



Rookwood Recollections!

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IN the far-off days which are now only a memory, Rookwood School was a famous monastery. We can picture the merry old monks, on a Friday morning, trooping down to the river in quest of fat trout for their dinner. The genial friars were great trenchermen, and did not stint themselves of the good things of the table. In the refectory—upon the site of which the dining-hall now stands—many a goodly joint of the Roast Beef of Old England was carved and

consumed with great gusto. I was telling my pupils about this the other day, and “Tubby” Muffin, of the Fourth, wistfully remarked that he wished Rookwood was *still* a monastery!

Many traces of the monks still remain. The crypt and the cloisters preserve the old-time atmosphere of hushed tranquillity. The old ivy-mantled tower has stood intact throughout the centuries, buffeted by all the winds that blow, but good for a long lease

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of life yet. And the school fountain, in the quadrangle, is extremely ancient, and a wonderfully quaint piece of sculpture. Antiquarians are attracted to Rookwood like moths to a flame; and the Head delights to show them round, and to discourse upon these surviving relics of the long-ago.

Rookwood presents a curious clashing of ancient with modern; for the Modern Side is quite a twentieth-century affair—up-to-date in every way, and fitted out with all modern conveniences. There is electric-lighting, which the Classical Side lacks; there are more bath-rooms; larger and airier studies; and corridors which are neither damp nor draughty. And yet, despite all these improvements, I must confess to a stronger affection for the older House, which has endured throughout the slow march of the centuries, and is rich in tradition, and glorious memories.

I am often asked to name the most exciting event which ever happened at Rookwood. This is very difficult to say. A Great Fire gives excitement enough, and to spare; so does a Great Rebellion; and Rookwood has tasted both. But some would be inclined to vote for the personal visit of King Charles the First, in the time of the Civil War, as being the most exciting happening. Twenty miles away, the Battle of Newbury was being fought, and was to prove a death-blow to the hopes of the Stuart monarch. Yet the King's visit to

Rookwood was not a gloomy affair, but a lively and ceremonious business. The whole school, under its loyalist headmaster, Dr. Parr, turned out to cheer the King, who was attended by an escort of gay and gallant courtiers. And scores of excited juniors wished that they had been old enough to take up swords for the Royal cause.

The Great fire of Rookwood occurred on a certain Bonfire Night, many years ago. The fireworks in those days were more highly-explosive and dangerous than they are to-day. To let one of them off inside a building was not only reckless, but positively dangerous. On this occasion, a misguided fag lighted a catherine-wheel in his master's study, with disastrous results. The window curtains took

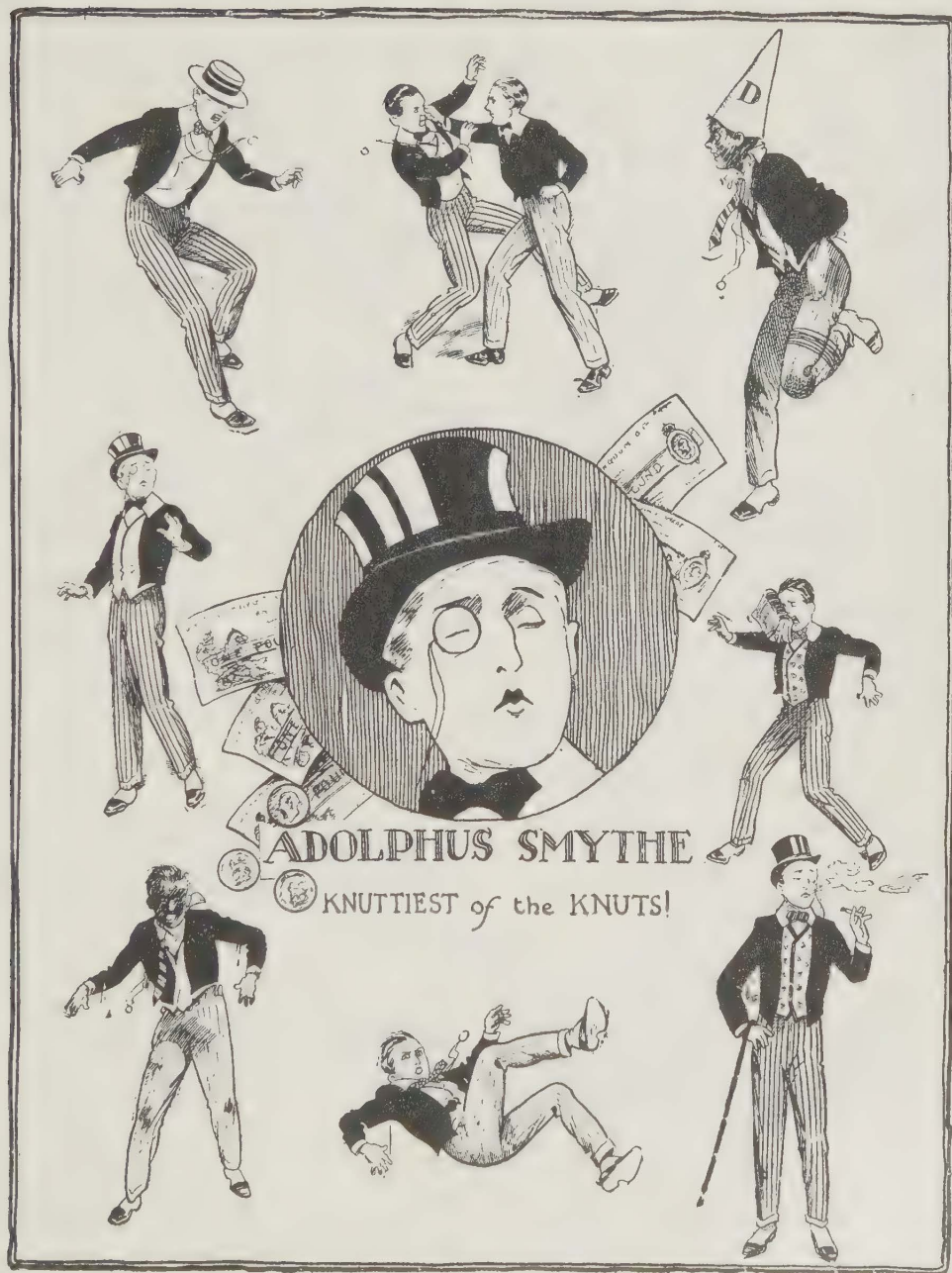
fire, and before the paralysed fag could move or act, the whole room was ablaze. Swiftly the flames spread, and the historic school building was in grave danger of being gutted. However, Rookwood turned out its amateur fire-brigade, and for upwards of an hour the fellows fought the flames with hosepipes and pails of water; and at last they succeeded in quelling the conflagration. Considerable damage had been done, but there was no loss of life. The scared fag who had caused all the trouble was not punished; but fireworks were "barred" at Rookwood for several years afterwards, as a result of his folly.

THE END



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One of the "Lads" of Rookwood Snap-shotted!



A Trapper's Life on the Frozen Plains!



THE HUSKY TEAM.



THE GAME IN SIGHT



IN BIVOUC.



A KILL.



THE PORTAGE SLEIGH.



A TRAPPER'S CABIN.