Cook and Doyle?" he panted.

"Ow! They're detained in the Form-room."

Knowles dashed away into the School House. Evidently the young rascals had broken detention to play that trick on him. He reached the Fourth-Form room, and glared in.

The three Tommies were seated at their desks, assiduously writing out French verbs. They looked up at Knowles.

"Come with me!" shouted the prefect.

Tommy Dodd shook his head.

"Sorry, Knowles! Can't! We're detained."

"Follow me to the Head at once."

"Well, if you make a point of it," yawned Tommy Dodd, "you'll have to explain to Mr. Bootles."

Knowles, trembling with rage, led the way. The three Tommies followed him calmly. Knowles tapped at the Head's door, and entered, followed by the trio. Dr. Chisholm glanced with strong disapproval at the prefect's red and excited face.

(Concluded on page 82.)

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TRICKING THE TRICKSTERS!

(Continued from the previous page.)

"Ay," said Willett, "and if they don't shut up, I'll have 'em all put outside."

"You dursn't do it!" shouted Radlett. "Look 'ere, we've come to fight Tom Belcher. Very well, make him fight!"

"Shame! Shame!" shouted the audience.

The row increased.

Radlett and Mason pressed forward to the ring side. They hurled defiance at Tom there.

Tom looked them up and down. They were sturdy, tough-looking fellows, both of them, but their dissipated faces showed that they were not in the best of condition. To concede weight to both of them seemed a tough proposition, yet by no means a hopeless one.

"Mr. Willett," said Tom, "you'll have no peace until these men have fought me, and as you want to get rid of them, I'll fight them both in the same ring, one down, the other come on."

The showman stared at Tom open-mouthed.

"Don't forget you're tired, kid," he said. "It will mean trying yourself pretty high after all you've done. And I don't see why you should run any extra risk. It's bad enough to give weight away every time, it seems to me."

"Never mind, I'll try," said Tom. The audience cheered excitedly. Here was fine sport promised.

Ted Willett, seeing how firm and resolute Tom Belcher seemed, gave way.

"After all," he thought, "if he is hopelessly outclassed, I can stop the fight, and save him from unnecessary punishment."

And so the challenge was accepted, and Mason and Radlett retired to prepare for the fight.

After the other contests and exhibition bouts had been fought, the ring

was cleared, and Tom Belcher made his bow amidst tumultuous applause.

Bob Radlett then appeared, a tubby and vicious little bantam, who was prepared for anything, and longing for a fight.

When the word was given, Tom commenced cautiously, and as Radlett forced the fighting, gave ground.

Tom soon saw by the changing colour of his opponent's face that Radlett had been drinking more than was good for him during the afternoon.

Alcohol, combined with a hot day, is not conducive to stamina.

And so Tom danced about, taunted Radlett, and drew his blows until he had the fellow gasping for breath.

And every now and then he would go in and fight, then retire as soon as Radlett had set himself for mischief. This he did for four rounds, easily drawing ahead on points. In the fifth round Radlett could no longer sustain the pace he had set. He began to flag.

And then Tom went in, hitting his man as hard as he knew how. The blows landed with terrific force.

A half a dozen on face and body, and down went Radlett to the boards.

And, having gone down, he was in no hurry to get up again. He remained there until Willett had counted him out.

He was carried from the ring, and Jim Mason at once took his place.

Amidst indescribable excitement Tom fought his second opponent.

Tom was tired by this time, but as fully determined as ever.

He fought cautiously during the first round, and then, having discovered that Mason, though a hard hitter, was a very poor boxer, he knew exactly what he had to do.

The round that followed was a perfect masterpiece.

Tom opened the ball with a stinging left in the face, and then upper-cut his

man severely. Blow after blow he sent home on jaw, nose, or mouth, until all Mason thought about was protecting his face.

That was what Tom wanted, and, sailing in, he let his man have it about the body with both hands until Mason crumpled up, and fell with a thud upon his back.

Tom, panting, stood over him.

But Mason had had enough, like his two chums. He was only too glad to get the gloves off, and beat a hasty retreat amidst the derisive laughter of the crowd, leaving Belcher the victor of the hard-fought field.

Ted Willett, clapping his right hand on Tom's shoulder, beamed at the crowd.

"Gents," he cried, "he's a wonderful little fighter—the best at his weight I ever did see, and I hope you'll reward him accordingly. They are now going round with the hat."

And then he added, glaring at the man of fifty:

"And let me say right here that Tom Belcher is through with his fighting in my booth to-day. And if there is anybody else here who wants to do him an injury, let him step forward now, and tackle me!"

The hint was sufficient. When the audience swarmed out into the open, the card tricksters went with it.

For once in a way their game of trickery had not panned out at all well. Tom Belcher was only a little fellow, but he had proved himself a match for the rascals. Not only had he exposed their rascally schemes in the race-train, but he had cleverly defeated their attempts to injure him in the ring. Small wonder, then, that Tom met with no more trouble from the tricksters.

When he made his way back to London in a late train, in company with Billy Rouse and Frederick Taylor, Ted Willett's five pounds, and the money kindly contributed by the boxing crowd, was nestling in his pockets.

It had been a profitable day indeed.

THE END.

(Another magnificent long complete tale of Tom Belcher in next Monday's issue of the BOYS' FRIEND, entitled "His Hour of Need!" Don't miss this grand story.)

THE ROOKWOOD REDSKINS!

(Continued from page 76.)

"What is the matter, Knowles?" he asked icily.

"I have to report these juniors, sir. They attacked me in my study, bound me hand and foot, lashed me with a cane, and smothered me with ink and butter!" panted Knowles.

"Bless my soul!" exclaimed the Head. He fixed his eyes on the three juniors. "Have you anything to say?" he demanded sternly.

"Only that we didn't do it, sir," said Tommy Dodd meekly. "We've been detained ever since lessons, sir, and haven't left the Form-room."

"He is lying, sir!" howled Knowles. "They came into my study disguised as Red Indians—"

"What!" ejaculated the Head.

"Theatrical costumes, sir, that they have used in a play."

"Oh, I understand!"

"These costumes belong to them. I knew them at once, however. I had occasion to punish them last week, and they have done this out of revenge."

"Whoever has done it, Knowles, shall be severely punished. These juniors, however, declare that they had been under detention since lessons."

"Certainly, sir!" said the three Tommies in chorus.

"Somebody may have sneaked into my study and borrowed the theatrical costumes, sir," said Tommy Dodd demurely. "Chaps will do such things. Of course, we couldn't be keeping an eye on our property while we were detained."

"Naturally you could not," assented the Head. "I presume you have proof that you were in the Form-room at the time?"

"Mr. Bootles knows, sir."

"Go and request Mr. Bootles to step here, Dodd."

Tommy Dodd left the study, and returned with the Fourth-Form master. Knowles stood quivering with rage.

"Mr. Bootles, Knowles accuses these juniors of assaulting him. When was it, Knowles?"

"A quarter of an hour ago, sir."

"They declare that they were under detention in the Form-room."

"Knowles is making a mistake," said Mr. Bootles drily. "The boys have not left the Form-room since lessons. I have been keeping them under observation."

"You are sure of that, Mr. Bootles?"

"Absolutely certain, sir!"

Dr. Chisholm turned to the prefect.

"That settles the matter, Knowles, so far as these juniors are concerned. You may go, my boys. Apparently, Knowles, some other boys borrowed the theatrical costumes belonging to Dodd. You have made a very hasty accusation, Knowles; and but for the mere accident that those three juniors happened to be under detention, a very serious injustice might have been done. If you discover the real culprits, you may report them to me."

Knowles did not speak; he could not. He almost staggered from the study. Even Knowles had to admit that the three Tommies were innocent; and as to who the culprits were, that was a mystery. It might have been any three juniors at Rookwood; Knowles was not popular. He left the School House with a face white with fury; and three cheery juniors watched him go from the window of the Form-room, and chuckled in merry chorus.

Knowles did not let the matter rest. But he had to drop it at last. The three Comanches who had gone on the warpath so effectively remained unknown. All Knowles knew was that they were not the three Tommies. Knowles had to swallow his wrath the best he could. But for a long time afterwards Jimmy Silver & Co. chortled gleefully over the adventure of the Rookwood Redskins.

THE END.

(Another magnificent long complete tale of the Rookwood chums in next Monday's issue of the BOYS' FRIEND, entitled "Jimmy Silver's Victory!" Order your copy in advance to avoid disappointment.)

COME TO SEA, MY LADS!

A Magnificent New Series of Articles as Interesting as they are Instructive, specially written for the BOYS' FRIEND by the Famous Naval Writer

JOHN S. MARGERISON.

NO. 5: THE EYES OF THE FLEET.

There is one branch of the Navy whose members are caught young and selected with great care for their superior intelligence. These are the signal boys; those who wear on their arms the cross-flag badge, and who are dubbed by their comrades "The Eyes of the Fleet." It is by no means a job for any chance comer, this of signalling, and yet, take it on the whole, it is one of the most pleasant branches of the Service to belong to.

Whilst in the training-cruiser, as I have already said, the boy receives some instruction in signalling, but as this is a specialists' branch, naturally the information imparted in this short course is only of a superficial nature, and it is only when one comes to treat of signalmen as a whole that we can get any idea of what their work really is.

In the first place, besides intelligence, the aspirant for the flag-badge must possess a certain retentiveness of memory, must be quick, adaptable, and willing to learn, and, above all, must be immune—as immune as is humanly possible—from the fatal habit of making mistakes. When taking the ordinary course, the eye of the signal-instructor is kept on every boy, and he who shows smartness is asked if he would care to be a signalman proper. There is a certain glamour in the way that whole fleets are turned and twisted and manoeuvred by the wisps of coloured bunting called flags; there is something wonderful in the way ships talk to each other when miles apart that appeals to almost every boy, and as a result there are, as a rule, more candidates for signal instruction than are required. Therefore, it is only the more intelligent who get the job; the others have to follow the calling of the seaman.

When a boy starts on his signal course he is sent to one of the great

signal schools at the various naval barracks, where he is put into a class with a dozen others. He is thoroughly grounded in the use of the mechanical semaphore, and taught the way to spell out words and messages with hand-flags where the mechanical, two-armed semaphore cannot be used. He learns the intricacies of the Morse code, being taught to flash words by electric lamps at night, large white and blue flags—according to his light or dark background—by day; and with the steam syren or foghorn during thick weather. He has the whole code of coloured flags drilled into him, and can reel off the name, meaning, and significance of any flag in the whole sixty, whether it is hoisted alone or with others. And here it may be as well to state that every single flag, besides having a letter of the alphabet or a number allotted to it, means some message or other, and when hoisted with several others has quite a different significance altogether.

For example, the flag Q may mean that the ship flying it is taking in ammunition—that is, when hoisted alone in a certain position; flown at another point—say, the masthead—it may give steering directions to a small pulling-boat which has gone to pick up a man who has fallen overboard; while, if P flag and the Number 9 flag appear below it, the fleet may be ordered thereby to raise steam for nine knots.

When the boy has become thoroughly grounded in all these rudiments of his craft he has to pass an examination, and if he is not successful his dreams of ever controlling a fleet have gone by the board. If he manages to get through he has—as they say in the Navy—"earned his flags," and he proceeds to sew the badge of his rating on his sleeve. Then he is sent to one of the commissioned ships in harbour to gain experience,

and to make himself fit for the greater responsibilities which will rest upon him later on. In the ship, as a rule, he will be what is termed a "boatman." This will mean that he will be stationed on the quarter-deck for a certain portion of each day, with a pair of marine binoculars in his hand, and no sleepiness whatever in his eyes. His job will be to keep an eye on every boat that comes within sight of his ship, and to discover if she is carrying officers, to whom she belongs, whether she is coming to the ship or not. He reports the arrival on shore, and the putting off of his own ship's boats; tells the officer of the watch when the admiral is afloat in his barge, so that the guard may be turned out in time to salute him; sees that the flag is dipped in salute to passing steamers, yachts, and other craft, and watches the arrival and departure of all foreign vessels.

When he is not on duty as boatman he has to be on the bridge, writing down messages as older signalmen read them; bending on, hoisting, hauling down, and stowing away flags; serving as messenger to take the signals to those officers whom they concern; while, if he has any spare time, he will repair flags that have been torn in use. But he never has to keep night watches. His day begins at six, and generally ends at four; unless he has some signal exercise which keeps him on duty, for only by exercise and competition between ship and ship are signalmen kept to that high state of efficiency their job demands.

As soon as the boy reaches the age of eighteen he becomes, officially, a man, and by the passing of another examination, stiffer than his first, an "ordinary signalman." He now has to stand his watch at night with the others of his calling; and he also loses his job as boatman when in harbour, being allowed to go ashore three nights out of four with his

watch for leave. His next step is to "qualified signalman," which means that his pay is two shillings per day, and he is in charge of ratings inferior to his own. He now takes in and sends out messages, and employs messengers of his own; and his responsibility is proportionately greater.

It is at this period of his training that he must get rid of every lingering trace of the tendency to make mistakes that every boy and man possesses; for there is one great and glaring example of a signalman's mistake which is ever held before him as a warning. It happened in this wise. The Mediterranean Fleet were at manoeuvres some score of years ago, and had been at sea three days and nights. They had been carrying out attacks of all descriptions with separate divisions as the enemy, and as a consequence the signalman had grown very tired and sleepy for want of rest. The two main divisions had at last joined hands, and everybody was anticipating a long night's rest, when about four in the afternoon the admiral in command decided to exercise his ships at "steam tactics." One manoeuvre in particular was termed "the gridiron movement"—a very dangerous one indeed, and one in which every care must be exercised to avert a disaster. Up went the signal, and a tired yeoman of signals on the Victoria's bridge read it, and snapped out its meaning to his captain.

"Gridiron, sir," he said. "Alter course eight points to port."

The helm was put over in a twinkling, and the great ship turned almost immediately at right angles to her old course. She had barely steadied herself before the yeoman discovered his mistake. "Eight points to starboard"—the other way altogether—should have been the order, and even as he realised his blunder, the ram of H.M.S. Camper-

down struck the Victoria fair and square amidships, damaging her so severely that she sank within ten minutes. A slight mistake, truly, but it cost the British nation the lives of seven hundred men and officers, to say nothing of a million and a half of money. At the present time the story gains point from the fact that Admiral Sir John Jellicoe was the commander of the Victoria, and was not picked up—although he was ill—for nearly two hours after his ship had disappeared from sight.

As a qualified signalman, the youngster first makes the intimate acquaintance with the "Signal Manual." Now, this is the book which contains the code meaning of every single hoist or combination of flags that it is possible to make. This is the book which German spies have paid such large sums to obtain in the past, though why they should do so no one knows. The code which is being used now in war-time is entirely different, and, until war was declared, reposed in a steel safe, securely locked and sealed, in the captain's cabins of all warships. The Manual, as it should be, is a confidential book, and is protected by the Official Secret Act, which renders any person who communicates any portion of its contents to a person not in the Naval Service liable to a sentence of seven years' imprisonment. Its binding is weighted with lead, so that if dropped overboard it will sink at once, and not float away to be picked up by any chance person who might put it to unpatriotic use. Divers are then sent down for it, and if they fail to recover it the whole naval code is at once altered, and the signalmen have to learn everything over afresh.

From this stage to the highest—that of signal boatswain—a warrant officer, sword and all—the man passes by means of examinations up the ladder of promotion, the main requisites being application to duty, alertness, and intelligence, the seizing of opportunities, and the non-making of mistakes, and so rapid as a rule is the promotion from one step to another, that I personally know at least half a dozen signal boatswains who are not yet thirty.

(Next Monday's article will deal with the next steps in a boy's training in the Navy, and will describe how the young sailor is instructed in torpedo work.)